

**Report to:** Children's Services Scrutiny  
Committee

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009

**Report of:** Margaret Asquith  
Director of Children's Services

**Report No:**

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**Report Title:** **HMI Probation Inspection of Bolton Youth Offending Team**

**Confidential /  
Non Confidential:**

(**Non-Confidential**) This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.

**Purpose:**

This report provides information about the outcome of the YOT Inspection, details the action plan to improve systems and processes within the YOT and provides an update on action taken so far.

**Recommendations:**

Elected members are asked to note and comment on the report and to make any necessary recommendations to the Executive Member for Children's Services.

**Decision:**

**Background Doc(s):**

**Signed:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leader / Executive Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Monitoring Officer

**Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Summary:**

The YOT was inspected in July 2009 by HMI Probation and the final report was received in September 2009. The inspection focused on systems and processes and did not take into account the outcomes achieved by Bolton YOT.

The inspection looked at three areas: Safeguarding, Risk of Harm to the Public and Reoffending. Substantial improvement was identified as being required in each of these areas.

There is evidence of the process focus of the inspection in that the inspectors require substantial improvement in Risk of Reoffending when Bolton's reoffending statistics better than the regional and statistical neighbour averages and are improving.

The improvements required are related to providing evidence in case records of the work undertaken by the staff and managers in the YOT, improving quality assurance systems and management oversight, improving the quality of assessments and improving case recording.

Line management responsibility for the YOT has been transferred to Children's Services Stating Safe since the inspection report has been received and the YOT will now be included in the rolling programme of audits undertaken within the division.

The majority of areas of work identified in the recommendations are now either completed or are in progress. The YOT Manager and Assistant Director have met with Youth Justice Board and the YJB have agreed to provide targeted support for Bolton through consultancy which will focus on: Case recording, Analysis, Engagement, Sequencing and Escalation techniques.

The inspection revealed some systems issues relating to workflow in the YOT and there are structural issues which have impacted on the outcome of the inspection and these will need to be addressed in the near future.

## 1. Background Information

The YOT was inspected in July 2009 by HMI Probation against three key areas of

- Safeguarding
- Risk of Harm to the Public
- Reoffending

In each of those three areas the YOT was assessed in terms of

- assessment and sentence planning
- delivery and review of interventions
- outcomes

A selection of case files were reviewed against a number of criteria, and simply judged as met, - "yes" or not, - "no". The number of yes and no scores were then "number crunched" to arrive at the percentage scores in each area. Cross calculations were done to arrive at thread scores which are reported below. This method of calculation takes no account of the complexity of a case with no weighting for the more serious cases and took no account of the "grey areas" that there can be in terms of working with difficult and chaotic young people.

Although the inspection did not look at practice or at any work with partners, it gave a thorough examination of processes, recording and quality assurance systems. In this respect there were a number of deficiencies identified which have to be addressed.

The key thread scores were as follows

Key Area	Percentage Score	Grading
Safeguarding	58%	Substantial Improvement Required
Public Protection-Risk of Harm	49%	Substantial Improvement Required
Reoffending	55%	Substantial Improvement Required

The inspection also made six recommendations which were as follows

Recommendation	Responsible
1. A timely and good quality assessment and plan, using Asset, is completed when the case starts and when there is significant new information	(Chair of Management Board)
2. Specifically, a timely and good quality assessment of the individuals vulnerability and <i>Risk of Harm to others</i> is completed at the start, as appropriate to the specific case	(YOT Manager)
3. As a consequence of the assessment, the record of the intervention plan is specific about what will now be done in order to Safeguard the child or young persons well-being, to make him/ her less likely to reoffend, and to minimise any identified <i>Risk of Harm to others</i>	(YOT Manager)

4. The plan of work with the case is regularly reviewed and correctly recorded in Asset with a frequency consistent with the national standard for youth offending services	(YOT Manager)
5. There is evidence in the file of regular quality assurance by management, especially of screening decisions, as appropriate to the specific case	(YOT Manager)
6. Work undertaken is fully, consistently and accurately recorded on the case management systems	(All staff and YOT Manager).

The recommendations are fairly broad and refer primarily to recording, recording processes being done on time, plans being smarter and most importantly assessments being completed in a timely fashion and reviewed at key points. The YOT Management Team has drawn up an action plan which has been submitted and agreed with HMI Probation and a more detailed service action plan which is reproduced below.

