

To

YJS

Torbay
Youth Justice
Service

YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN 2026-27

UNIT



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Introduction, Vision and Strategy

Introduction by Chair of Torbay Youth Justice Board

As chair of Torbay Youth Justice Service Strategic Management Board, I am pleased to present the Youth Justice Plan for 2026-27. The Plan has been developed following our first joint staff and Board 'Away Day' where performance reports and summaries, feedback from children, parents, and victims and the wider community were reviewed to create the plan and its priorities for the year ahead. Excitingly this took place in our new facility in the centre of Torquay which although not fully open it was great to be in finally after many years of searching and planning.

Firstly, I would like to recognise the achievements of the service over the last year, specifically maintaining rates of children who reoffend in both the pre court and statutory court orders arenas. This is particularly true for the new Prevention / Turnaround service where early data shows that 81% of children accepted onto the programme did not go on to re-offend. We have also significantly reduced the number of First time Entrants (FTEs) coming into the service through the increase focus on both Prevention and Diversion work in conjunction with the Police Intervention Clinic and the Out of Court Resolution Panel. I am also proud that we have been reaccredited with our SEND Quality Lead Award with a Child First commendation for our work with children with SEND who are open to the service.

We are also pleased to note that in April 2025 Devon and Cornwall launched their new Child First Policing Team for South Devon (a slightly wider area than just Torbay). This pulled together resources for dealing with children into one team and has reduced delays in investigation and resolutions of low level youth crime. In the autumn of 2025 in partnership with the Police, we launched the new Child First Youth Pathway Protocol for Devon and Cornwall. This protocol has both clarified Child First practice expectations in the Police and increased the range of options for diverting children from entering the criminal justice system and reduced inconsistencies across the Police Force footprint.

Internal and partnership audits of our work have identified area of good provision and areas we need to improve upon; these are highlighted in the Service Improvement plan and priorities for the year ahead. Specifically, the Strategic Board will focus on: -

- Seeking to influence the education landscape to reduce the number of children being excluded and suspended from education provision and ensuring children open to the YJS are accessing appropriate education or training provision suitable to their needs and abilities.
- Maintaining the reduction in the number of First Time Entrants and reducing re offending rates so that the yearly rolling target reduces to below our statistical neighbours.
- Be more 'Child First' in the provision of our services.
- Opening our new location for face-to-face delivery work in Torquay.
- Develop our services to victims and ensure we provide a coordinated service with all the other providers of victim services

This is really exciting time for Torbay Youth Justice Service with a number of developments that we have been working on for some time coming to fruition and making a significant impact for children in the Bay



Nancy Meehan

Chair of Torbay Youth Justice Service Strategic Board

Director of Torbay Childrens Services

Voice of the child

'didn't get on with the worker at first as was in a bad place. Get on great now & feels he knows me and has my back'

Legal Framework

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 39) introduced the statutory requirement for local authorities to establish Youth Justice Services (YJS) in their area, requiring the involvement of the local authority, Police, Health and Probation – the statutory partners.

The responsible local authority is also required, under Section 40, after consultation with partner agencies, to publish a Youth Justice Plan each year outlining the composition of and funding for their Youth Justice Service. This includes the steps taken to encourage children not to commit criminal offences. This document is the required Youth Justice Plan for Torbay.

Parts of the legislation refers to Youth 'Offending' Teams and youth 'offenders' this language has been replaced by updated guidance from the Youth Justice Board (YJB) as part of their Child First approach to stop labelling children as offenders and now refers to local services as youth justice services, although the primary legislation has not been changed. The Child First model is based on evidence and research that shows a positive, pro social approach focussing on the child's strengths and capabilities is the most likely to result in desistance from offending.

Vision

Torbay's Youth Justice Service vision is to: -

'Keep young people and their communities safe by working in collaboration with other services to help children recognise and repair the impact of harmful behaviour and develop a positive future'.

The Service will achieve this by delivering a '[Child First](#)' approach in all aspects of its work, as well as supporting the work of Torbay Council, UNICEF UK and other local partners towards international recognition as a [UNICEF Child Friendly Community](#).

The Youth Justice Service Vision supports the work of the Torbay local community Vision and Plan which is: -

'We want to see a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay'

The Local Community Plan has three strategic themes: -

- ***Community and People***
- ***Pride in Place***
- ***Economic Growth***

The Youth Justice Service makes contributions to all three strategic themes but mainly sits within the 'Community and People' theme and the priority of: -

'Keeping children safe in their communities and providing safe environments for our young people to thrive in'

Parent feedback

Everyone involved supported us as a family and took time to understand our needs'

Local Context

Torbay is a glorious part of Devon with an inspiring natural environment. It is a magnet for tourists and is known as the English Riviera. It is home to globally significant technology businesses and has a rich leisure and cultural scene.

Torbay has total population of 139,322 (2021 census mid-year estimate) of which 11,896 are aged 10 -17 years. 96.1% of Torbay's population are white, 1.6% are Asian, 1.5% are mixed ethnicity, 0.3% black and 0.4% other. There are higher numbers of older people compared with the England average and far fewer people in their 20s and 30s.

Torbay has the highest number of residents living in deprived areas and the highest numbers of children living in income deprived areas when compared with all other councils in the South-West. 27% of Torbay's residents live in the 20% most deprived areas in England and 1 in 4 residents say they have a long-term illness or disability.

Average weekly earnings in Torbay are £467 (£123 less than the England average -2020) and 12.4% of households are in fuel poverty. Those born into deprived families are more likely to have worse educational and health outcomes. The life expectancy gap is 9 years males and 8 years females.

Approximately double the number of cared for children compared to other areas in England and the South-West. Over 1 in 3 children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) have been excluded from school for a fixed period.

Torbay's SEND inspection in 2025 found: -

'There are widespread and/or systemic failings leading to significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which the local area partnership must address urgently.'

An improvement plan is in place address the concerns and the service will be reinspected in January 2027

Torbay Children's Service was rated as 'Good' at its last two Ofsted inspection (May 2022 and Feb 2026) the 2026 inspection report stated: -

'Services for children in Torbay have significantly improved. This improvement is demonstrable and making a tangible difference for Torbay's children. Strong political and corporate commitment to the improvement agenda has enabled the local authority to change the trajectory of social work practice so that services in Torbay are now good. This is an impressive achievement.'

Victim feedback

'Lynsey (victim worker) was extremely professional and put me at ease. She explained everything thoroughly in ways I could understand'

Governance, Leadership, and Partnership arrangements

A number of Partnership 'Deep Dives' have taken place since the last HMIP inspection of the YJS in 2020, led by the CEO of Torbay Council. The improvement recommendations from the Deep Dives have been completed and signed off. At the Away Day in 2026 the Board and staff team received a summary of performance, disproportionality and related data, presentations from the YJB and Education representative the annual feedback summary from children, parent and victims open to the YJS, and used these to set the new priorities for the year ahead which are set out in Chapter 13.

Attendance and participation at the board is good, all statutory partners are actively engaged in the boards as well as taking part in audits of the service (victim audit) and observing other activities of the service eg FTE and Reoffending reviews.

The Youth Justice Service Head of Service reports to both the Chair of the Strategic Board for service accountability matters and to the Director of Children's Services as the employing body for all non-seconded staff. In 2026-27 the chair of Board and the DCS are the same person.

The staffing and accountability structures are provided in [Appendix 1](#) and [1a](#).

Knife Crime

In February 2026 the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) introduced new guidance for [child knife crime possession offences](#) these set clear requirements for how children in possession of knives should be dealt with, specifically through the increased use of Deferred Prosecution Schemes (DPS). The guidelines also set tight timescales for notification from Police to Youth Justices Services (24hrs) and for the delivery of a mandated best practice programmes within 4 weeks of the referral. Prior to programme delivery an assessment and a multi-agency decision panel would be needed to agree a charge or deliver an out of court pathway and programme. The mandated implementation for this new approach was by 1st April 2026 which for many police forces nationally has been a significant challenge as most did not have a DPS in place. However, because of the work that Devon and Cornwall Police and the YJS's across the area have done in developing and implementing the Child First Justice Pathway Protocol which has a DPS the additional option of a Deferred Charge (there was already a Deferred Caution) could just be switched on and we were able to meet the requirements by the 1st April and are therefore fully compliant with all aspects of the new guidelines.

1. Progress on Previous Plan

The 2025-26 Improvement Plan contains one action which has remained unresolved since the HMIP inspection: - 'Secure access to suitable premises' which despite much work over the last 4 years has remained unresolved despite eleven buildings having been identified but ruled out due to either cost or planning issues. In 2025 a building in the centre of Torquay was identified that is in council ownership, plans were developed for its total refurbishment, costs have been established and agreed, planning and building control has been approved and in April 2026 work has been completed. Children open to the service have been involved in aspects of the design and decoration of the building. Specifically choosing the colours pallets of the decoration and range and types of furniture as well as designing with Sound Communities the artwork for the front window, designing the logo and naming the building as Un1t (Unit 1)

Last year's Improvement Plan is shown below; this is reviewed at each Strategic Board meeting and was last updated for the Board meeting in March 2026. There were 7 areas identified for improvement, there were 4 improvement actions that were **Green**, meaning they have either been completed or ongoing, or are on track to be completed. 3 were **Amber** meaning they were in progress but are behind the planned timescale for completion

TYJS Improvement Plan 2026-27

March 2026 update

	Area for Improvement / Outcome desired	Action	Timescale	MB Lead	Update	RAG
1.	Child First approach to all we do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Hear and respond to the voice of the child and carers not only in the delivery of their intervention but in the development of the service. b) To support the development of the Child First Policing Team and the new Child First Protocols to improve how children are supported within the youth justice systems. c) Swifter Youth Justice - Reduce delays in intervention and resolution for all children in the youth justice system. d) Increase the range of positive activities and opportunities for children to develop their confidence, skills and abilities. 	<p>Over the next year</p> <p>Over the next year</p> <p>Monitor this through Police & YJS</p> <p>Summer 2025</p>	DP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A Child First Task and Finish group has been established through the LCJB to ensure that Child First principles are delivered across the whole DCP area. b) The Child Centred Policing Team is now established in the area and has improved the speed of interventions and resolution of level 1 cases. Update to Board in Nov 25. c) The new Child First Justice Pathway has been launched in which aims to reduce delays in youth justice, increase diversion options & reduce inconsistencies across the D&C footprint. More training will be delivered to Police and YJS teams later in the year and early in 2026. d) SH and JR are working with the Centre for Justice Innovation who will be support the role out of the new Youth Justice Pathway and the development of the Child Centred Policing team (see c. above) e) YJS have delivered a Positive Activity programme in the Spring & in summer holidays 2025 with additional funding from HAF and Community Safety and hope to run again in 2026 subject to funding. f) DP has linked with YJS and briefed his staff team re Child First practice within Community Safety & plan to complete the YJB Child First Toolkit 	
2.	Reduce the numbers of school suspension and exclusions and ensure children in contact with the Youth Justice Service are in appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All Board members to consider what their agencies can do to support school attendance and inclusion eg Not make appointments with children in school time, professional curiosity by staff 	March 2026	HB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Following the SEND inspection report JR has joined the SLAIP Attendance Task Force, it has met once on 2nd July an improvement plan re attendance will be developed by this group. b) HB and JR have met to discuss what can work together re reducing suspensions. 	

	education, training, or employment.	<p>seeing children not in school during the school day.</p> <p>b) All agencies support Inclusion strategy / SLAIP?</p> <p>c) YJS staff to work with partners to reduce the number of children suspended & excluded from school and improve their attendance.</p>			<p>c) YJS colleagues are now joining SEND team anchor days for collaborative and joined up working – this is implementing and being embedded in practice.</p> <p>d) Discussions re YJS attending IPOP when children open to YJS are discussed so that YJS views can be presented.</p> <p>e) YJS now attend the Risk of Exclusion and Placement Panels & are working with Vulnerable Pupils Service to share more up to date information.</p> <p>f) HB brought a report to the March 26 Away Day re progress on reducing suspensions and exclusions from education. Recommendations were made for action for 2026-7.</p>	
3.	<p>Secure access to suitable child friendly, safe, accessible premises for delivery of face-to-face work (Outstanding Deep Dive Recommendation Continue work to secure a range of local facilities that are fit for purpose to enable services to be delivered effectively to children).</p>	<p>a) Open the new face to face delivery location in Torquay and ensure it is accessible and inclusive for children, parents, victims and partners.</p> <p>b) Develop plans so that it is a safe, confidential and inspirational place for children and all users of the building.</p>	<p>Oct 25</p> <p>June – Oct 25</p>	NB	<p>a) Refurbishment work is now nearing completion, painting work is almost completed, final fittings of kitchen and showers / toilets is nearly completed. Furniture will be taken out of storage & in late February</p> <p>b) Young people have been engaged with the selected artists since December to work on the designs for the front of the building and also with designing the internal look a furnishing the building. We have still to select and a name for the building.</p> <p>c) Health and safety planning re operational running of the building taking place on 11th Feb.</p> <p>d) Building will be used for Board & staff team away day on 19th March. Soft opening and Grand opening event dates to be decided.</p>	<p>Soft opening in April, grand opening in May</p>
4.	<p>Improve the services to victims and work to ensure better coordination with all agencies who support victims across the local area.</p>	<p>a) Increase the engagement of victims with our service.</p> <p>b) Ensure Victim safety planning is paramount in all aspects of our planning and delivery</p> <p>c) Ensure the YJS listen to victims and help them understand and navigate the justice system and its outcomes for them and</p>	Jan 2026	EP	<p>a) Victim report being presented to each Board to identify gaps in data re victims and areas for development.</p> <p>b) Regular briefings for staff on the requirement to evidence safety planning for victims.</p> <p>c) Improved feedback system from victims and the planned work with the Centre for Justice</p>	

		<p>the children who have caused them harm.</p> <p>d) Work with all the other agencies who provide services to victims to ensure victims are supported to access what they need.</p>			<p>Innovation will improve understanding & services for victims</p> <p>d) We are linking with the LCJB to ensure better coordination of services for victims in the D&C area. The 2nd meeting took place on 17th September.</p> <p>e) Victim Audit took place on 11.11.25 with auditors from Devon, Plymouth, Cornwall and EP from the Torbay Board and 4 staff from Torbay YJS, Report & Action plan presented to Nov 25 board. This to be written up for YJB good practice site.</p>	
5.	Maintain the reduction of children who become First Time Entrants (FTEs) in Torbay and seek to bring the rate below our statistical neighbours.	<p>a) Ensure the Prevention service is stopping children offending by monitoring in the performance report.</p> <p>b) Work with Police and Partners to increase Diversion outcomes at the Intervention Clinic & OOCR panel.</p> <p>c) Increases the Police awareness and understanding of the Child First approach and of the work of the YJS</p>	<p>Every 2 months</p> <p>March 26</p> <p>Jan 26</p>	HC / NY?	<p>a) Turnaround as part of the Prevention service was recognised by the MOJ being a high performer because of reoffending rate of 7% for children open on this programme last year.</p> <p>b) The new Child First Decision Protocol (Pathway) has been launched in July 25 which will increase the options for diversion at the OOCR panel, and informal Diversion options was launched in Sept which will divert children earlier.</p> <p>c) The Centre for Justice Innovation have supported YJS in the D&C footprint in the role out of the new Child First Joint Decision Protocol & specifically working with S Devon over the next year to support the new ways of working between YJS & the S Devon Child Centred Policing Team.</p> <p>d) FTE Review group meets quarterly to review all decisions to see if children could have been diverted.</p> <p>e) Jan 2026 Torbay FTE rate was 163, latest available family group rate was 157. This will be updated in the 19th March Away Day</p>	Go green if rate stays close to family group
6.	Maintain the success of the Prevention Service in stopping children entering the formal justice system and look for funding for 2026-27	<p>a) Ensure the Prevention & Turnaround funding & performance criteria requirements are met.</p> <p>b) Look for alternative funding to continue Prevention service or decommission in 2026</p>	<p>March 26</p> <p>Dec 25</p>	NM	<p>a) Turnaround as part of the Prevention service was recognised by the MOJ being a high performer because of reoffending rate of 7% for children open on this programme last year.</p> <p>b) The prevention service funding has now been made permanent through additional core funding</p>	

					from Torbay Council. All 3 workers have been issued with permanent contracts	
7.	Implement the 2024 Partnership Deep Dive recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Board can properly lead, direct and empower those responsible for driving forward the YJS in the next phase of its development and ensure that its strategic priorities are set and delivered. b) The Board should ensure that it has an unfettered 'line of sight' to front line services to inform its activity. c) The Board should consider whether an Operations Board or a specialist sub-group network is the preferred mechanism for taking forward service priorities and providing the Strategic Board with the intelligence and data it needs to properly understand and direct the YJS. d) Ensure that all strategic and operational priorities are understood across the service. e) Strategic Board to assist in securing a base from which the service can deliver direct work to children. f) Assure itself that the plans are fit for purpose, actions are sufficiently clear with appropriately rigorous and fixed timescales, outcome ambitions are properly defined, and reporting and evaluation requirements are clear. 	<p>July 25</p> <p>Autumn 25</p> <p>May 25</p>	NM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) July 25. In May the Strategic Board completed an 'Away Day' led by the chair of the Board with contributions from all partner agencies, the staff team and data and feedback from across the service to devise the Youth Justice Plan for 2025-26. Work included reviewing the key points and actions from the Deep Dive. Decisions included the dissolution of the Operational Board and Task and Finish groups will be established for areas of work or development needed. Board members have received several inputs and briefing re their role and function as Board members, and there will a particular focus on being ready for any HMIP inspection. b) July 25 Board members have taken lead roles for aspects of the Improvement Plan for the service which will increase their contact with the service. Additionally, more staff will attend Board meetings to present pieces of work and case studies. Other opportunities for engagement will take place over the next year. c) July 25. The Operational Board has been dissolved. Task and Finish groups will be established for any areas of development or action needed. d) July 2025. Staff and volunteers have been engaged in both an Away Day to develop Priorities for the Youth Justice Plan for 25-26 and sent a number of challenges and priorities to the Board. Staff have also engaged with Marjon University & South Devon College to review how Referral Orders can be made more Child First. The intention is to publish this as an Academic Review to be used nationally by YJS's (hopefully Sept / Oct 2025). The Police and YJS have also just received word that we are 1 of 10 YJS 	

					<p>nationally who will be receiving support from the Centre for Justice Innovation for the next year to roll out the new Child First Pathway and support the development of the Child Centred Policing Team for S Devon</p> <p>e) A base in Unit 1 Torr Hill House has been secured and is currently undergoing refurbishment</p> <p>f) The new Youth Justice Plan has been approved by the YJS Board and Torbay Council Cabinet and is now published on the website</p> <p>g) The Deep Dive actions have been completed and have been signed off by the CEO Deep Dive review group.</p>	
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2. Performance over the Previous Year

Torbay has taken an active and often leading role in regional and national developments to promote a Child First approach to policing and how we support children to not become involved in crime and the justice system. Specifically, we have worked with Devon and Cornwall Police in the development of the Child First Pathway Protocol which is being implemented across the whole force area and systemises the Child First approach to how we deal with children in the justice system from prevention, diversion and court work. The Service has also worked with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to develop a Child First approach to reduce delays in investigation and decision making which has supported the development of the Child First Policing Team for Torbay which has brought together police resources who deal with all low level offending by children ensuring greater coordination and oversight. The OPCC through the LCJB has created a Child First Working Group led by the regional head of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) which is working to improve outcomes and reduce delays for children in the criminal justice system and on which the head of Service for Torbay sits. These changes will help to both reduce First time Entrants (FTEs) and reoffending rates

Torbay YJS has continued to increase the breadth and quality of performance data made available to managers, management boards other local authority departments eg Children’s Services and Community Safety etc as well as external partners. In early 2025 the Board requested a number of revisions to the performance report structure, a Draft report was presented and approved at the March 2025 Board meeting the first new report will come the next Board in July. This includes caseload data, demographics, links to wider services, exploitation, education, attendance, free school meals, SEND, timeliness of decision making, outcome types, offence types, court decisions, first time entrants, reoffending, custody, breaches, and victim data. More detailed analysis is often requested by the board and this year they have received supplementary reports regarding First Time Entrants, Disproportionality, and Education.

