

A thematic review of the work of youth offending services during the COVID-19 pandemic



Thematic Review

HMIP published [thematic review](#) in November, which focuses on 7 YOTs that were remotely inspected.

The review provides some key learning, areas of best practice and identifies some important issues that YOT Managers, YOT Management Boards, YJB will need to consider.

These slides will provide a summary of the key issues.



Key Issues and Recommendations

Management Boards are recommended to:

- Identify the backlog of cases being processed through courts, and ensure that there is sufficient workforce capacity to deal with increased caseloads.
- Review the locally agreed definition of vulnerable children, to make sure that all relevant children who are known to the YOT are included for access to education and services.
- Consider how young people are to be reintroduced to school, education and employment and how any attainment gap is to be addressed.
- Address any inequalities in 'digital divide'.



Key Issues and Recommendations

YOT Managers are recommended:

- That as part of assessments, young person's access to IT and communication methods are routinely assessed.
- To give careful consideration to whether case responsibility should remain with the 'home' YOT after an out of area placement, if that can be undertaken remotely and is in the best interests of the child.
- Ensure effective communication with the custodial estate, so that children are best prepared for being released into COVID-related restrictions that will vary.

Key Issue highlighted:

- Concern raised about the experience of parents who were victims of violence by their child. This is an area that needs a sharper focus and more detailed planning for the protection of parental victims.

Areas of best practice

- Noted flexibility and innovative service delivery by YOT and the staff
Contact via virtual methods and social media were positive
Contact in an outside setting ‘walk and talk’ proved positive
Continued contact with those identified as high risk/intensive cases
- Multi-agency meetings had improved attendance
- [YJB Resource Hub](#) has practice examples of working through the pandemic