Action	Recommendation	Timescale
1. Assessment team to complete full ASSET assessment, draft risk/vulnerability plans and a draft outline of intervention plan in the PSR, Stand down or Ref Order report. This will take place in all new cases including "stand downs" where there is no existing ASSET or the existing ASSET is over three months old and/or not relevant.	(1), (2), (3)	Immediate
2. Full review of "Stand Down" process to take place incorporating identification of responsibility for completion of ASSET and intervention and risk plans	(1), (2), (3)	December 2009
3. All initial assessments including draft Intervention Plans, Vulnerability Management Plans (VMP) and Risk Management Plans (RMP) to be quality assured by Assessment Team Manager prior to handover of case – cases will not be taken over by the HIT or LIT team should the plan(s) be insufficiently completed. The relevant Assessment Team Worker will be responsible for case managing the full intervention of the case pending satisfactory completion of the required Plans to allow reallocation.	(1), (2), (5)	Immediate
4. Information from Inclusion teams to be provided for all new cases including ONSET assessment – YOT to be given access to UMIS MIS. An interim process pending UMIS access for cross-referencing Prevention cases coming in to YOT has been agreed by the Information Officer and the Court/Assessment Team manager	(1), (3),	Immediate
5. "What do You Think" to be included in all assessments by assessment team and case managers & at all review stages.	(1), (2), (3)	December 2009
6. Team discussions/workplace seminars to take place and identify what constitutes "new information" meaning a review/updating of assessment is required.	(1), (3), (4) (5)	December 2009
7. Staff supervision process to incorporate a QA process to be used to check out where new information constitutes a need for reassessment	(1), (3), (4), (5)	December 2009
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8. Performance and quality assurance information to be a standing item on the management meeting agenda.		
9. Review of quality assurance and management processes to agree lines of responsibility (Information Officer / Team Managers / Admin)	All	December 2009
10. Implement the YJB guidance published 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2009 YJB bulletin on Risk of Harm and provide training to staff.	(2), (3), (4)	December 2009
11. All High Risk of Re-Offending cases to be included in the Case Planning Forum process.	(1), (3), (4)	November 2009
12. Assessment Team to develop draft risk of harm / vulnerability management plans in all cases assessed as medium and high risk of harm and/or vulnerability.	(1), (3)	Immediate
13. Outline intervention plans to be incorporated into all Pre Sentence and referral Panel and stand down Reports.	(1), (3)	Immediate
14. Develop QA process in relation to reviews of ASSET and plans using YJB QA tool as a reference.	(1), (3), (4), (5)	December 2009
15. Managers to dip sample risk assessment screening in cases where a ROSH is not required and where the case does not come within the CPF process. (i.e. low and medium in reoffending, low and medium in vulnerability and low in harm).	(5)	Immediate
15. Include parents/carers and other relevant partner agencies in a formal review of cases with young person at key stages identified in National standards.	(4), (5)	December 2009
16. Training on basic recording issues and policy guidance to be identified and provided where needed for staff.	(6)	December 2009
17. Identified staff to receive individual mentoring from Operational Managers regarding concise and accurate recording	(6)	Immediate
18. All sessions undertaken with young people to be recorded on YOIS and paper records kept where appropriate	(4), (5), (6)	October 2009
19. Source / develop exemplars of good quality recording to assist staff.	(6)	December 2009
20. Operational Managers to dip sample recording in case files as part of supervision process	(5), (6)	December 2009
21. Training for staff in relation to sequencing and recording of intervention plans with reference to YJB case management guidance.	(3)	January 2010
22. Pilot new Case Management System to test ease of recording and whether staff time at computer screen can be reduced	(6)	February 2010

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

This report does not require an Equality Impact Assessment as it is not seeking a Policy change.

## Bolton YOT Performance

2008 - 2009

Performance area	April - June	July - Sept	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Annual
Education, Training and Employment	100/123 (81.3%)	77/95 (81%)	84/103 (81.5%)	86/107 (80.4%)	347/428 (81.1%)
Accommodation	139/141 (98.6%)	135/136 (99.3%)	106/110 (96.4%)	139/143 (97.2%)	519/530 (97.9%)
Custody	16/198 (8.1%)	13/193 (6.7%)	15/197 (7.6%)	7/147 (4.8%)	51/735 (6.9%)
First Time Entrants	111	80	108	105	404
Recidivism (frequency rate per 100 offenders) 2005 Baseline				280 Offenders 411 Offences	147
Recidivism (frequency rate per 100 offenders) 2008/09				231 Offenders 248 Offences	107 (27% reduction)

2009 -2010

Performance area	April - June	July - Sept	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Annual
Education, Training and Employment	64/79 (81%)	85/104 (81.7%)			
Accommodation	90/93 (97%)	109/111(98.1%)			
Custody	10/149 (6.7%)	5/189 (2.6%)			
First Time Entrants	96 (13.5% reduction)	59 (26.5% reduction)			
Recidivism (frequency rate per 100 offenders) 2009/10					