The data within this plan is taken from both the Torbay Youth Justice Service's case management system - ChildView, and the YJB data summary published on a quarterly basis by the Youth Justice Board. We have also developed the use of Power BI to help managers and staff review live performance data and after some trials this should be rolled out in 2026.

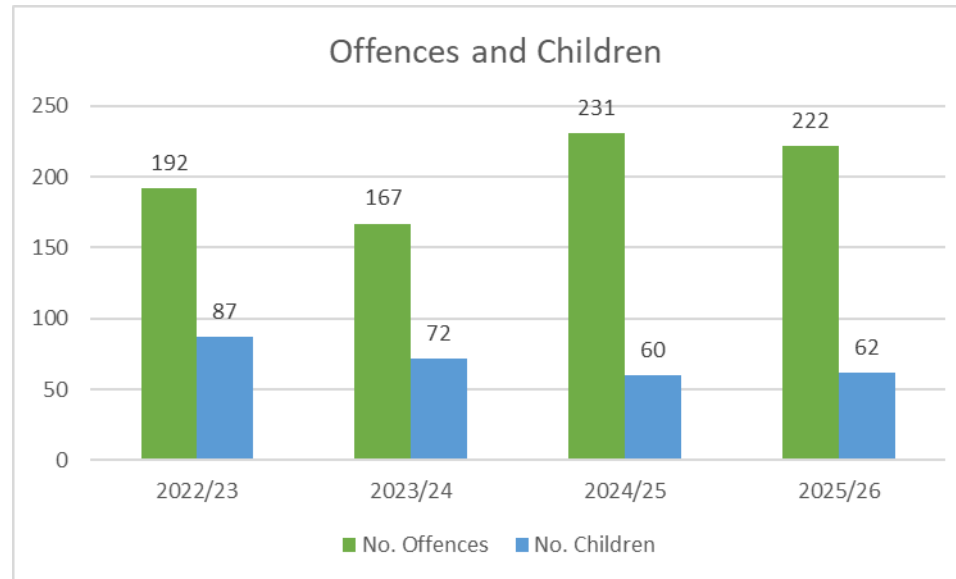
There remain 2 caveats to the data below which is we still do not have regular data updates from Devon and Cornwall Police that has been requested. Specifically, information on Police only Community Resolutions and Stop and Search data.

Quote from a child

'It's because of the difficulties I had previously where I got myself into trouble with some people doing things. I know I can't change that, but I can change the now and future'

Offences

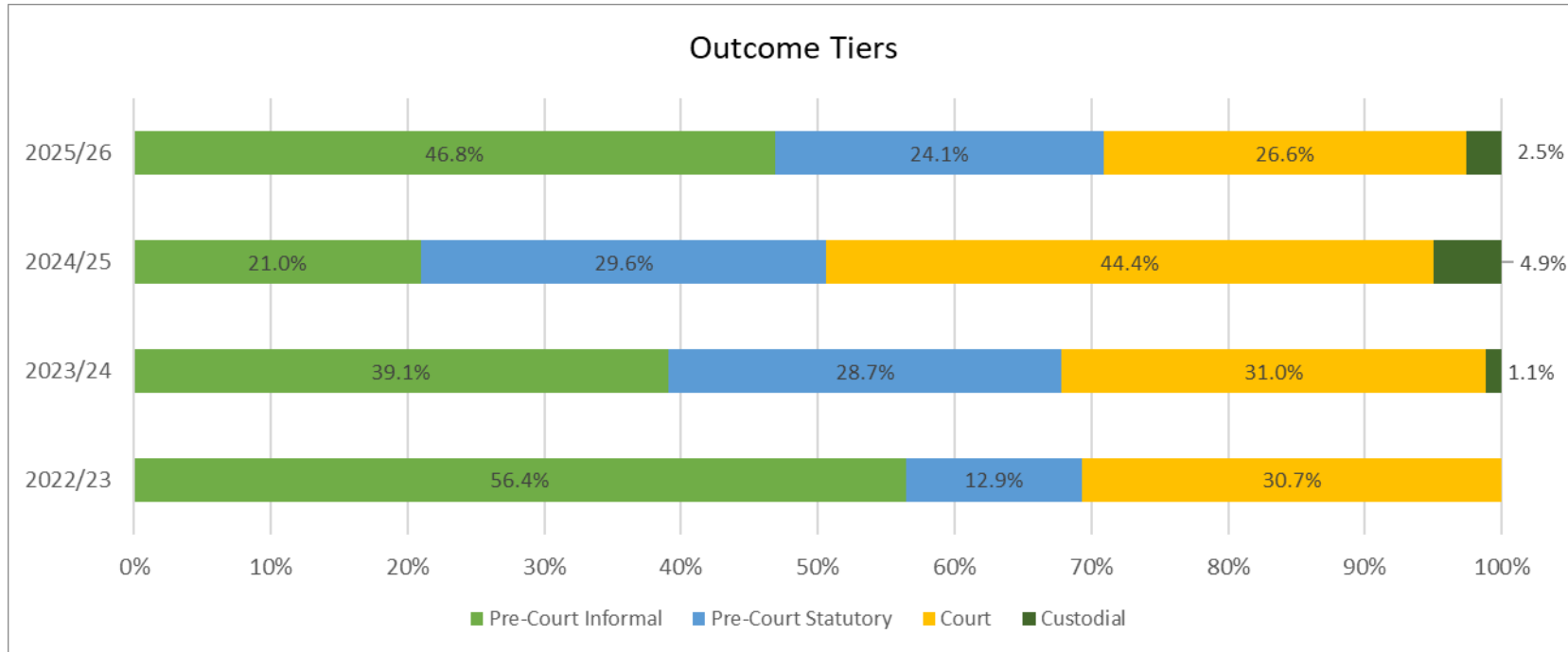
The number of children who received an outcome for an offence remained relatively low during the previous twelve months following the decline from 2023/24. The number of offences remains high and the gap between these two numbers reinforces the narrative that offending is increasingly concentrated among a small cohort of children committing multiple offences. (The data here uses date of outcome, not date of offence).



The ratio of offences per child is:

- 2.21 offences per child (2022/23)
- 2.32 offences per child (2023/24)
- 3.85 offences per child (2024/25)
- 3.58 offences per child (2022/26)

Outcome Tiers



The distribution of outcomes shows a clear shift towards diversion away from the formal court process over the four-year period. In 2025/26, 71% of outcomes were delivered out of court, the highest proportion across the period, indicating a continued emphasis on early intervention and diversion. This compares with a lower reliance on out-of-court outcomes in both 2023/24 and 2024/25, when the use of court disposals increased.

Pre-Court Informal outcomes accounted for 47% of all outcomes in 2025/26, a substantial increase compared with the previous year. This suggests improved use of informal resolution where appropriate and is consistent with reductions seen in First Time Entrants later in this report. At the same time, the number of Pre-Court Statutory outcomes reduced, indicating a rebalancing within out-of-court disposals towards less formal interventions.

Row Labels	Pre-Court Informal	Pre-Court Statutory	Court	Custodial	Total
2022/23	57	13	31		101
2023/24	34	25	27	1	87
2024/25	17	24	36	4	81
2025/26	37	19	21	2	79

Offending Behaviour

Violence Against the Person offences were the most common offence type to receive an outcome during 2025/26. They accounted for 21% of offences and, despite decreasing by eight offences, replaced **Theft and Handling Stolen Goods** offences as the most prevalent. The latter reduced from 68 to 39, and these offences accounted for 18% of outcomes during the previous 12 months.

There were increases in the number of **Criminal Damage** offences (+9), **Vehicle Theft / Taking** (+9), **Breach of Bail** (+16), **Domestic Burglary** (+11) and **Public Order** (+4).

There were reductions in the number of **Motoring Offences** (-14), **Non-Domestic Burglary** (-5), and **Drugs** (-7).

Parent feedback

'The worker genuinely cared about supporting our child and put in helpful support place'

There were 222 offences by Torbay YJS children that received a justice outcome between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026. (The numbers below offence type show increase/decrease on previous year).



47
Violence Against
The Person
-8



17
Breach Of Bail
+16



12
Non-Domestic
Burglary
-5



39
Theft & Handling
Stolen Goods
-29



14
Motoring
Offences
-14



8
Sexual Offences
+/- 0



22
Criminal
Damage
+9



13
Public Order
+4



6
Drugs
-7



19
Vehicle Theft /
Taking
+9



12
Domestic
Burglary
+11

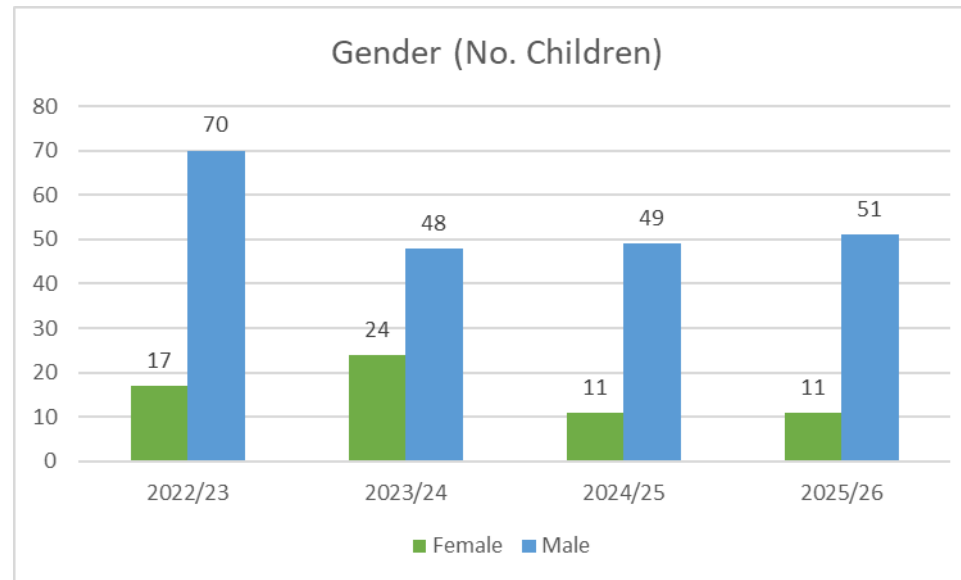


13
Others (incl. Racially
aggravated, Robbery,
Breach of Order)
-11

Offending Profile

The children receiving an outcome for an offence in 2025/26 are again predominately male (83%). Across the four-year period, most offences have been committed by male children, who consistently account for between 67% and 82% of all cases. While 2023/24 saw a temporary increase in the proportion of females supported (33%), the overall trend indicates a sustained male majority. Total numbers supported have declined over time; however, the gender profile of the cohort has remained broadly stable.

- 2022/23 – Female 20% Male 80%
- 2023/24 – Female 33% Male 67%
- 2024/25 – Female 18% Male 82%
- 2025/26 – Female 18% Male 82%



Age (at Outcome date)

Across the period, offending is predominantly concentrated among teenage children aged 13 and over, with consistently low numbers of children aged 10–12. While 2023/24 saw a peak in offending among 13–15-year-olds, the age profile has since shifted, with those aged 16–18+ accounting for the majority of offences from 2024/25 onwards. This indicates an increasing concentration of offending behaviour among older children despite overall lower volumes compared with 2022/23.

Age	Outcome Date			
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
10		<5		
11	<5	<5	<5	
12	8	<5	<5	6
13	6	14	4	5
14	17	13	8	8
15	17	16	10	7
16	16	11	18	17
17	20	12	11	16
18+	<5		<5	<5

Age	Outcome Date			
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
10	0%	<5%	0%	0%
11	<5%	<5%	<5%	0%
12	9%	<5%	7%	10%
13	7%	19%	7%	8%
14	20%	18%	13%	13%
15	20%	22%	17%	11%
16	18%	15%	30%	27%
17	23%	17%	18%	26%
18+	<5%	0%	7%	5%

YJS Children and Interventions

The number of YJS interventions that began in 2025/26 was lower than in each of the previous two years.

75 children started an intervention last year (86 in 2024/25) across a variety of interventions. Some children will have had multiple interventions during the year.

- 23 Turnaround interventions (changes to the eligibility guidelines meant that all children were eligible for Turnaround and therefore no Prevention Programme interventions – previously reserved for children not eligible)
- 15 diversionary interventions (YJS Community Resolution or Outcome 22)

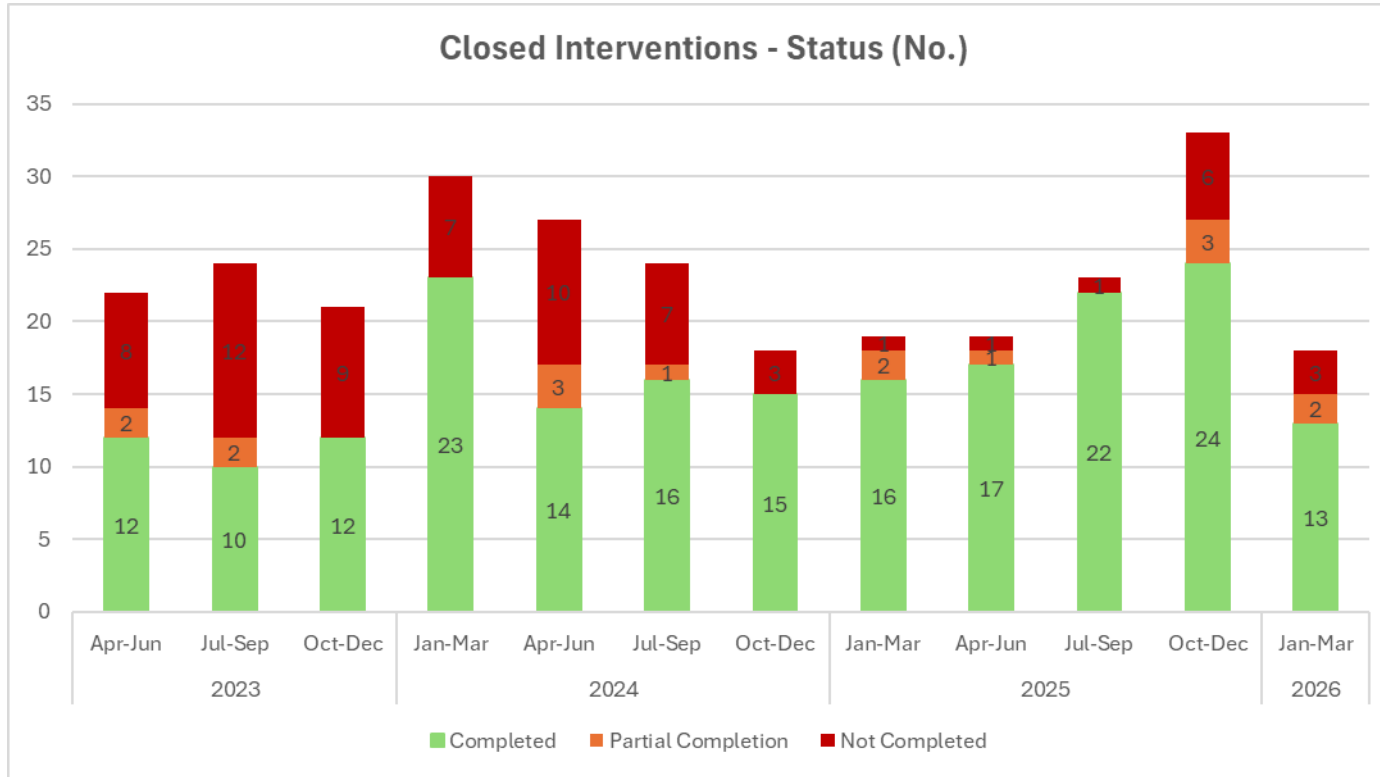
- 17 pre-court substantive outcomes (Youth Caution or Youth Conditional Caution)
- 18 court ordered interventions (Referral Order or Youth Rehabilitation Orders)
- 17 voluntary support programmes (these can be pre or post an intervention linked to an offence)
- 6 bail support or remand programmes
- 2 custodial sentences - DTO

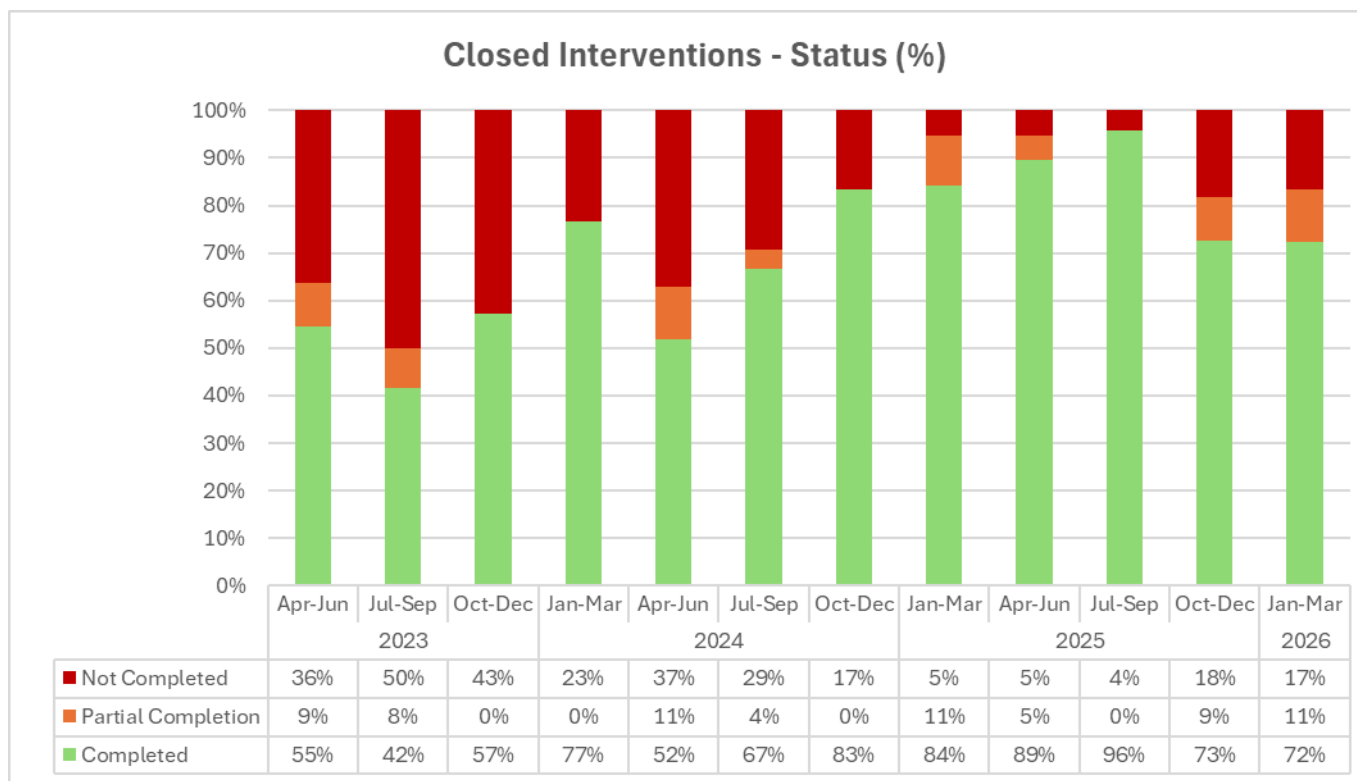
The full breakdown is shown below:

Intervention Type	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Prevention Programme	12	9%	7	6%		
Turnaround	36	26%	24	21%	23	23%
Voluntary Support Programme	26	19%	19	17%	17	17%
Community Resolution with YOT Intervention	13	10%	7	6%	11	11%
Outcome 22 (Diversionary, Educational or Intervention Activity)	5	4%	5	4%	4	4%
Youth Caution	4	3%	8	7%	6	6%
Youth Conditional Caution	13	10%	12	11%	11	11%
Bail Support Programme	1	1%	2	2%	5	5%
Civil Supervision Order					1	1%
Criminal Behaviour Order	1	1%			1	1%
Referral Order	20	15%	14	12%	8	8%
Youth Rehabilitation Order	4	3%	12	11%	8	8%
Remand in Custody (YDA) YOI					1	1%
DTO Post Custody/Licence Programme			2	2%	1	1%
DTO/Custody Programme	1	1%	1	1%	2	2%
Total	136		113		99	

Intervention Outcomes

The chart below shows the number of interventions that closed in the period and the proportion of these that were successfully completed.





82% of interventions were completed successfully in 2025/26, this is an improvement on 2024/25 when the successful completion rate was 69%.

3. National Key Performance Indicators

First Time Entrants

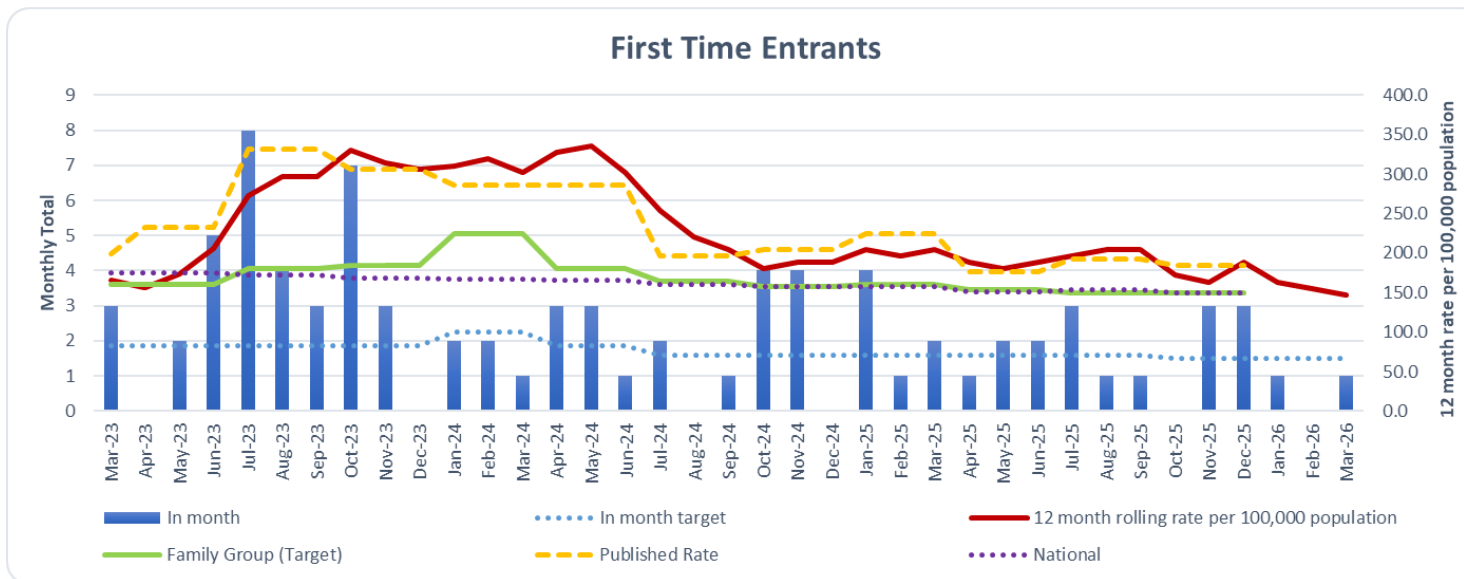
First Time Entrants (FTEs) to the youth justice system are children who have committed an offence and receive a youth caution or court conviction for the first time. This is a key performance indicator for the Youth Justice Partnership in Torbay.

Concerns around the high number of Torbay children becoming FTEs was one of the reasons why Torbay YJS were placed in the third quadrant (equivalent to a service requiring improvement) of the YJB's oversight framework.

Following a peak in May 2024, when the rate reached 335 first-time entrants (FTEs) per 100,000 population aged 10–17, the most recent data demonstrates a significant and sustained reduction in Torbay. By March 2026, the FTE rate had fallen to 139 per 100,000, representing a reduction from 41 children to 17 children entering the youth justice system for the first time.

The Youth Justice Partnership has maintained a longstanding commitment to reducing the number of first-time entrants. This downward trend can be attributed to a range of targeted initiatives, including:

- **The success of preventative programmes**, such as *Turnaround*, which provide early support to children at risk of entering the youth justice system.
- **The Intervention Clinic**, a weekly intelligence-led triage meeting with Police, enabling swifter decision-making and increasing diversion from formal youth justice outcomes.
- **A consistent Child First approach across the partnership**, including initiatives such as the Child-Centred Policing Team, which prioritise children’s welfare and proportional responses.
- **The use of Deferred Prosecutions and Cautions** for children who do not enter a plea, supporting diversion and preventing unnecessary criminalisation.

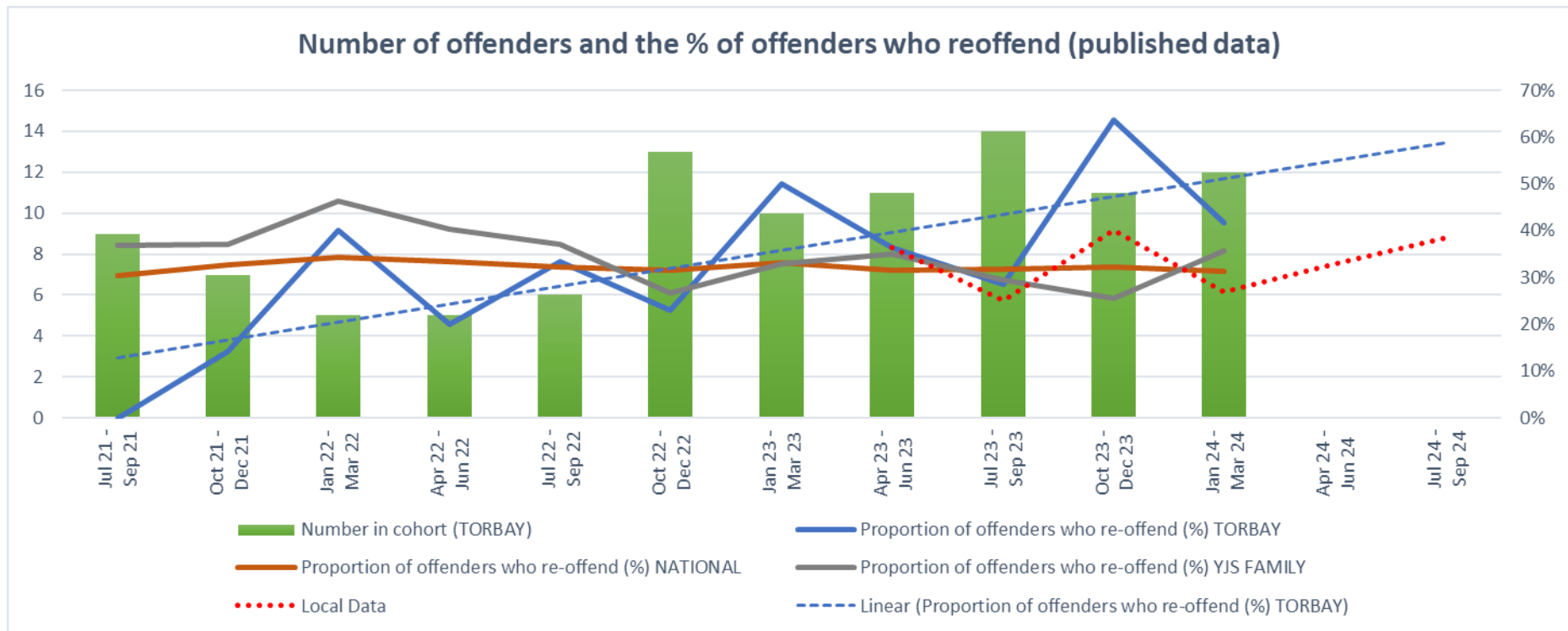


Binary reoffending rate

Reducing the number of children who reoffend is a primary key performance indicator (KPI) for youth justice services. The data for this KPI comes from the data summary published by the YJB and consists of all children who received a substantive outcome or were released from custody in that date range. The most recent cohort available is those children who received a substantive outcome between January and March 2024, tracked for 12 months.

The target is to remain below the family group, and this was achieved in only one of the previous four quarters. The increase in reoffending rates has coincided with the reduction in FTEs. Whilst many children are being diverted, those children who do enter the formal system often have multiple complex needs and this, plus the small cohort size in Torbay, is exhibited by the volatile reoffending rate.

The chart below shows the number of children in each three-month cohort for Torbay and the proportion of those children who reoffended compared against both the family group and national benchmarks.

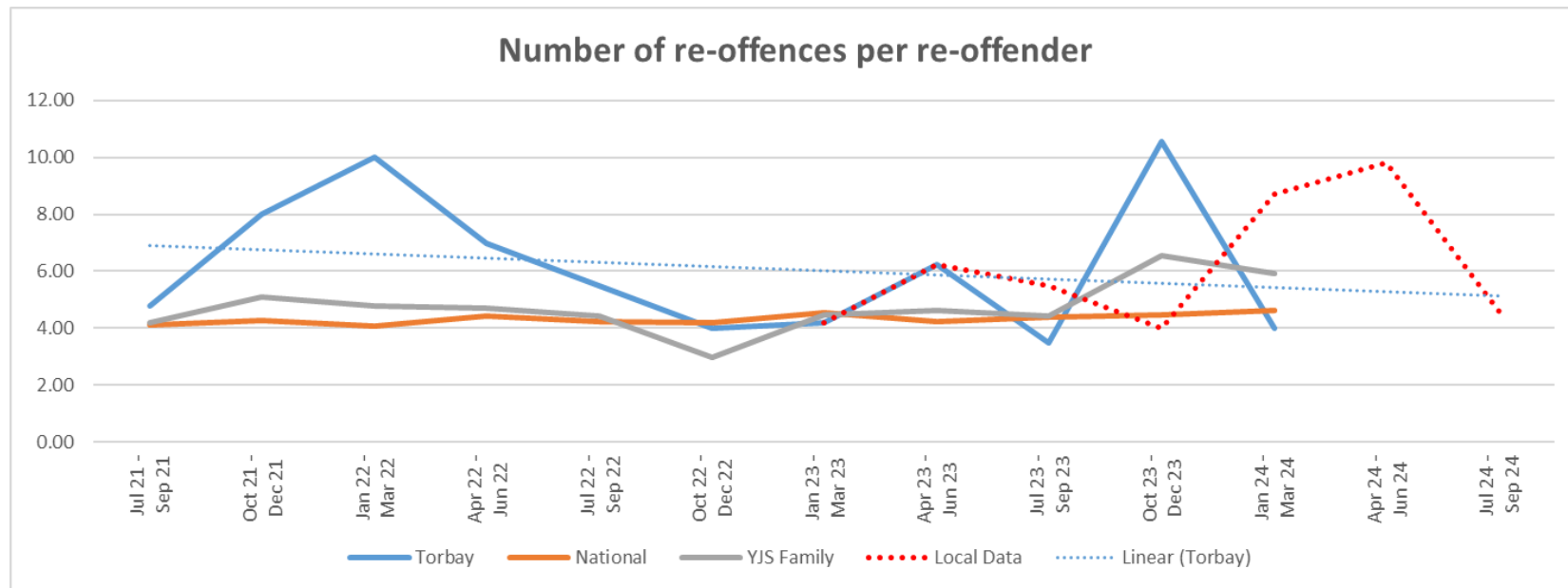


Frequency of reoffending

A further priority is reducing the number of offences committed by those children who go on to reoffend. The data for this indicator also comes from the data summary published by the YJB. The frequency rate of reoffending calculates how many re-offences are committed by each reoffender.

The target is to remain below the family group, and this was achieved in two of the previous four quarters. As shown by the chart below the number of reoffences committed by Torbay children is variable, and for some children they reoffend a significant number of times. This, and the increase in the binary rate, led to the Youth Justice Partnership launching a reoffending review group. This group looks in detail at each child who reoffended in a quarter. This highlighted some common factors:

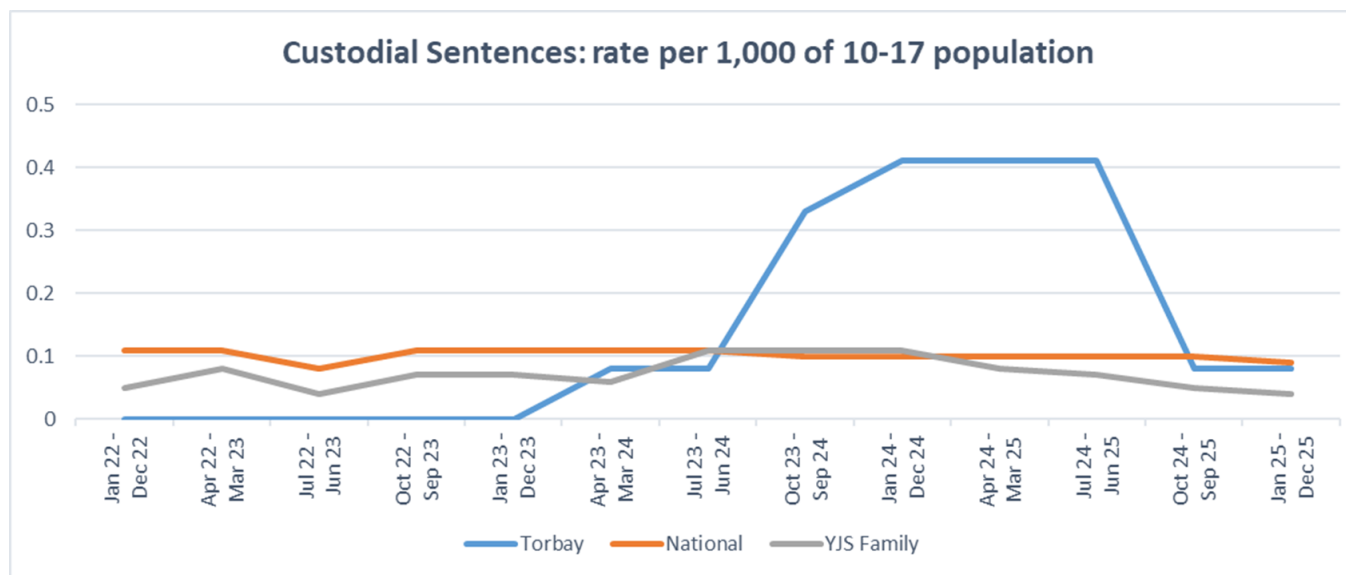
- Significant barriers to accessing education
- Parenting capacity limits
- Exploitation and unmet basic needs



Use of custody

Reducing the number of children sentenced to custody is another primary KPI for Youth Justice Services.

This indicator uses case level data from the YJ Application Framework and is the number of custodial sentences in the period given to children with a local residence aged under 18 years on the date of their first hearing related to the outcome. This data is presented as a rate per 1,000 children in the 10 to 17 local general population.



Historically this has been an area of strong performance for Torbay YJS, with rates consistently below the family group and national averages. However, 2024 saw a significant increase in custodial sentences causing the rate to rise above those comparators.

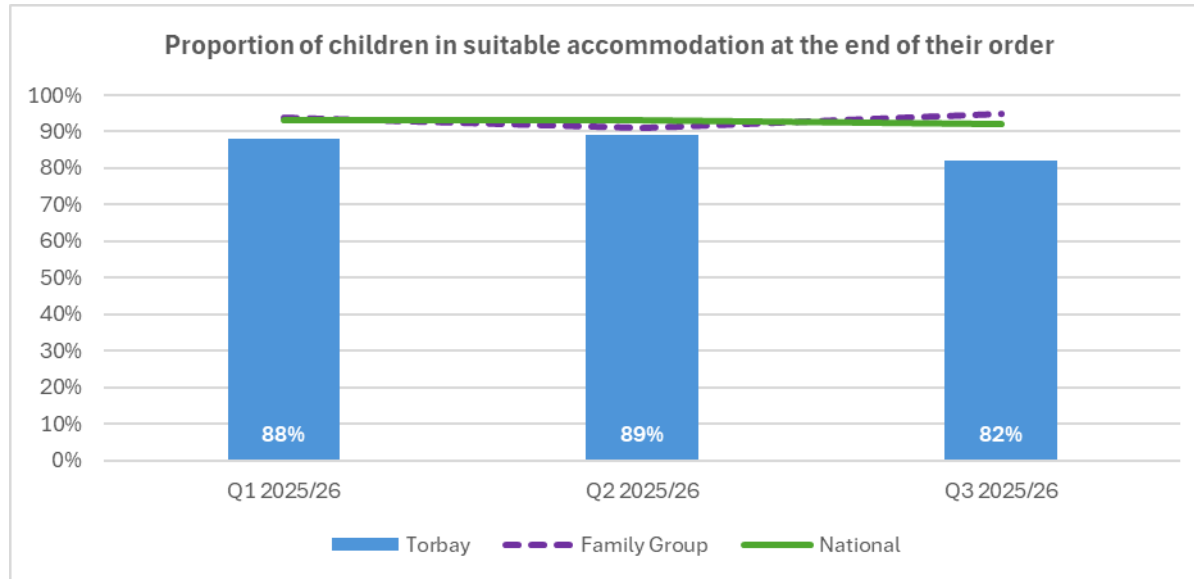
The rate improved into 2025 but is expected to remain above the target when the next round of data is released by the YJB following another custodial sentence in February 2026.

All 3 children sentenced to custody most recently have been known to Operation Hyphenate for burglaries to steal car keys and subsequently driving vehicles illegally. A multi-agency review has been led by the OPCC has been completed which has made a number of recommendations to partner agencies, these will be reviewed early in 2026. Additionally, a wider review of the Operation Hyphenate cohort has been commissioned by Torbay Safeguarding partnership and will take place in 2026 re concerns around adult exploitation of this group of children and how the partnership responds

KPI 1: Accommodation

Access to suitable accommodation is key in reducing the risk of reoffending.

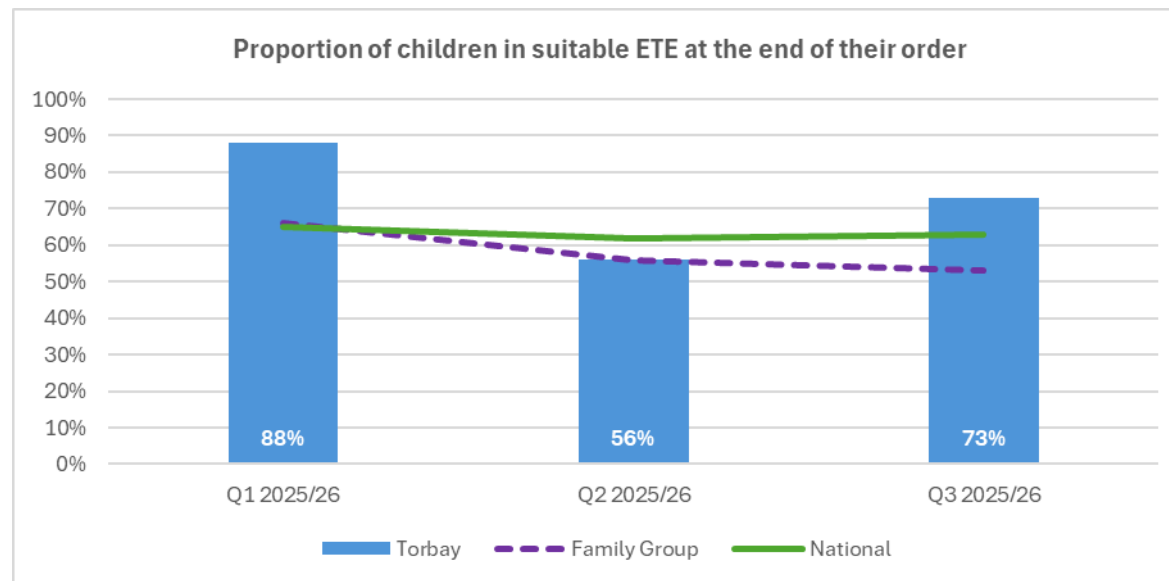
During 2025/26 the proportion of Torbay children in suitable accommodation at the end of their orders has remained constant at above 80%. However, this is below the Family Group and National benchmarks and represents a small number of children for whom their accommodation has not been assessed as meeting their needs. The YJS continue to work alongside partners to improve access to suitable accommodation for all children.



KPI 2: Education, Training and Employment (ETE)

There are well-established links between low educational engagement and attainment and an increased risk of childhood offending. Access to suitable education is critical in enabling a child's pro-social identity and success in life.

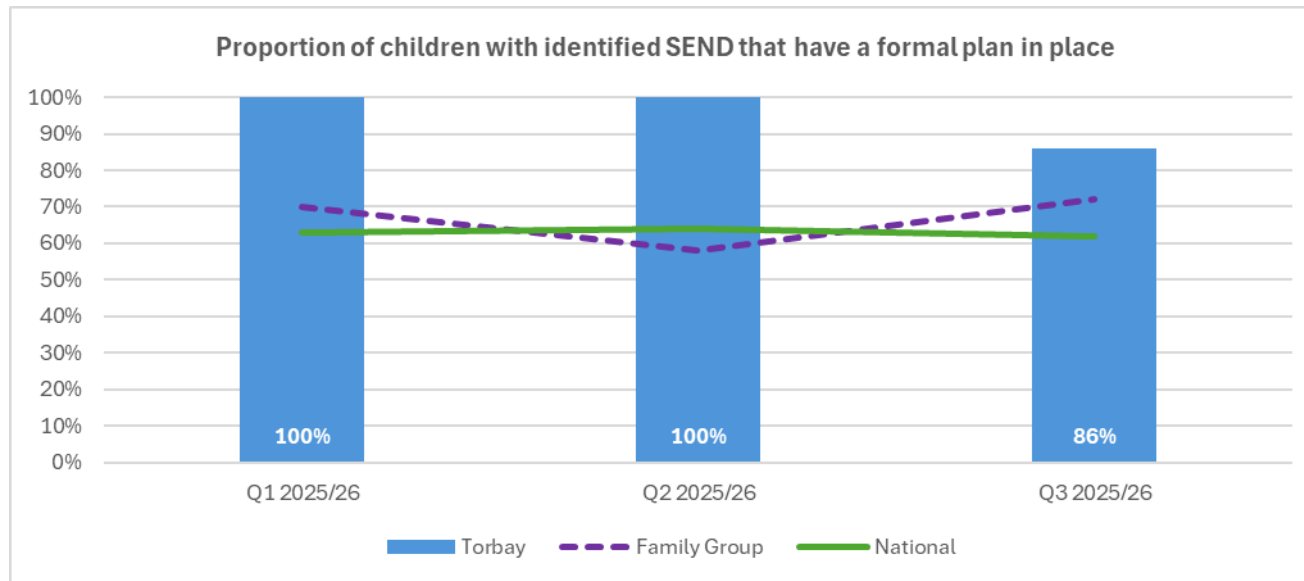
Performance against this indicator was strong in both Q1 and Q3, higher than both benchmark groups. However, the low proportion of children in suitable ETE at the end of their order in Q2 highlights the variability of need within the small groups of children Torbay YJS support. Even when ETE offers are suitable, data shows that attendance is often a barrier for Torbay YJS children with an average of 85% of school age children persistently absent throughout the year.



KPI 3: Special Education Needs and Disabilities

This KPI measures the proportion of children with identified Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) / Additional learning needs (ALN). Early identification and support for SEND/ALN are crucial for a child’s engagement and success in education. A lack of appropriate support can lead to disengagement from education, which is a known risk factor for reoffending.

Data for 2025/26 shows that the percentage of children with SEND with a formal plan in place to be consistently higher than comparators.

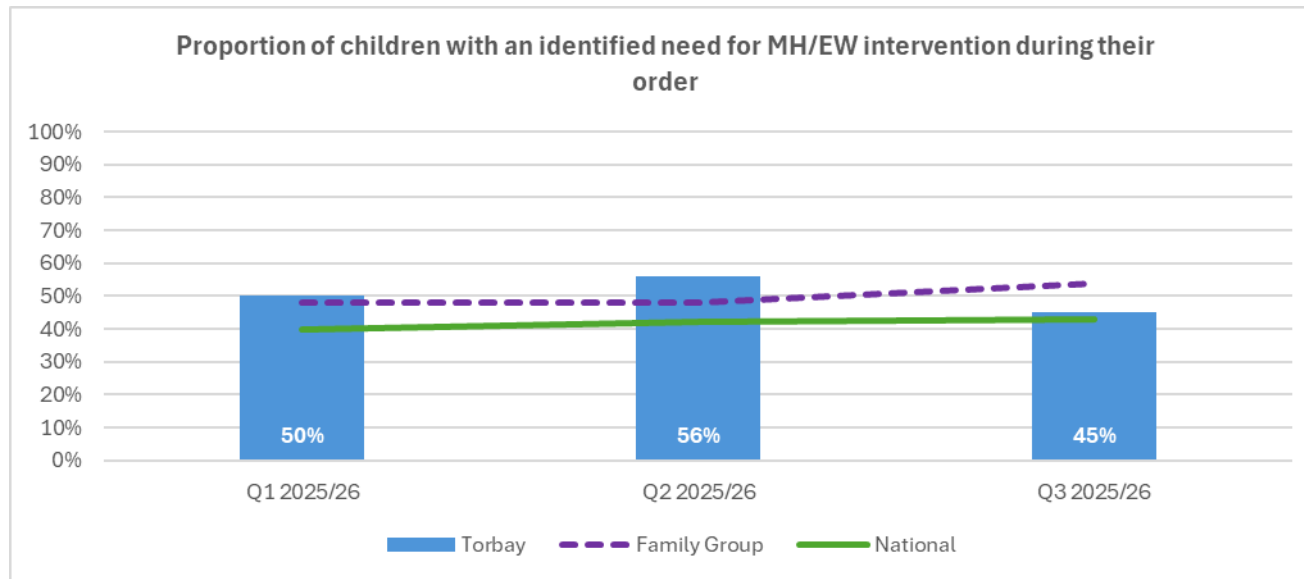


KPI 4: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

This KPI measures the proportion of children identified as having a mental health or emotional wellbeing need. Children in the youth justice system experience significantly higher rates of mental health challenges compared to their peers in the general population.

Mental health and emotional wellbeing screening is offered to all children as part of the assessment process with referrals made to the dedicated in-house CAMHS Practitioner when a possible need is identified.

The proportion of Torbay children with an identified need for mental health or emotional wellbeing was above the national average for each quarter, and above the family group in all but quarter 3. This reflects a cohort of children with complex and overlapping challenges.

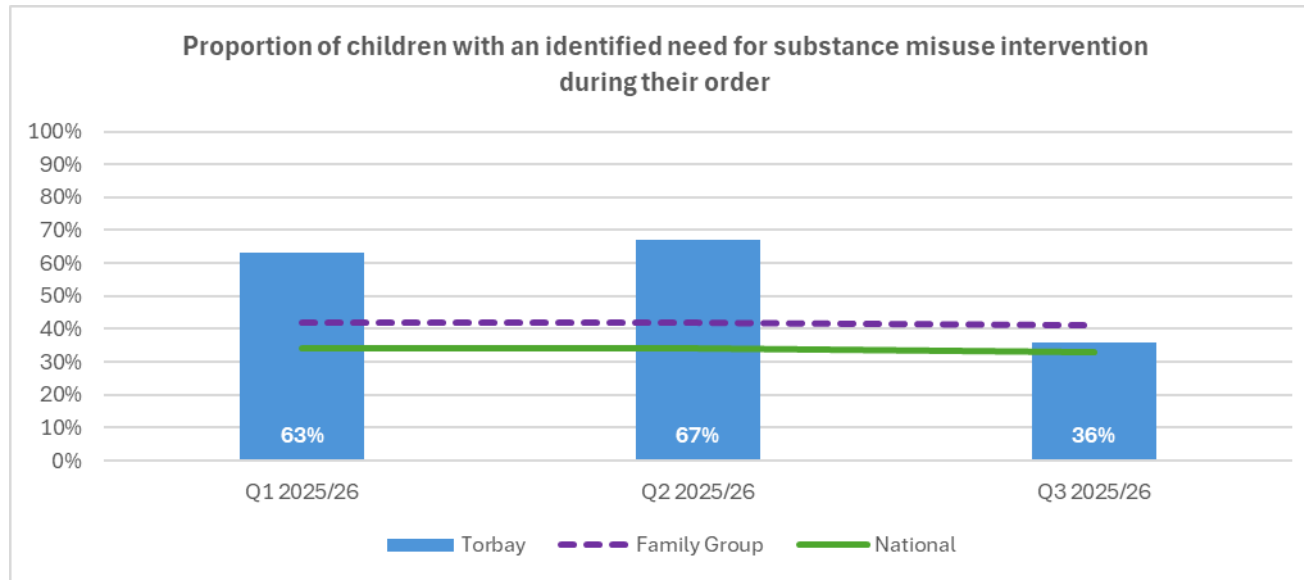


KPI 5: Substance misuse

This KPI measures the proportion of children identified as having a substance misuse need. Children in the youth justice system are particularly vulnerable to substance misuse.

Substance misuse screening is offered to all children as part of the assessment process with referrals made to the Torbay Youth Hub’s **Young Person's Drug and Alcohol Service** when a possible need is identified.

The proportion of Torbay children with an identified substance misuse need was above the national average for each quarter and often significantly so. The higher-than-average prevalence of substance misuse among children locally is reflective of a cohort presenting with increasingly complex and overlapping needs.

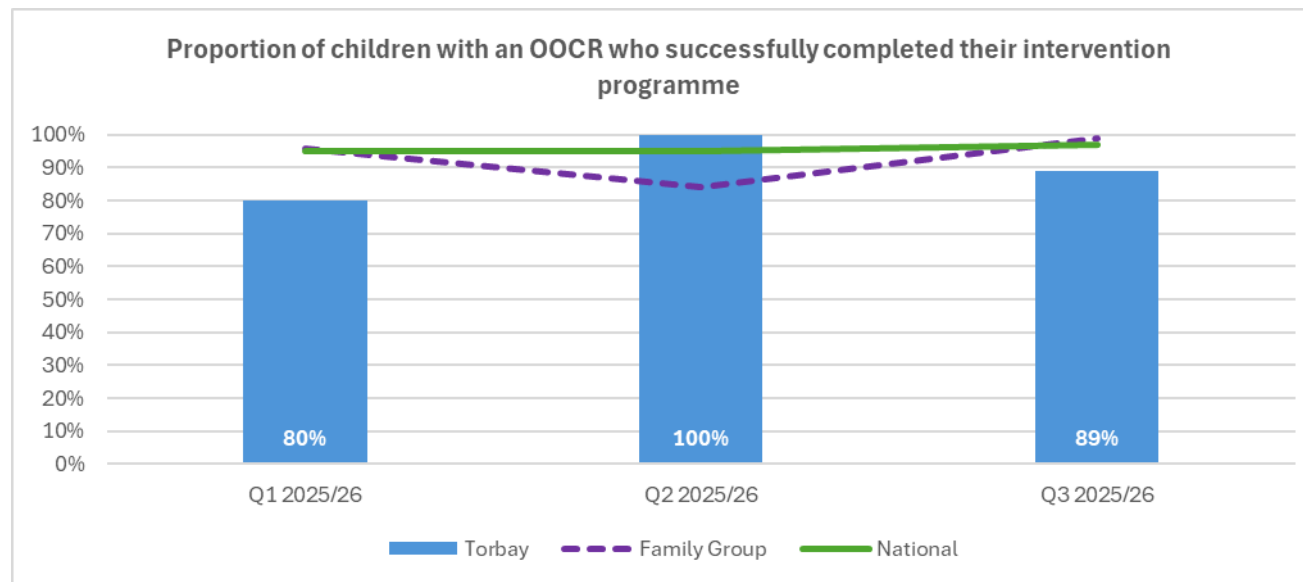


KPI 6: Out-of-court resolutions

This KPI measures the proportion of children receiving out-of-court resolutions (OOCRs) and their completion rates.

With an increasing number of cases managed through OOCRs, it is essential to ensure that assigned interventions are completed and that children achieve positive outcomes.

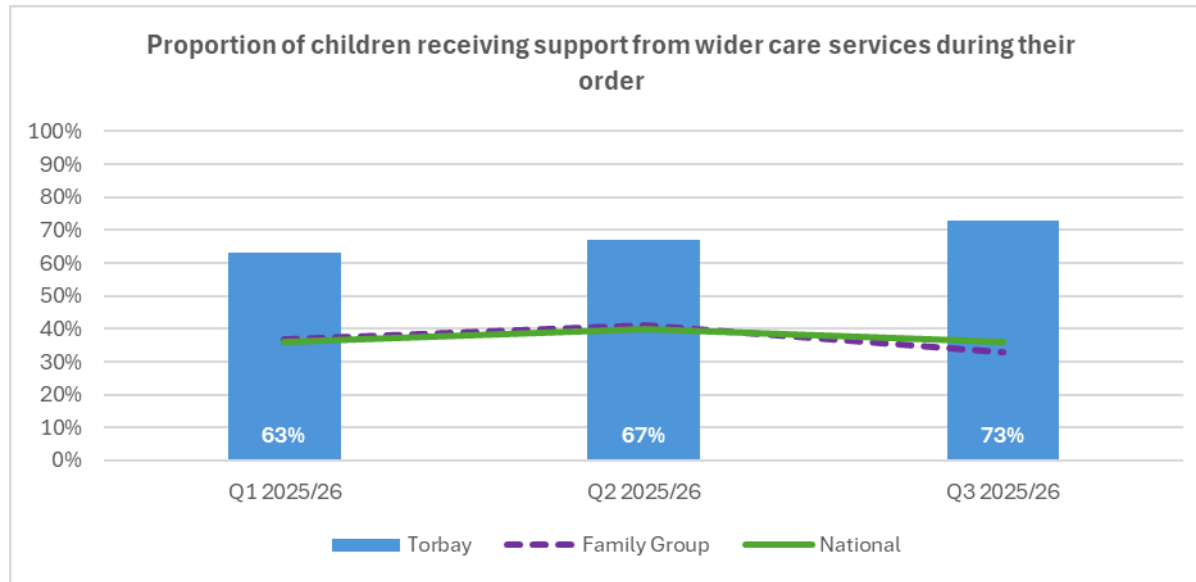
A high proportion of OOCRs are completed successfully; however, the small cohort size in Torbay leads to some variability in percentages. In Q1, 4 of 5 were successful; in Q2, 3 of 3; and in Q3, 8 of 9.



KPI 7: Wider Services

This KPI measures the proportion of children receiving support from wider care services during their order. Effective multi-agency working is essential to reducing offending and reoffending.

A significantly higher proportion of local children are supported by wider care services than both the family and national averages. This proportion has increased quarter on quarter.



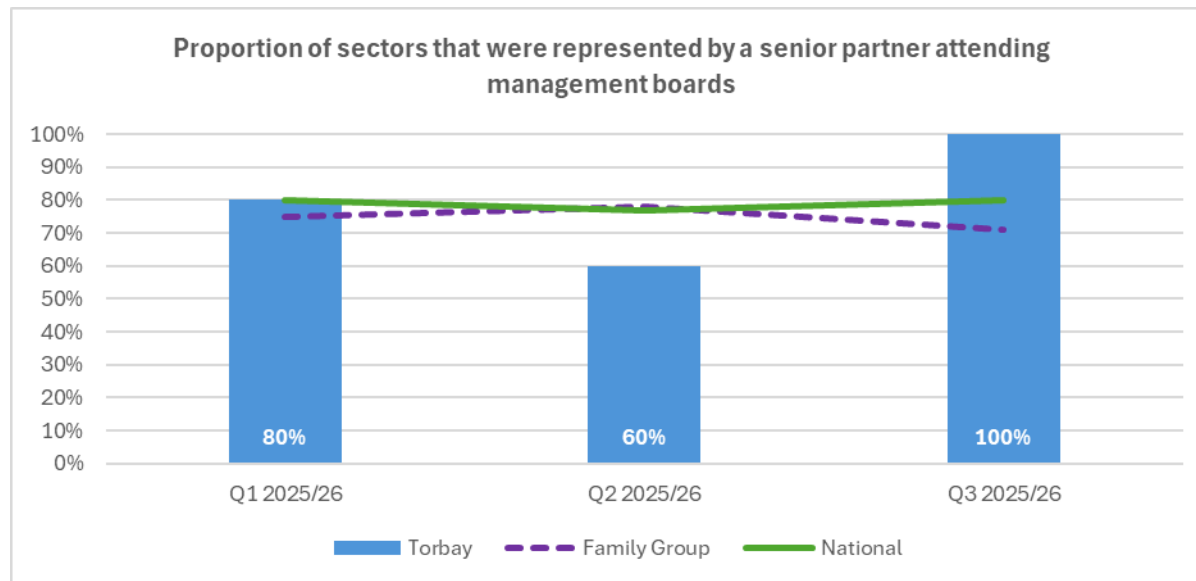
KPI 8: Management board attendance

This KPI measures the total number of sectors (out of five) that were represented by a senior partner attending YJS Management Boards.

YJS Responsibilities in Management Board Attendance:

- MBs are required to meet quarterly in line with the grant's Terms and Conditions. Torbay aims to meet 6 times a year this cannot be reflected the YJB KPI because of the counting rules but practically this means there is increased oversight and engagement with the service
- Each MB should have clear, up-to-date terms of reference, a strong understanding of its accountability, and a proactive approach to driving change.
- It is essential that YJSs are represented at MBs by strong leadership and consistent senior-level attendance.

Torbay's management board attendance from senior partners was above or equal to the benchmarks in two of the three quarters. In Q1 and Q2 a delegated representative was in attendance ensuring all sectors were represented each quarter.



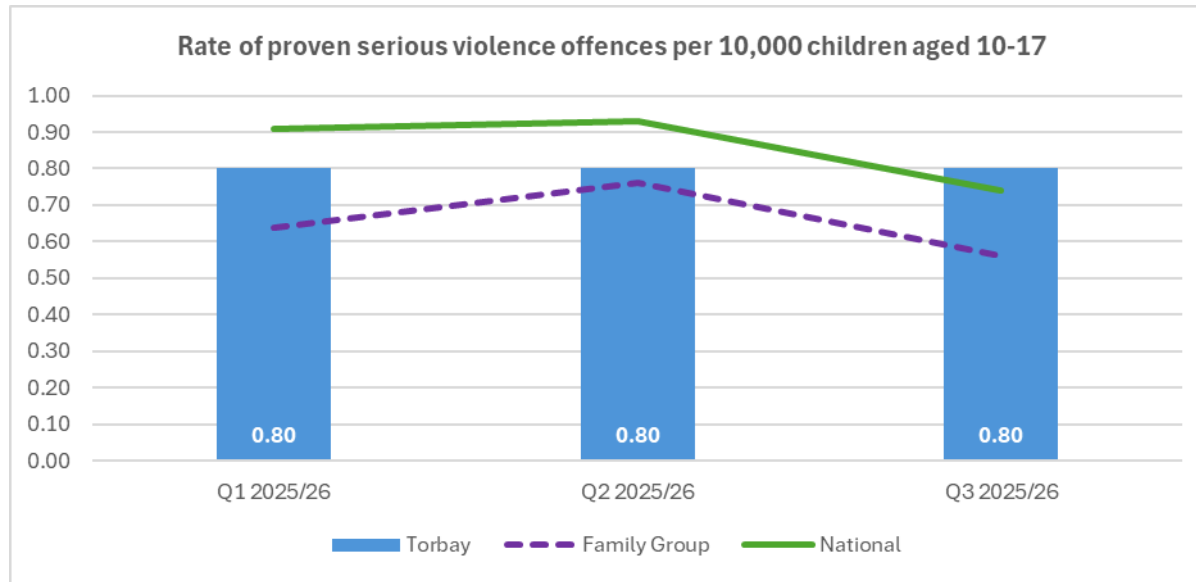
KPI 9: Serious violence

This KPI measures the rate of proven serious violence offences per 10,000 children aged 10-17, based on the number of children cautioned or convicted for these offences.

YJSs should work with the police, education, and health partners to ensure that children at risk of, or who have committed serious violence, receive the appropriate level of support for their needs.

YJSs should work with appropriate partners to prevent and reduce serious violence as part of their local strategy to implement the Serious Violence Duty.

The rate of 0.80 per 10,000 children aged 10-17 shown below is equivalent to one proven serious violence offence per quarter (2 * Robbery, 1 * Threats to kill). To achieve a rate below the family group Torbay needs to aspire to zero serious violence offences in the period.



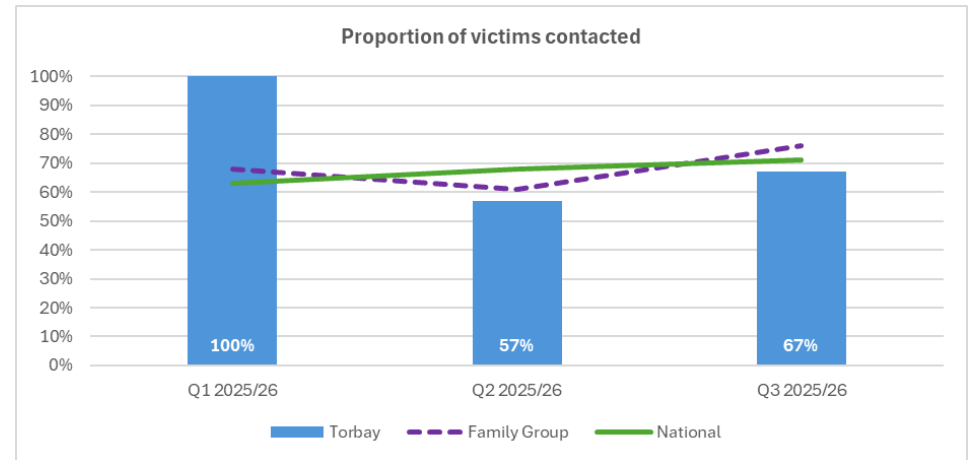
KPI 10: Victims

This KPI measures the number of victims of youth crime, and their level of engagement with Restorative Justice (RJ), as well as the support and information they receive about their case.

YJSs have a statutory duty to provide information and support to victims as set out in the Victims' Code. YJSs need to ensure compliance with the Victims' Code to protect the rights of victims.

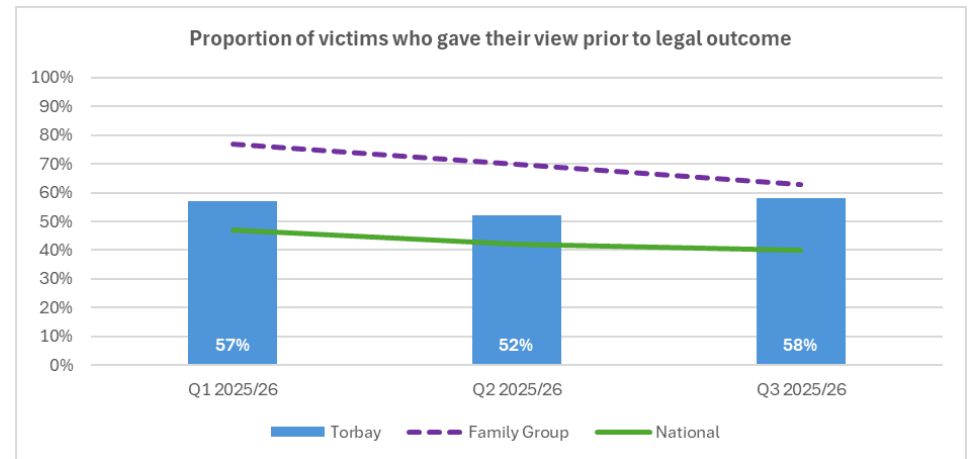
Proportion of victims contacted

The proportion of victims contacted by the YJS is variable across the three quarters. This is highlighted by all victims being contacted in Q1 but then dropping off into Q2. As part of the recent victim audit Torbay YJS is closely monitoring all recording on the case management system to ensure that is not under reported as we suspect the actual rate is much higher than this.



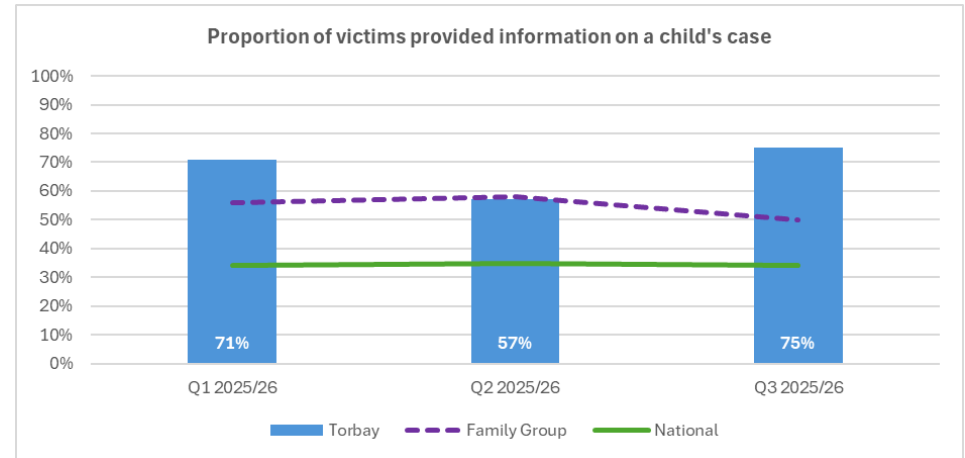
Proportion of victims who gave their view prior to legal outcome

The proportion of victims providing their views prior to the legal outcome in Torbay is consistently above the national average but below the Family Group.



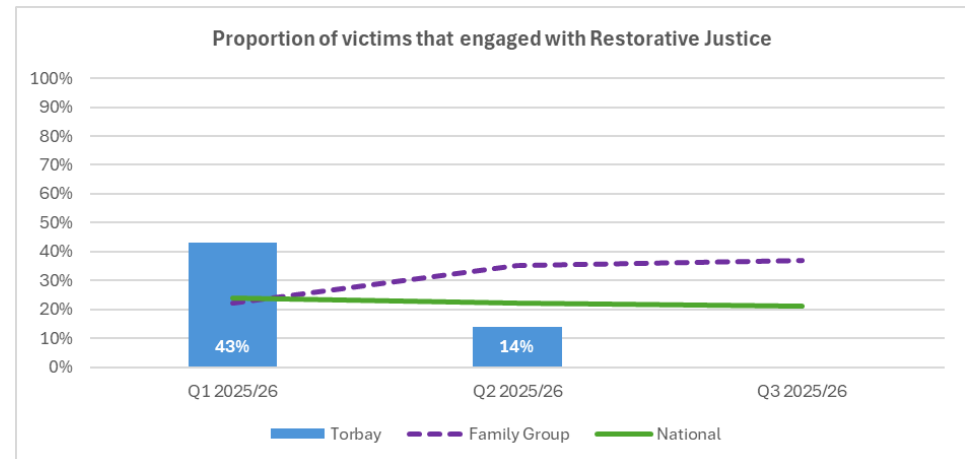
Proportion of victims provided information on a child's case

Torbay consistently performs above both the Family Group and national averages in providing victims with information on a child's case.



Proportion of victims that engaged with Restorative Justice

The proportion of victims engaging with Restorative Justice in Torbay has declined across the year (43% in Q1, 14% in Q2, and 0% in Q3), falling below both Family Group and national levels by Q3.



5. Challenges, Risks and Issues

The service has identified the following challenges that it needs to take action to ensure they don't impact on service delivery to children. A risk register has been created with actions and mitigations identified to address these circumstances.

- i) **First Time Entrants** – The service saw a significant increase in First Time Entrants (FTE) in 2023 and because the nature of the KPI (a rolling year) this adversely affected our performance until the end of 2024. Through significant focus and work in this area the service has significantly reduced the number of in FTE's 2025 but we remain just above the family group and national rates. To monitor performance this area the service holds quarterly reviews of all FTEs to check if all options for diversion we tried and provide feedback to workers and decision makers.
- ii) **Volatile Re offending rates** – due to our low numbers of children our rates of reoffending remain very volatile going from best in family group to worst. We will seek to do greater analysis of our most frequent offenders who have the most impact on these rates to see what else we can do or do differently to address these rates. This will be linked not the work within education to keep children in education.
- iii) **High rates of education suspension and exclusion** - Torbay has some of the highest rates of suspension and exclusion from school in the country. For children open to the youth justice system this is particularly true (77% of children worked with during 2025/26 had experienced one or more fixed exclusion and 21% had been permanently excluded from school), this coupled with low levels of attendance of children know to YJS means that they are not only receiving very limited education but are also not being seen or supervised through the school day. It is well evidenced that attendance at school is a major safeguarding factor as well as the positive effect on future life chances and success. Torbay YJS Board and staff team have identified this area as one we all need to seek to improve and both strategic and operational level. Torbay Education have delivered a number of pilots in local schools which have proved effective and the YJS will link with them to focus on the YJS cohort in the year ahead (see Improvement plan)
- iv) **Budget no Inflation increase** - The MOJ / YJB has confirmed the grant allocation for 2026-29 but it does not include any inflation uplift for the whole 3 years. The OPCC have confirmed their grant to YJS up until 2028, when they will be disbanded, as the same as last year again with no inflation increase. As over 90% of the YJS budget is spent on staffing it is predicated that due to salary inflation increase predicted at 3% per year we will have a budget deficit of £69,000 over the next 3 years.
- v) **Suitable available Childcare Placements and provision** - A few children under local authority care are placed in children's homes or other provisions. Last year, a very small number of children had to be placed in unregistered accommodation due to the national sufficiency challenges. At times this has resulted in the need for children to be moved to alternative placements away from Torbay, resulting in a number of caretaking arrangements with external youth justice services. The local authority does not commission either PACE or Remand beds and there is also a national

and local shortage of placements which makes this practically impossible and if beds were ‘held vacant’ it would only increase the pressure on the care system. Children's Services believe that a child centred approach should be maintained, and children should return home unless the offence is severe enough to warrant police custody until they appear in court.

The Youth Justice Plan for the year ahead:

6. Child First

Torbay Youth Justice Service (TYJS) supports the Youth Justice Board's (YJB) vision of a ‘Child First’ youth justice system, which they define as a system where all services: -

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

The Child First approach is a priority in this plan as evidence supports this as the best approach to achieve better child outcomes. Much of this is explored in the research by Loughborough University alongside UKRI, Child First Justice – the research evidence base. The summary report is [here](#).

Torbay YJS has significantly improved its feedback mechanisms for children, parents and victims, we are also reviewing how Referral Order Panels can be more Child First and this will be led and academically reviewed by a local University. Children have also stated that they want more things to do and the service ran a pilot Summer Activity programme in 2025 with funding from Serious Violence Fund and Holiday Activity and Food fund (HAF) we hope to run a similar programme in 2026 if we can access further funding.

Parent Feedback

‘I got a lot of support and group leader Jade did great, what was the best thing about the parenting group ‘knowing I wasn't alone’

7. Voice of the Child

Torbay Youth Justice Service gathers feedback from children in a variety of different ways including: -

- Informal Feedback recorded by workers and collated.
- Self-Assessment Questionnaires (SAQ) are completed by the child and separately by their parent or carer at the start, review and the end of orders. These are used to gather data to help inform assessment, and the development of co-created intervention plan.
- User Feedback Surveys – these are more general feedback forms to gather data about the child’s (as well as the parent or carer and the victim) overall perception of the quality of the service they received including things such as timeliness, location of delivery and did it make a difference.
- Complaints – the service has received no complaints this year.

All of our feedback forms are now available electronically which has increased accessibility, confidentiality and increased the ease of data analysis from the current paper only format. We now are developing a statistically reliable range of data which is being analysed by the service management team, feedback to staff team and reported to the Service Boards alongside any improvement or change activity that is required.

Feedback is reviewed quarterly and information from feedback is used to develop practice in the service. A participation group has been established to have an opportunity for young people to review any changes in practice in the team and to provide support and insight in terms of any wider changes to the service. This group are also tasked to represent the wider community in respect of highlighting the impact of youth crime and what might help to reduce it.

Young person’s satisfaction survey:

Number of responses

- 2024/25 (26) vs 2025/26 (18)

Overall Experience

Children continue to report **very high levels of satisfaction** with Youth Justice Service support.

- 94.4% of respondents in 2025/26 rated their overall support as Good or Excellent, an increase from 84.6% in 2024/25.
- While “Excellent” ratings reduced slightly, there was **a clear shift away from ‘Okay’ responses towards ‘Good’**, showing more consistent positive experiences.

Relationships & Practice Quality

- Respect remains exceptionally high (over **83% ‘Excellent’** in both years).

- Significant improvement in children feeling **trusted, understood, and known**, with “Excellent” ratings for *being understood* rising to **77.8%**.
- Qualitative feedback consistently highlights **positive relationships with named workers**, trust, and feeling listened to.

Communication & Responsiveness

- Satisfaction with **initial contact times** decreased **85% to 72%** (Excellent/Good ratings)
- Perceptions of responsiveness from workers improved substantially:
 - “Excellent” ratings for response times increased from **42% to 61%**
 - This suggests improved communication, accessibility, or clearer expectations.

Safety & Environment

- Safety remains a key strength, with nearly **9 in 10 young people feeling safe**.
- Despite a shift towards community-based and public-space meetings, **feelings of safety and ease improved overall**.
- Slight reduction in “Excellent” confidentiality scores suggests privacy in non-office settings should remain a practice focus, particularly as **two children rated confidentiality at home as “Poor.”**

Participation & Planning

- Fewer young people rated planning processes as “Excellent” (62% to 33%), although **over 83%** still rated this area Good or Excellent.

Access to Wider Support

- Most young people said they received all the help they needed.
- Housing remains the most common unmet need across both years.

Overall Summary

The Youth Justice Service continues to deliver high-quality, relationship-based practice. Improvements in trust, responsiveness, and understanding offset small declines in structured areas such as planning and initial contact times.

Overall satisfaction is strong, stable, and improving.

Parent/Carer satisfaction survey

Number of responses

- 2024/25 (31) vs 2025/26 (13)

Overall Experience

Parent and carer feedback demonstrates exceptionally high and improving satisfaction with the Youth Justice Service.

- In 2025/26, 100% of parents and carers rated the overall help and support they received as Good or Excellent, compared with 93.5% in 2024/25.
- The proportion rating support as **Excellent** increased markedly year on year, indicating a strengthening overall experience.

Relationships, Trust and Respect

Relationships between workers and families are a significant strength of practice.

- In 2025/26, all respondents (100%) reported that they were treated with respect, trusted the Youth Justice Service worker, and felt that the worker took time to understand their child.
- Qualitative feedback consistently highlights workers' ability to build rapport, communicate honestly, and engage both parents and children effectively.

Communication and Responsiveness

Communication with parents and carers is **strong and improving**.

- Parents reporting that next steps were explained clearly increased from **80.6% 'Excellent'** in 2024/25 to **100% 'Excellent'** in 2025/26.
- Perceptions of timely responses to calls and messages also improved, this follows a small number of historic comments noting difficulties contacting services early in involvement.

Safety, Comfort and Practical Arrangements

Parents and carers report high levels of safety and comfort when engaging with the service.

- The proportion feeling safe and at ease during meetings rose to **100% Good or Excellent in 2025/26**.
- Home remains the most common meeting location, supporting accessibility and engagement.
- Confidentiality and ease of access both improved year on year.

Access to Wider and Specialist Support

- Confidence in accessing other services, including education, health, housing, and emergency services, improved significantly in 2025/26.
- Where unmet need was identified, this related primarily to wider system pressures (e.g. mental health or housing provision) rather than Youth Justice Service practice.

Supporting Parents to Support Their Child

There has been a notable improvement in how supported parents feel to help their child.

- Large year-on-year increases were seen in parents feeling supported to:
 - Explore ways to support their child
 - Understand child exploitation risks
 - Improve parent-child relationships
- Reduced “Not Applicable” responses in 2025/26 suggest support is more targeted and relevant.

Parenting Worker Support

- Uptake of Parenting Worker support increased from **32.3% (2024/25)** to **53.8% (2025/26)**.
- Feedback from those receiving this support is **overwhelmingly positive**, particularly in relation to understanding family circumstances and providing non-judgemental support.

Overall Summary

- Parent and carer **satisfaction is very high** and improving
- Relationship-based practice is a clear strength
- Improvements are evident across **communication, trust, safety, and empowerment**
- **Areas for development** relate mainly to timing of intervention and external service availability, not service quality

Victim satisfaction survey

Number of responses

- 2024/25 (14) vs 2025/26 (7)

Overall Experience

Victim feedback shows **generally positive experiences of Youth Justice Service support**, with some more polarised views in 2025/26, driven by a small number of complex cases.

- In **2024/25**, **85.7%** of victims rated the overall service as Good or Excellent.
- In **2025/26**, this reduced to **71.4%**, reflecting a small number of victims expressing dissatisfaction with outcomes rather than staff support.
- The proportion rating the service as Excellent increased, indicating that experiences were either very positive or, in a small number of cases, significantly negative.

Relationships, Trust and Respect

Relationships with Youth Justice Service staff remain a **clear and consistent strength**.

- Across both years, the vast majority of victims felt **treated with respect and able to trust their worker**.
- Even where victims disagreed with outcomes, feedback frequently acknowledged **professionalism, empathy, and supportive communication** from staff.

Feeling Supported and Listened To

- Most victims reported feeling **supported and listened to throughout their involvement**.
- Lower scores in 2025/26 are closely linked to **frustration with decision-making, timescales, or outcomes**, rather than the quality of interaction with workers.

Communication and Responsiveness

- Communication remains a **key strength**, with some mixed trends year on year.
- Responsiveness to calls and messages improved in 2025/26, with a higher proportion rating this as Excellent.
- Understanding of “what would happen next” dipped slightly, particularly in ongoing or unresolved cases, highlighting the importance of managing expectations where outcomes are delayed.

Safety, Accessibility and Meeting Arrangements

- Victims generally report **positive experiences of meeting arrangements**.
- Perceptions of feeling **safe and at ease improved year on year**.
- Accessibility of meetings also improved, with **remote contact** continuing to be an effective and preferred option for many victims.
- Confidentiality remained consistently strong across both years.

Restorative Justice (RJ)

Restorative Justice is viewed positively where it is appropriate and chosen.

- **All victims who took part in RJ reported that it was helpful.**
- In 2025/26, **all victims were offered the opportunity** to communicate with the person who caused harm.
- Lower participation rates reflect **choice, readiness, and suitability**, rather than lack of offer.

Perceptions of Justice Outcomes

This is the **most challenging and sensitive area** of feedback.

- Just over half of victims in 2024/25 felt justice was served; this reduced in 2025/26.
- Dissatisfaction was linked to:
 - Case outcomes
 - Delays in proceedings
 - Perceived lack of proportionality
- Importantly, **negative views of justice outcomes did not usually translate into negative views of Youth Justice Service staff**, who were often praised even in critical responses.

Overall summary

- Victims consistently experience **respectful, supportive, and professional practice**
- Communication and responsiveness are **strong and improving**
- Restorative Justice is **highly valued by those who participate**
- More negative feedback reflects **system outcomes and delays** (particularly related to initial contact), not staff conduct

- Small sample sizes mean individual cases significantly affect year-on-year trends, important to **boost responses to a more representative sample size.**

Complaints

There have been no complaints received in 2025-26

Summary and next steps

Feedback from children is generally very positive about their experience of the youth justice service. This is triangulated between the feedback mechanisms and informal feedback received by family. It may be that the more feedback that the Youth Justice Service receive that this feedback leads to more change as the range and depth of information increases. The Youth Justice Service aims to receive feedback from all young people completing their Court Orders.

The Victim Focus group was established in 2024 and one of the initiatives to come from it was to invite a local police inspector to the group to talk about police process, support and communication with victims. Additionally, the Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez attended at the request of one of the victims to talk about her specific case which has led to a multi-agency review of the case.

Victim feedback is generally positive however some victims do not feel that justice that was served i.e. that the incident was resolved appropriately, we have revised the survey question to ask for more details about why they justice has not been served and will report back to the board when we have the results.

8. Resources and Services

Torbay Youth Justice Service Budget is a 'pooled' budget held by Torbay Council on behalf of the Board and the Strategic Partners and funding bodies. The annual budget is approved by the Strategic Board for the year ahead and expenditure is against the budget is reviewed six times a year at each Board meeting. Operational day to day expenditure is approved by the Head of Service under the financial regulations of Torbay Council and in line with any criteria for which the funding is given. All funding is used for the primary roles of the Youth Justice Service i.e., prevent offending and re offending, the delivery of our Improvement Plan and achieving the [Key Performance Indicators](#) laid out in this plan.

The two largest funders are Torbay Council and the Youth Justice Board (YJB) each giving approximately one third of the overall budget with the final third made up of other partnership contributions and funding bodies for specific pieces of work. Over 95% of the budget is spent on staffing who are our key resource for delivery to children, with the remaining 5% spent on resources, facilities and consumables. Additional to the funding from statutory partners

the service receives 'contributions in kind' from organisations who 'second' staff to the service these include: - Children and Family Health Devon, Devon and Cornwall Police, and the Probation Service. See [Appendix 2](#) for a more detailed breakdown of the budget.

9. Board Development

An induction programme for board members is delivered to all new members. Additionally, there are planned inputs at Strategic Management Board to update members on significant changes in local or national practice as well as inputs from external examples of best practice and development. In the last year Board members have both been part of and received briefings following Victim, FTE and Reoffending audits on the quality of the work of the service. In April 2026 at the combined 'Away Day' the Board received a number of updates and briefings about performance and national changes and activities to set the priorities for the service in the year ahead. Members of the board have also attended staff meetings and case planning in the last year to meet the staff and develop better understanding of the work of the service.

At each board meeting staff from the service attends to present either case studies of the work they do directly with children, parents, or victims so the boards or provide updates on aspects of operational level work.

10. Workforce Development

The service has had a stable staff team for a number of years with limited turnover which has enabled the development of an experienced and well-trained team. In 2026 the service will see a number of positive moves within the staff team as a number of people have been promoted, and others changed career paths so it will be good to have some new people in the team bringing new ideas and fresh perspectives. As stated elsewhere for the first time we combined the Board and staff Away days and did so in our new building which although not entirely open was finished enough to hold us for the day. There was very positive feedback from both the board and the staff team that it was great to do the review and planning together and to meet on a more social level to get to know each other.

- All staff working with children are trained in Restorative Justice 3-day course provided through Torbay Council.
- All case workers are trained in AIM3 (Assessment and Intervention of Harmful Sexual Behaviour).
- The service's Trauma Champion was also the Trauma Lead for the Southwest and has brought considerable knowledge and training to the staff team.
- Team Managers are trained by [NOTA](#) re: Autistic Children & People Displaying Problematic or Harmful Sexual Behaviour
- A further member of the team has signed up for the Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment for children tool training who will champion this in the team and complete train the trainer.
- 2 staff members have completed the Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate (YJEPC) and one has completed a Degree in Youth Justice in 2025.
- 3 staff have attended training on Child to Parent Violence.
- 4 staff have attended training on Pre-Sentence Report (PSR) writing.

- Staff access mandatory training through Torbay Council’s ‘iLearn’ online training provision which tracks inductions, mandatory training and required refreshers for all staff directly employed, seconded staff can also have accounts added or access training in their home organisation.
- [Appendix 3](#) is the timetable of training that took place last year and into 2024-25

11. Evidence-based practice and innovation

Child First

In 2025 Torbay YJS completed the YJB Child First Toolkit – this involves assessing ourselves against the performance and best practice guidance and producing a plan about how the service can improve. The service has largely completed the actions this will be reviewed early in 2026. Through links with the Community Protection lead on the YJS Board we did a presentation on Child First practice to the whole ASB and town marshals and subsequently they will also be completing the Toolkit for their service area in 2026.

One of the areas that has also been challenged by the Child First approach is Referral Orders and to this end we have made changes to how these operate which has led to an academic review by South Devon College University of the Referral Order Panel and process to make it more participative for children. This should be published in 2026.

Victim Work

In late 2025 Torbay YJS invited the three other YJS in Devon and Cornwall to take part in an audit of our victim work in Torbay alongside members of our Board and the staff team. In total we had eight auditors who reviewed the case work of 26 victims who had been in contact with the service against the new HMIP standards. There were many areas of good practice identified specifically: - high levels of engagement by victims, individualised support, timely response to meet victims needs and wishes and well evidenced. Areas for improvement were also identified including more contact with the child case worker to be evidenced, improvements in victim safety planning, and poor information re victim details (eg ages, ethnicity etc). An improvement action has been created and largely completed by March 2026. All involved reported that it was both professional useful in terms of helping Torbay review our victim work but also learn from each other about how we work and share best practice. This type of audit has now been carried out in Devon, and both Plymouth and Cornwall plan to do the same.

MACD

Multi Agency Case Discussion (MACD) – this is an aspect of the HMIP inspection regime which Torbay practised last year for 2 children known to the service and of which the learning was found useful not just in terms of inspection process but also in terms of reviewing the child’s case. The service repeated this in early 2026 and again was found to be useful process the reports will come before the next board meeting in May 2026 with recommendations for practice improvements across the partnership.

Trauma Recovery Module

The service has well established practice in using the Trauma Recovery Model (TRM) as a tool to help understand children's level of functioning and plan interventions based on this. All staff have been trained in the TRM approach. The service has a member of staff who is a 'Trauma Champion' to support the development of the nationally recognised (within youth justice services) Enhanced Case Management (ECM) approach. The Torbay Trauma Champion also shared a role leading the Trauma Champions across the Southwest indicating her high level of expertise.

Summer Activities

The Prevention service was reviewed in 2024 and evidence showed that 81% of children who received an intervention did not go on to offend and because of this success has been made permanent. In early 2025 the service started an initiative providing an 'Adventure Activity group' for children open to the service and which gave children the opportunity to try a range of positive activities and events that they will probably not had the chance to do previously. Engagement has been very positive and they were able to expand this during school holiday period through funding from the Serious Violence Fund and Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) funding. Due to the nature of the children we work with group numbers were small and the programme was tailored to them, it was deemed successful in terms of uptake by children and from the children and their parents' feedback. The service plans to provide this again in 2026 and is looking for funding

Parenting work

The service has a very active parenting worker who supports many of the parents of children open to the service and quite often a long time after the children have closed to us. To help manage numbers some work is delivered through group work using the [Who's in Charge](#) programme which is a 9 week programme for parent whose child is being abusive to them or is out of parental control. Feedback from parent sis very positive

Feedback from a Parent

Most helpful thing – 'changing my perspective which enabled me to make positive changes'.

12. Evaluation and Standards for Children

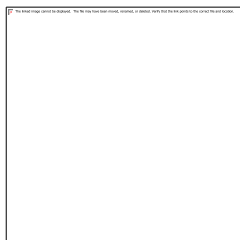
The service has carried out a high number of audits and quality assurance measures in the last these include: -

- a) **Multi Agency Case Discussions (MACD).** The service has carried out 4 MACD on children known to the service, these were carried out using the HMIP format that would be used in an actual inspection and were carried out to both practice the process prior to an inspection but they have been recognised as a very useful learning tool to reflect on our multiagency case management.

- b) **Victim Audit** – In November 2025 8 staff were involved in auditing the case records of 26 victims known to Torbay YJS against the new HMIP standards for victims. To increase our learning colleagues from the 3 other YJS’s in the Devon and Cornwall were invited to take part as well as members from the Torbay YJS Board resulting in representatives from all 4 taking part. This combined with 4 staff from Torbay YJS established 4 pairs who audited the 26 cases. This was the first audit of this type for all YJS’s in the area and all staff commented what a useful process it was for both Torbay staff but also for the external organisations to understand both Torbay processes and share their own practices. All 3 other YJS’s indicated that they would be doing something similar in their own service in the near future. An action plan was developed to address key learning and this should be completed in 2026.
- c) **Child Criminal Exploitation Multi Agency Case Audit (CCE MACA)**. Led by Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership (TSCP) 10 cases were audited, 9 of which were known to the Youth Justice. YJS produced its own Action Plan following the findings which is monitored by the Strategic Board.
- d) **CEO Deep Dive Audit (CEO DD)** – This audit was completed following previous audits that commenced after the last HMIP inspection of the service. Good progress in many areas was noted from previous audits and outstanding areas for improvements were noted and have been prioritised in the new action plan produced. All improvement activity has now been completed and the plan formally closed.
- e) **After Action Review C95** – This audit was completed following a murder by C95 a former looked after child who at the time of the murder was ‘relevant child’ meaning they were receiving support from children’s services and was previously known to the YJS. We are currently still waiting the final report to come from the TSCP.
- f) **After Action Review C103 (AAR C103)** – This audit has been completed of a specific case that took nearly 3 years of investigation before it was resolved just short of the child’s 18th birthday. The final report and action plan has been completed and all aspects have been closed and signed off by the TSCP Executive Board
- g) **Prevention Service Review** – In December 2023 the service completed a multi-agency review of the work and performance of the Prevention / Turnaround and made recommendations on improvement activity which will be put into place in early 2024. Subsequently
- f) **Case File Audits** We have increased the number and reporting of full case file audits and will be reporting to this to both boards in early 2026-27.
- h) **Accreditations**



In 2022 and again in 2025/26 the service achieved the prestigious Microlink Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Quality Mark for youth justice services with a Commendation for Child First practice, this required the service to audit current practice and address any gaps identified. Good practice within the service was recognised as part of the SEND inspection of Torbay.



Torbay Children's Services of which Torbay Youth Justice Service is a part, have been awarded Registered Restorative Status by the [Restorative Justice Council](#), the first Children Services in the UK. The Youth Justice Service was part of the audit of training, working practices and policies to achieve this status helped by our experience of working in Restorative Justice over a long period of time.

13. Priorities for the coming year

The full list of priorities are laid out in the [Service Development Plan](#)

- Being more Child First focused in all aspects of our service delivery.
- Ensuring children are accessing appropriate education or training provision suitable to their needs and abilities.
- Maintaining the reduction in the number of First Time Entrants so that the yearly rolling target reduces to below our statistical neighbours.
- Reduce the re offending rates of children open to the YJS
- Reduce criminal exploitation of children in Torbay by increasing their resilience and focusing on the adults who exploit them
- Increasing our focus and range of support for victims.

14. Service Development

The service has a comprehensive training plan for staff see [Appendix 3](#) to keep staff updated and refreshed re best practice in Youth Justice. Staff are also involved in audit work for the service last year we completed audits against the HMIP ETE Theme Inspection findings and against the Victim Code of Practice. We have also a very competent staff champions for both Restorative Practice and Trauma.

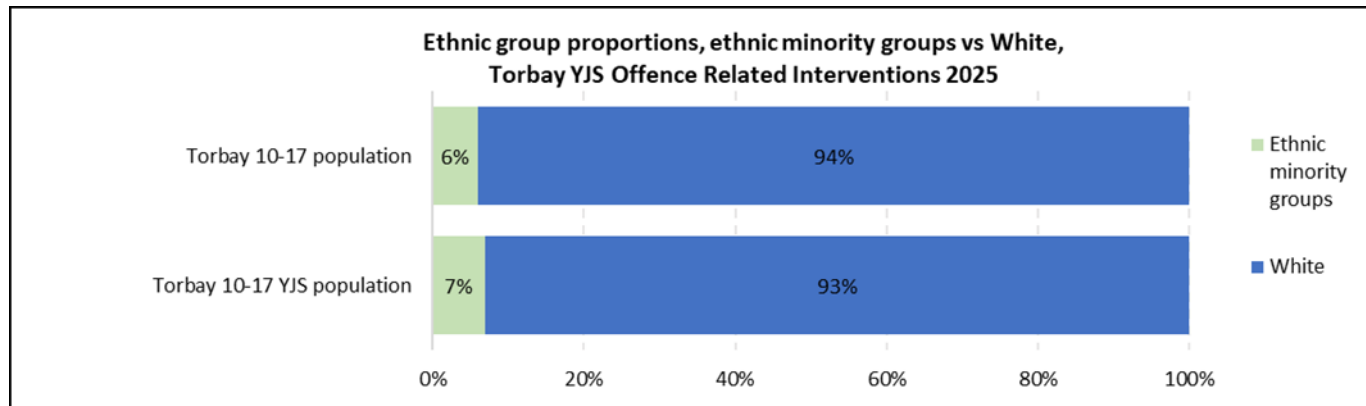
National Priority Areas

15. Children from groups which are over-represented.

Ethnic Disproportionality

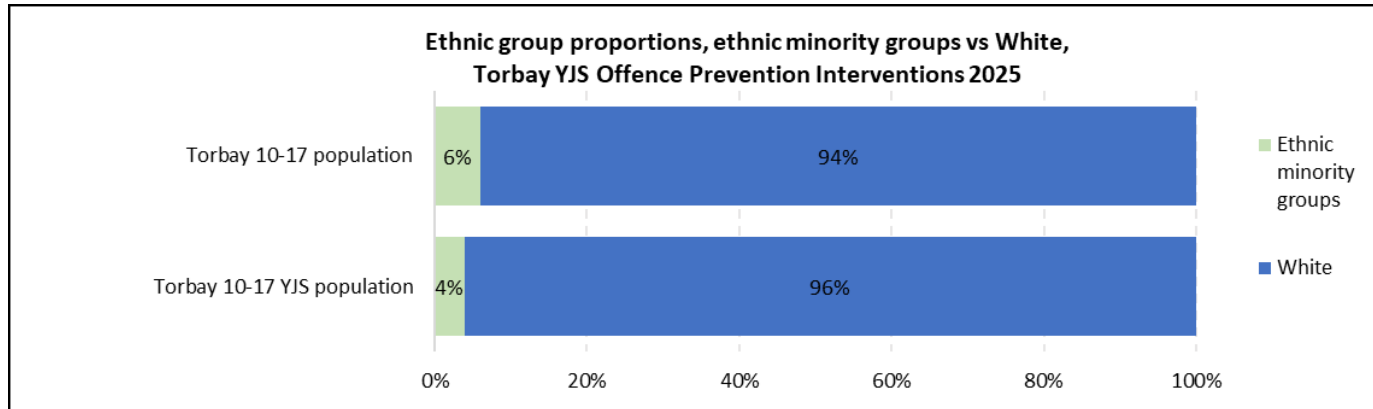
The charts below show a comparison of the ethnic composition of Torbay YJS population (all children worked with including prevention, diversionary and statutory interventions) with the local area 10-17 year old population (2021 census). Due to small numbers data has been aggregated for children from the Asian, Black, Mixed and Other ethnic groups into the ethnic minority group.

Offence related interventions:



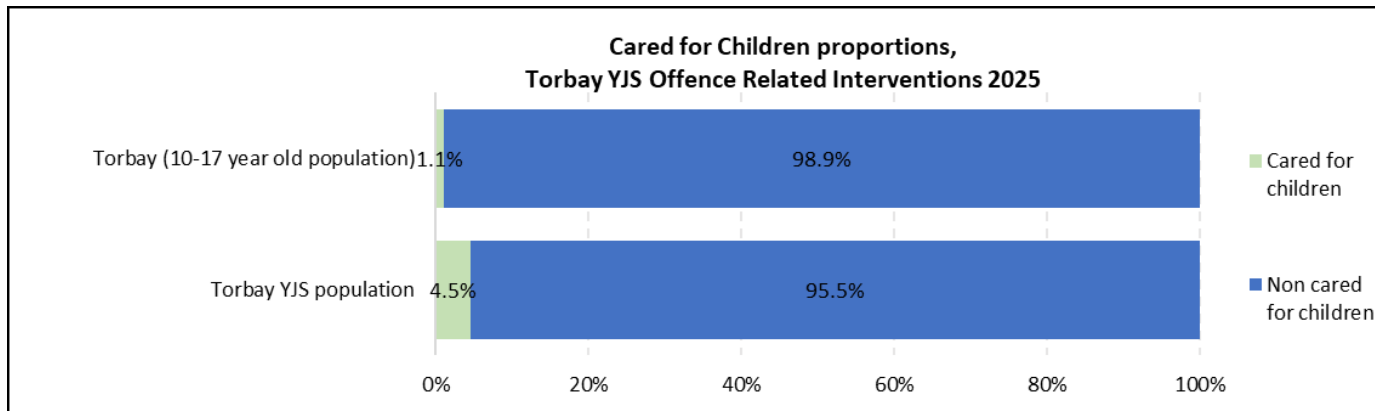
When comparing the YJS cohort to the wider population, there is no indication of disproportionality. Our cohort is composed of 6% ethnic minority group children and 94% White children, which closely aligns with the wider population makeup of 7% and 93% respectively. The small 1-percentage-point difference is not statistically meaningful and suggests that the representation of ethnic minority groups within our cohort reflects the broader population proportions.

Prevention and Turnaround interventions:



A comparison of the prevention cohort of children’s demographic composition, with that of the wider Torbay 10-17 year old population, indicates no evidence of disproportionality. The minimal variance, and small cohort size, is not statistically significant and suggests that the cohort is broadly reflective of the makeup of the wider population.

Comparison of proportion of cared for children between YJS population and local population.



Cared for children are overrepresented within the YJS. 4.5% of the children supported by the YJS were cared for, this compares to 1.2% of the local under 18 population. None of the children who were open on Prevention interventions were cared for children.

Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is the official measure of relative deprivation in England and is part of a suite of outputs that form the Indices of Deprivation (IoD). It follows an established methodological framework in broadly defining deprivation to encompass a wide range of an individual’s living conditions. People may be living in poverty if they lack the financial resources to meet their needs, whereas people can be regarded as deprived if they lack any kind of resources, not just income. (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2025). Areas are then ranked depending on their level of deprivation and grouped into deciles.

The table below shows the number of children living in each decile. Decile one being the most deprived and decile ten the least deprived.

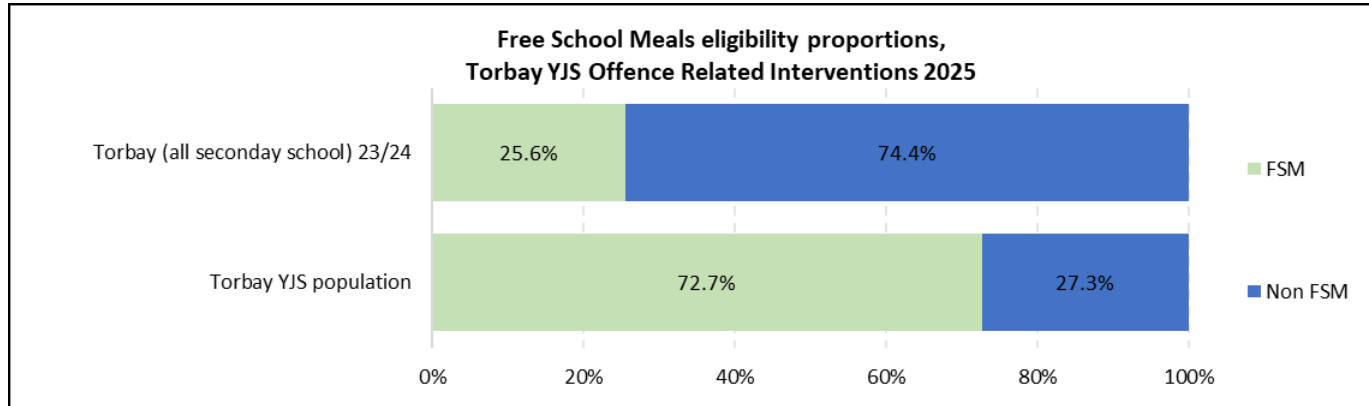
Index of Multiple Deprivation Decile	Offending		Prevention		All YJS	
	No. children	% Children	No. children	% Children	No. children	% Children
1 (The most deprived 10%)	10	23.3%	8	30.8%	18	26.1%
2	15	34.9%	3	11.5%	18	26.1%
3	4	9.3%	4	15.4%	8	11.6%
4	4	9.3%	4	15.4%	8	11.6%
5	8	18.6%	6	23.1%	14	20.3%
6	2	4.7%			2	2.9%
7						
8						
9			1	3.8%	1	1.4%
10 (The least deprived 10%)						

26% of Torbay children known to the YJS live in areas that fall into the 10% most deprived in England. (In 2024 this was 39%).

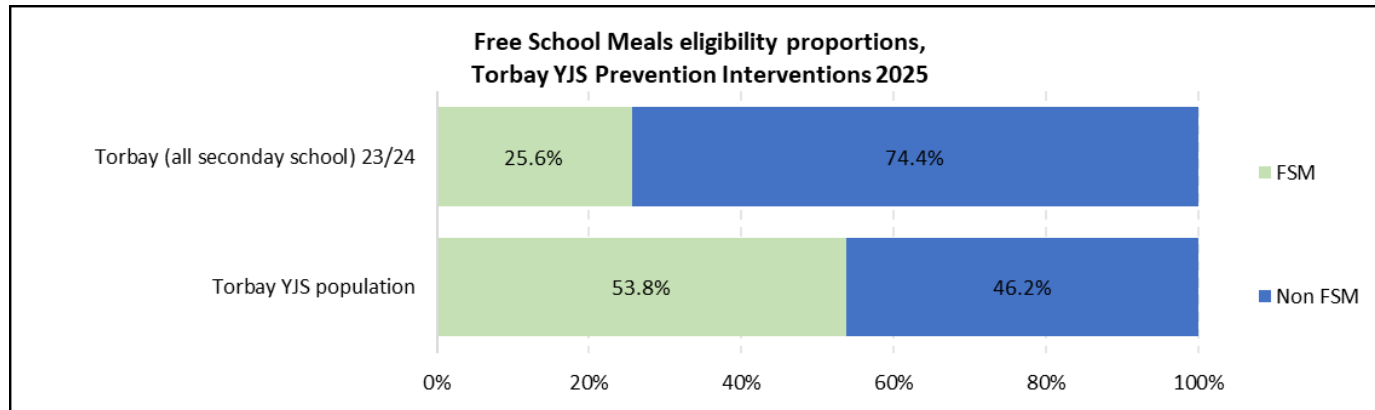
64% of Torbay children known to the YJS live in areas that fall into the top 30% most deprived in England. (In 2024 this was 82%).

Comparison of proportion of free school meals eligibility between YJS population and local secondary school population.

Offence related interventions:



Prevention and Turnaround interventions:

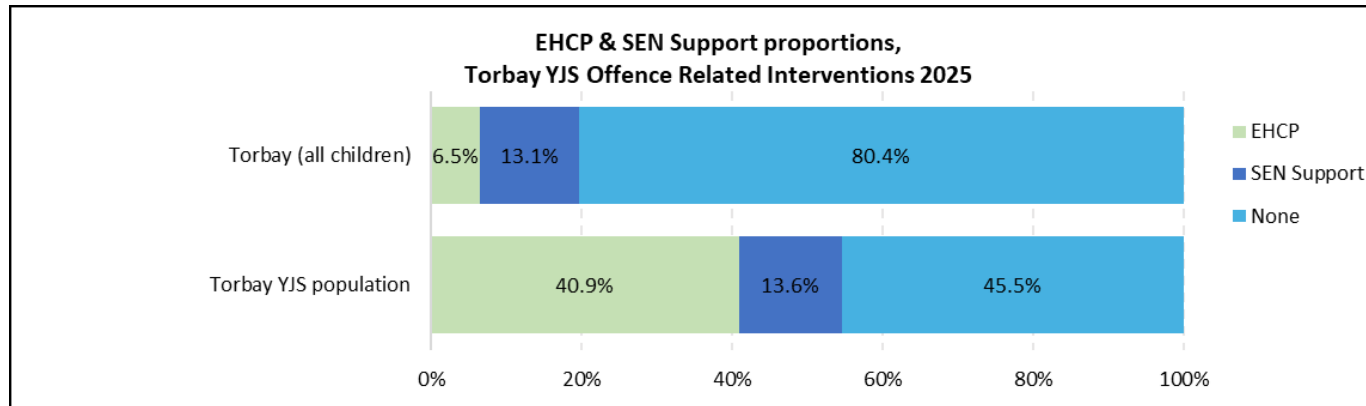


The proportion of children in the YJS who are eligible for free school meals is significantly higher than in the wider population.

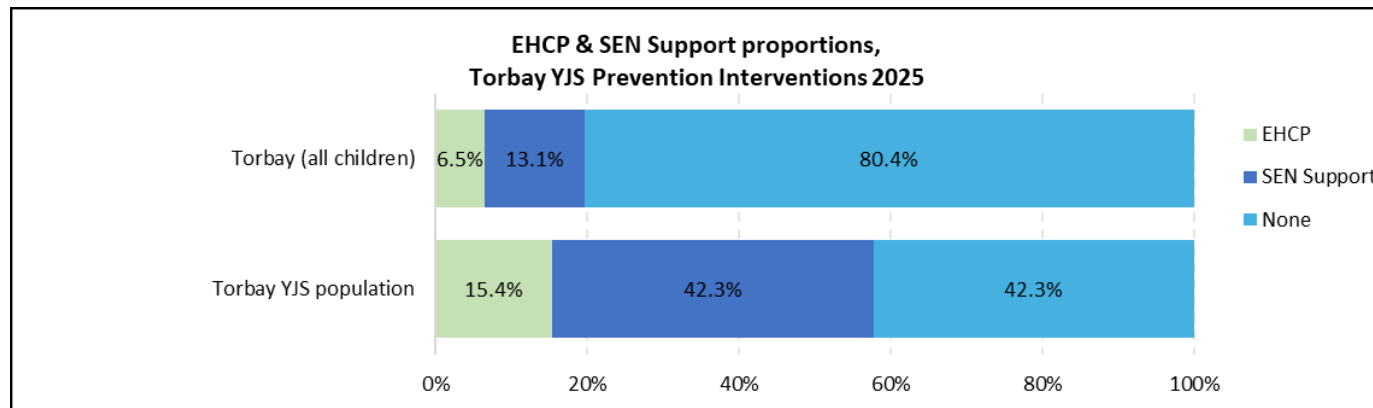
Special educational needs and disability (SEND)

Comparison of proportion of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support between YJS population and local population.

Offence related interventions:



Prevention and Turnaround interventions:



The proportion of children within the YJS who have an EHCP, and also those that have SEN Support is significantly higher than that for all children living in Torbay.

16. Policing

Torbay Youth Justice Service has developed strong links with Devon and Cornwall Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB). Torbay Youth Justice Service has played a key role in working with the Police and other partners to develop the new Child First Pathway Protocol and helped instigate the Child Centred Policing Team covering Torbay and South Devon. The new Protocol was launched in autumn 2025 and has increase the range of options for Out of Court Resolutions for children including Deferred Prosecution Scheme (DPS). The Child Centred Policing Team has brought together all child focused Police and resources under central management through one Inspector who will oversee all level one (low level) police investigations and oversight for children suspected of committing a crime in the South Devon area. It already showing an increase in the coordination of children who offend and lead to swifter resolutions of investigations and decisions.

17. Prevention

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) defines Prevention as support and intervention with children (and their parents / carers) who may be displaying behaviours which may indicate underlying needs or vulnerability. In practice this involves a tiered approach of early and targeted prevention. The aim being to address unmet needs, safeguard, promote positive outcomes and stop children entering the formal youth justice system.

In the summer of 2022 Torbay Youth Justice Service expanded its prevention offer in recognition of the numbers of children known to other services who were entering the formal Youth Justice System after being arrested or charged with offences. The service adopted a set of criteria for referrals for children who were exhibiting a range behaviours or circumstances that research indicated correlate to an increased risk of offending. In December 2022 the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Youth Justice Board (YJB) announced the Turnaround fund with a very similar set of criteria. Torbay combined the Turnaround criteria and our local criteria under the Prevention programme to expand the offer. Since August 2022 there have been over 216 Prevention and Turnaround Referrals to the Youth Justice Service. Referrals have mainly come from social workers for children who have a Child in Need (CIN) Plan, which is reflective of the enhanced model of joint working between Children's and Youth Justice Services. More recently, and as a result of quicker triaging of children at the weekly intervention clinic, there has been an increase in referrals from Police colleagues. A review of the Prevention / Turnaround service has shown that 81% of children who have completed their intervention have not gone on to offend. The YJS Board noted the success and were able to access funding from Torbay Council to continue the full funding for the programme for 2025-26 before the Turnaround grant was approved by central government. The grant has now been received at a much-reduced amount for the current year but Torbay Council has increased its contribution so we can maintain the 3 full time staff for the project.

Devon and Cornwall Police in conjunction with the Youth Justice Service have a now well established 'Intervention Clinic' in Torbay. The clinic meets twice a week and reviews all the intelligence reports of children to identify who may need additional intervention to prevent offending. If interventions are required these are primarily delivered by the Police Youth Intervention Officers (YIOs) and a smaller number are referred for YJS Prevention Service. This addresses one of the recommendations from the Prevention Review completed in December 2023 to offer interventions earlier.

Torbay Youth Justice Service continues to offer voluntary support to children, parents and victims after any formal intervention or Court Order has ended.

18. Diversion

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) defines Diversion as children receiving an alternative outcome that does not result in a criminal record but has an element of support and intervention. The intent is to stop further offending and avoid escalation into the formal youth justice system and potentially becoming a 'First Time Entrant' (FTE) which is one of the national measures for diversion and youth justice services.

Diversionary disposals allow Police to refer children who have committed low-level offences who would have previously been charged and potentially sentenced at court (and becoming both an FTE and get a criminal record) to be offered a voluntary intervention and support that potentially does not mean they become an FTE or get a criminal record.

Reducing the number of First Time Entrants has been a key priority and prior to 2023 Torbay had seen a significant drop which was largely been due to the creation and development of the Out of Court Disposal (OoCD) process. However, in 2023-4 Torbays rate rose significantly above the target (at the end of the year. Reducing FTEs has been a strategic priority for the local partnership board who instigated a number of measures to address this including: - working with Police and the LCJB to increase the speed of decision-making, the introduction of an intervention clinic where decision-making is informed by real-time data and intelligence to target children at risk of entering the youth justice system into the most appropriate preventative intervention, and regular auditing of decision-making at the pre-court panel. The rate has steadily decreased since the peak in May 2024, narrowing the gap with the family group and national averages which we are sitting just above.

Torbay Youth Justice Service has worked with Devon and Cornwall Police and the three other Youth Justice Services in the southwest to improve the consistency and clarity of local guidance on the use of Out of Court Resolutions as the national guidance and legislation is unclear leading to different interpretations locally and nationally. This revised guidance called the Child First Pathway Protocol was launched in the autumn of 2025 and this combined with the new Child Centred Policing Team for South Devon is making a difference in the early identification of children, the speedy investigation and resolution of any offences, and stop escalation into the formal justice system. Early results of the Child Centred Police team are showing very positive results.

19. Education, Training and Employment

The staff team identified education as a major factor for the coming year to support children in not becoming involved in criminal activity and to improve their safety, future prosperity and wellbeing. Torbay has very high rates of exclusion and suspension and this is particularly true for children open to the service. Many children known to YJS have already missed significant amount of education and supporting them to re-engage after long periods out is very challenging particularly if they have criminal convictions. The Torbay Board have agreed that this will be a priority for work for the board and the service in the year ahead however in the current education landscape this will be a significant challenge.

All children who are supported by the YJS have their educational needs reviewed as part of their assessment and will potentially have aspects of their intervention focus on accessing education, training or work. Education attendance and attainment is reviewed minimally every 6 weeks by the YJS Education Worker and colleagues from Torbay Council’s Education Services, including SEN, and the CSW group.

At the start of their interventions 83% of the children are in Education, Training or Employment. 17% were NEET/Missing from Education.

A disproportionate number of children are receiving their education outside of mainstream schools, with 36% registered with an alternative provision or outside of mainstream education. The table below shows the breakdown by establishment type:

Establishment Type	No. children	%
School/Mainstream Education	35	47%
At School Alternative Programme Pupil Referral Unit/Special Unit	17	23%
NEET	13	17%
Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)	7	9%
Elective Home Education	3	4%

There is also an over representation of children who have an **Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)**. 32% of children worked with have an EHCP whilst the comparative figure for Torbay secondary school age children is 6.5%.

A further indicator of vulnerability is children who are (or have been) eligible for **free school meals**. 60% of YJS children are or were eligible for free school meals and the comparative figure for all secondary school aged children in Torbay is 26%.

77% of children worked with during 2025/26 had experienced one or more fixed exclusion and 21% had been permanently excluded from school.

Attendance is often a barrier for Torbay YJS children with an average of 85% of school age children persistently absent throughout the year.

20. Restorative approaches and victims

Torbay Youth Justice Service has a stated priority to be 'victim focussed in all we do'. Torbay YJS has a single full time Victim, Restorative Justice and Reparation Worker who offers support to the victims of crime, and restorative processes to put right the harm they have experienced. In 2024 due to their success in engaging victims, we increased the Victim worker element to become full time we will maintain this in 2026-27. The additional resource has improved our victim offer from which we have developed a victims focus group which has called in the local Police Partnership Inspector and the Police a Crime Commissioner to hear their views. Victim feedback has challenged the level of support available to victims (in comparison with what we provide to children who do harm) and we are now providing general and specialist support to children and adults who are harmed ie we have supported an adult to access counselling, and child victim to access CAMHS support.

Victim feedback surveys are generally very positive in all but one area: - 'do they feel that justice has been served' which is more negative than any other area. We believe this may be due to either time delays in investigations or the outcome for the child (ie not going to court) so we will be asking a flowing up clarifying question in future surveys to try to understand this better.

The service has implemented the data collection requirements for the new Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for victim work within Youth Justice Services. We were one of the first services ready to report against (all) the new KPIs from 1st April 2023 when they came into place. It is unfortunate that the national caparisons and data returns from the YJB are not yet available after 2 full years of the requirement to report on all the new KPIs.

The service has developed and has launched a victim satisfaction survey so that victim's views can be used to inform and shape the service. We have redesigned and tested our survey which is now live and will be providing insight for future improvement activity when a robust level of data has been gathered. This survey is now be completed in paper format and online.

21. Serious Violence and Exploitation

The Youth Justice Board's operational definition of Serious Violence is any drug, robbery or violent offence committed against the person that has a gravity score of five or more. Gravity scores range from 1 (least serious) to 8 (most serious) Robbery offences all carry a gravity score of 6. The YJB Serious Violence Tool shows that for Torbay children there were three Serious Violence offences that received an outcome during the calendar year 2025. This equates to a rate of 2.5 per 10,000 of the general 10–17 year old population which is below the YJS family group rate (4.3) and below the national (5.6). This is a 50% reduction on 2024.

The responsibility for the development and delivery of the local response to the Serious Violence Duty in Torbay is held by Safer Torbay the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). As a member of the CSP and as a specified authority under the Duty, Torbay Youth Justice Service will work with other the other specified authorities and key partners to develop Torbay's response under the Duty.

A key aspect of the Service's role has been to contribute to the development of the local strategic needs assessment through provision and analysis of data. The strategic needs assessment is key to developing understanding of the local profile in relation to serious violence and the delivery of a local strategy and response.

In 2025-26 the Service received funding to run a pilot (summer) activity programme for children open to the service, this was aimed at children at the open to Prevention or Diversion but did have a small number of children on statutory orders. The programme was useful in attracting the numbers planned for each event, group size was kept to a maximum of 5 and a range of activities was agreed with those involved using local providers and facilities. The intention was to give children the chance to try some new activities (ie paddle boarding), develop some news skills (ie plastering) develop new social skills and help develop relationships with staff. Overall it was deemed successful but did put a strain on staff as it was done 'on top of the day job' and the service hopes to run this again in 2026 if we can access further funding.

The Head of Service for Torbay Youth Justice is a core member of the Torbay Channel Panel and offers support through discussion at Panel as well as intervention and support to children where appropriate. The Torbay Channel Panel links directly to the Torbay and Devon Prevent Partnership Board where themes, risks and approaches are shared to improve the wider operational and strategic approach to Prevent across the two local authorities.

The Service has good working relationships with the local Exploitation Team based within Children's Services as well as the multi-agency partnership meetings of Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group (CEMOG) which the Service's Team Manager and Police Officer attend and the strategic Child Young Person Exploitation Group (CYPEG) which the Head of Service attends. A red Exploitation Toolkit is one of the criteria for referral to the Prevention Service.

22. Detention in police custody

The resumption of quarterly police custody review meetings re children held in police custody overnight has given the service for first time in several years to access this data. It is pleasing to note that generally decisions and processes to keep children overnight appear to be sound. However, with the rollout of the Child First Pathway Protocol and other Child First measures it is hoped that children being held overnight will reduce, the data will help us to track this.

There remains a small number of children who are held overnight frequently, data shows that these children are either the children we have most concerns about that are being exploited in some way or are children (mainly girls) who have Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) in place and despite having 3 or 4 staffing to safeguard them but are still going missing or committing offences in the community, against staff or police officers. This is an aspect of the insufficient supply of suitable placements for children.

A Childrens Service senior officer is always available on call overnight, along with qualified senior social workers as part of the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) to discuss alternatives for children instead of remaining in police custody. Further work is necessary to address differing opinions on the most appropriate child-focused response to certain situations. Torbay does not commission a PACE bed for the reasons outlined in Chapter 5.

23. Remands

In 2025-26 the service had only one child remanded into custody which was the first child remand in 2 years. The child was not able to reduce his offending despite the very intensive package of support and control measures put in place to keep him and the community safe, and went on to receive a 12 month custodial sentence for 56 offences of domestic burglaries to steal cars and related driving offences.

Torbay Youth Justice Service has good relationship with the local Youth Magistrates and the Chair of the Youth Panel sits on the Strategic Board. Magistrates have been briefed on the changes to Remand thresholds as part of the briefings for the Boards, and in June 2025 the Youth Justice Head of Service will be briefed the Magistrates Youth Panel on youth justice matters at a training event.

The Service has made significant steps to improve the relationship and understanding of our differing roles with Children's Services social care and Education over the last year and this had led to closer working to ensure better coordination of services for all children we are working with and specifically those at risk of remand into custody. However there remains a national and local challenge in finding suitable and available placements for children at all levels of the care system and particularly when a child is subject to criminal proceedings. The Board is well sighted on this matter as is national government who have published a consultation '[Children's social care: stable homes, built on love](#)' followed by '[Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive](#)' which focusses on keeping children safe in and outside their home, keeping families together by providing the support they need, increasing the number of foster and children's homes placements.

Torbay's work with the Family and Friends Programme (FFP) is increasingly focused on reducing statutory escalation. By prioritising preventative approaches and early intervention, the FFP aims to support families at an earlier stage, helping to keep children safely within their family networks wherever possible. This not only aligns with the national vision for keeping families together and providing the support they need but also strengthens our local response to the placement challenges faced by children in the justice system.

24. Use of Custody and Constructive Resettlement

In 2025-26 two children were given custodial sentences. Both children were victims of exploitation and had conclusive ground NRMs but due to their ongoing, high level offending. This combined with noncompliance with court orders, despite very high levels of support and challenge to them and their parents, we could not reduce their offending and protect the public. Both were involved on domestic burglaries and car theft followed by driving offences all over the southwest. Both children had high levels of SEND, nonengagement with education for a number of years, and multiple other histories of abuse and neglect. We continue to support them during and post custodial sentence and will be leading both internal and multi-agency reviews of why we were not successful in diverting them from custody and what we need to change for other children in the future.

25. Working with Families

Case workers are experienced and practiced in working with the parents and families of children open to the service and will provide levels of support and communication with care givers so that the child has the most chance of successfully completing their order or programme. If more support is required, the service has a full time Parenting Worker who completes assessments with all parents or carers of children on the statutory caseload. Support is offered through both individual work directly with parents in their homes and through group work parenting programmes (ie [Who's in Charge](#)). Currently there is not capacity to offer this to parents of children open on Prevention / Turnaround programmes.

All aspects of the Service have close links with Early Help as well as services for children open on CIN / CP or CLA and work to ensure plans and interventions are coordinated to avoid duplication as well as not overwhelming parents and children with multiple professionals entering their lives at stressful and difficult times.

26. Service Development Plan 2026-27

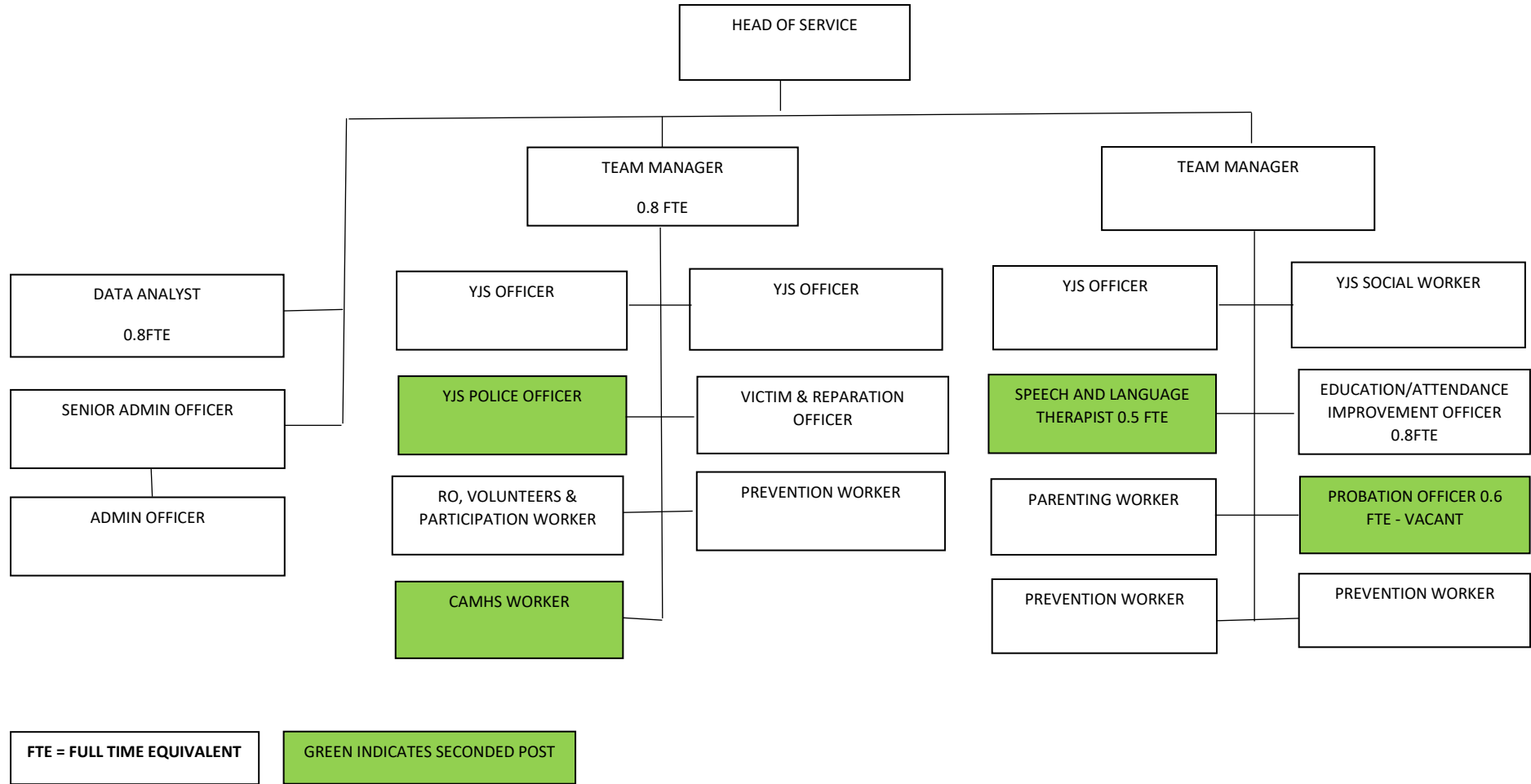
	Area for Improvement / Outcome desired	Action	Timescale
1.	Child First approach to all we do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Hear and respond to the voice of the child and carers not only in the delivery of their intervention but in the development of the service. b) To support the development of the Child First Policing Team and the new Child First Protocols to improve how children are supported within the youth justice systems. c) Swifter Youth Justice - Reduce delays in investigation and resolution for all children in the youth justice system. d) Increase the range of positive activities and opportunities for children to develop their confidence, skills and abilities. e) 	Ongoing

2.	Reduce the numbers of school suspension and exclusions and ensure children in contact with the Youth Justice Service are in appropriate education, training, or employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Strengthen multi-agency integration through the locality approach, using locality hubs to support more cohesive, coordinated interventions for families where a child is known to YJS. b) Develop and implement a specific action plan for persistently and severely absent YJS learners, with clearly defined interventions, responsibilities, timescales and review points. c) Align YJS operational engagement with emerging locality ‘huddles’ (for example, the Brunel special school pilot within the Paignton/Brixham locality hub), to improve information-sharing and earlier problem-solving. d) Prepare for the ‘Experts at Hand’ expectations set out in the Schools White Paper by developing a written local offer and a structured approach to building whole-school capacity (in addition to support for individual children). 	
3.	Reduce child criminal exploitation in Torbay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Work children to increase their understanding and resilience to grooming and exploitation b) Work with the Police, Exploitation Team and wider Childrens Services to reduce exploitation by targeting the adults involved by the use of powers available to disrupt exploitation ie Civil Injunctions. 	
4.	Maintain the reduction of children who become First Time Entrants (FTEs) in Torbay and seek to bring the rate below our statistical neighbours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensure the Prevention and Diversion services and options are being fully utilised through the Child First Pathway Protocol at Intervention Clinic and Out of Court Resolution Panel is stopping children offending by monitoring in the performance report and quarterly reviews of all FTEs. b) Link with schools to build focussed interventions for those children that are most likely to become FTEs (see 2. above) c) Increases the Police awareness and understanding of the Child First approach and of the work of the YJS. 	
5.	Improve the services to victims and work to ensure better coordination with all agencies who support victims across the local area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) Increase the engagement of victims with our service. f) Ensure Victim safety planning is paramount in all aspects of our planning and delivery g) Ensure the YJS listen to victims and help them understand and navigate the justice system and its outcomes for them and the children who have caused them harm. h) Work with all the other agencies who provide services to victims to ensure they are supported to access what they need. 	

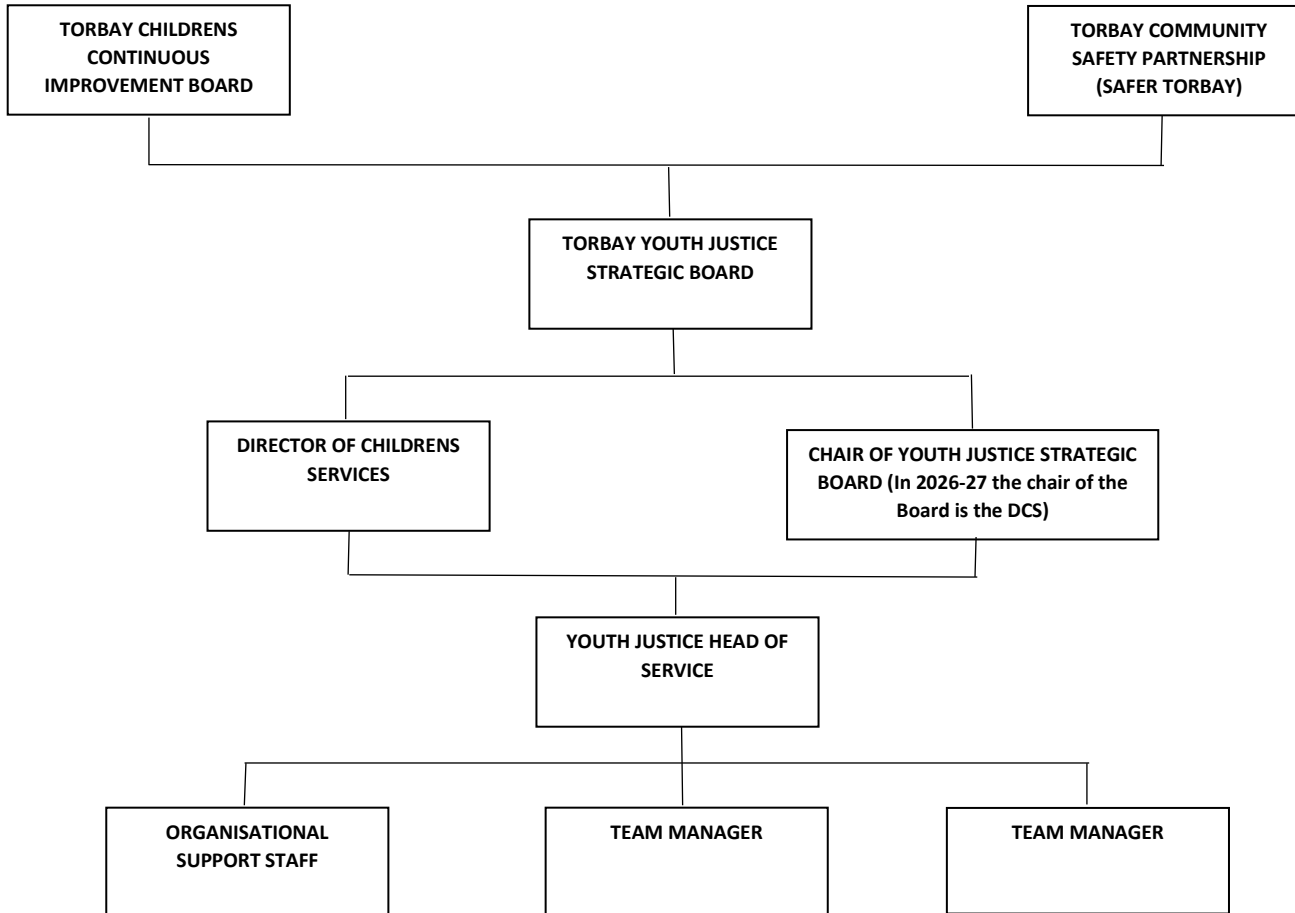
27. Sign Off, Submission and Approval

Chair of Torbay Youth Justice Service Board	Nancy Meehan, Director of Childrens Services, Torbay Council
Signature	
Date	

Appendix 1 Torbay Youth Justice Service Staff Structure



Appendix 1a – Service Reporting Structure Chart



Appendix 2 DRAFT Budget Costs and Contributions 2026-27

Expenditure	
Staffing	£895,900
Training	£1,500
Rent	£13,000
Service Provision	£10,900
Travel	£8,000
Other expenses	£5,600
Support to families	£500
TOTAL	£935,400

Income	
Torbay Local Authority	£514,926
YJB Grant	£247,369
Remand Grant (25/26 value, as 26/27 not yet announced)	£11,339
PCC	£68,346
Community Safety – Data Analyst	£11,100
NHS	£38,204

Probation Service	£5,000
Turnaround Programme Grant	£39,116
TOTAL	£935,400

In Kind contributions

The service is in receipt of non-cash resources in the form of seconded staff from the statutory partner organisations which support the multi-agency approach of the service.

Organisation	Contribution	In Kind cost
Probation Service	Probation Officer 0.6 FTE	£34,509
Devon and Cornwall Police	Police Officer – 1 FTE	£76,108
NHS Devon	CAMHS 1 FTE and SALT worker 0.5 FTE	£73,881
TOTAL	FTE 3.1	£184,498

Appendix 3 YJS Training Programme 2025-26

This training is service specific and additional to the required training all staff complete as part of the corporate training requirements eg safeguarding, data protection health and safety etc.

Date	Topic	For whom	By whom
2025-26	Youth Justice Degree	Prevention Worker	UNITAS
Feb 2025	Who's in Charge (parenting programme)	Parenting Worker	WIC
July 2024	FASD	Staff Team	Internal staff
Nov 2024	ASSET+ 2 day	New starter	Silver Bullet
Sept 2025	AIM3 Refresher	All AIM3 Trained staff	The AIM Project
Jan – Feb 2025	6 sessions of Volunteers / panel members training	Volunteers	YJS Team Manager & Vol coordinator
June 2025	Referral Order Child First review	YJS staff & volunteers	Suth Devon University
July 2025	Emotional Literacy training	All staff	Torbay Educational Psychologist
Sept 25	Children Facing Sexual allegations	Case workers	YJLC
Jan 2026	12hr Assessment and planning	New workers	Silver bullet
March 26	First Aid for all staff	Business support staff	
Feb 2026	Food Hygiene	All staff working with children	
	Requested / Planned for 2026 but not yet booked		
	Sexual health		
	Drug and Alcohol work updates		
	Vehicle theft best practice		
	NRM processes and court work		

Common youth justice terms

ACE	Adverse childhood experience. Events in the child's life that can have negative, long-lasting impact on the child's health, and life choices
AIM 2 and 3	Assessment, intervention and moving on, an assessment tool and framework for children who have instigated harmful sexual behaviour
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
AssetPlus	Assessment tool used for children who have been involved in offending behaviour
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation, where a child is forced, through threats of violence, or manipulated to take part in criminal activity
Children	We define a child as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This is in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and civil legislation in England and Wales. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.
Child First	A system wide approach to working with children in the youth justice system. There are four tenants to this approach, it should be: developmentally informed, strength based, promote participation, and encourage diversion
Child Looked-After	Child Looked After, where a child is placed in the care of the local council.
CME	Child Missing Education (ie child not on any school roll)
Constructive resettlement	The principle of encouraging and supporting a child's positive identity development from pro-offending to pro-social
Contextual safeguarding	An approach to safeguarding children (mainly teenagers) which considers the wider community and peer influences on a child's safety

Community Resolution	Community Resolution or CR, is an informal disposal, administered by the police, for low level offending where there has been an admission of guilt
ECM	Enhanced Case Management – a psychology-based approach for youth justice services to work with children.
EHCP	Education and Health Care Plan, a plan outlining the education, health, and social care needs of a child with additional needs
ETE	Education, Training, or Employment
EHE	Electively Home Educated, children who are formally recorded as being educated at home and do not attend school
EOTAS	Education Other than at School, children who receive their education away from a mainstream school setting
FTE	First Time Entrant. A child who receives a statutory criminal justice outcome for the first time (youth caution, youth conditional caution, or court disposal)
HMIP	Her Majesty Inspectorate of Probation. An independent arms-length body who inspect youth justice services and probation services
HSB	Harmful Sexual Behaviour, developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour by children, which is harmful to another child or adult, or themselves
JAC	Junior Attendance Centre
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MFH	Missing from Home
NRM	National Referral Mechanism. The national framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery in order to gain help to support and protect them
OOCD	Out-of-Court Disposal. A recorded disposal for a crime when an outcome is delivered but the matter is not sent to court
OOCR	Out-of-Court-Resolution. The new terminology for OOCD (see above).

Outcome 22/21	An informal disposal, when the child agrees to undertake an intervention to build strengths to minimise the possibility of further offending.
Over-represented children	Appearing in higher numbers than the local or national average within the population
RHI	Return Home Interviews. These are interviews completed after a child has been reported to the police as missing.
RJ	Restorative Justice – a variety of approaches seeking to repair the harm for victims and who caused the harm.
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
STC	Secure Training Centre (Custodial establishment for 14–16-year-old children)
SCH	Secure Children’s Home (Custodial establishment for under 16-year-old children)
TIP	Trauma Informed Practice – children who have suffered Trauma in their past are more likely to have impaired emotional and cognitive skills
TRM	Trauma Recovery Model – A psychological approach to help workers build working relationships and affect change for those who have suffered trauma.
Young adult	We define a young adult as someone who is 18 or over. For example, when a young adult is transferring to the adult probation service.
YJS	Youth Justice Service. This is now the preferred title for services working with children in the youth justice system. This reflects the move to a child first approach
YOI	Young Offender Institution (Custodial establishment for 16-18 year old children)