

PEOPLE SERVICES PORTFOLIO BRIEFING

Thematic inspection to identify how Youth Offending Services understand and meet the needs of black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system May 2021

Helen Sweaton

Introduction

This update will cover the planned inspection activity in the youth justice service. We were informed in February that the Sheffield Youth Justice Partnership has been selected to be part of the thematic inspection to identify how Youth Offending Services understand and meet the needs of black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system.

Disproportionality is a critical concern nationally and addressing it is a priority for the youth justice sector and a primary concern for HMI Probation.

The inspection will help develop the sectors understanding of the range, quality and effectiveness of services and interventions delivered to black and mixed heritage boys, with the aim being to identify good practice and make recommendations for improvement where needed.

The inspection will take a closer look at the work undertaken in the delivery of services to black and mixed heritage boys as data and research show that this group of children are significantly over-represented in the youth justice system and have poorer outcomes than their peers.

Thematic inspections differ from HMI Probation's core programme in that they will be visiting a number of areas and collating themes as opposed to undertaking an individual inspection of each area's performance.

Other areas involved in the thematic are Manchester, Lewisham, Nottingham, Leeds, Haringey, Hackney, Liverpool and Oxfordshire.

HMI Probation will report on the strengths and areas for improvement that they identify overall. Examples of practice in individual areas may still be attributed in the report.

Four HMI Probation Inspectors along with "lived experience consultants" will be involved in the inspection, which will be conducted remotely over five days.

The virtual onsite activity for Sheffield will take place over the week commencing 10th May 2021.

A final schedule will be issued prior to the inspection taking place.

Inspection arrangements

This inspection focuses on all aspects of youth justice service delivery.

They are keen to hear how services are working from the perspectives of the boys themselves, and have contracted with UserVoice to conduct semi-structured interviews with our children to discover their views.

The inspectors will also be looking at how the organisational structures support the effective delivery of services to black and mixed heritage boys.

The areas of work the inspectors will be looking at include:

Youth Justice Service

- The assessment of desistance and safety wellbeing and categorisation of risk of harm
- Planning to support desistance and safety and wellbeing
- Implementation and delivery of services to support desistance and safety and wellbeing
- Reviewing of post-court casework in relation to desistance, safety and wellbeing and the categorisation of risk of harm
- Decision-making for out-of-court disposals
- The quality of information provided to courts for sentencing
- Work done with boys on remand.
- The involvement of parents and carers in service delivery
- Supervision and management oversight for casework delivered to black and mixed heritage boys

Sheffield City Council and Partners

- Race equality and diversity strategies including management information on disproportionality.
- The effectiveness of work with partners to support desistance and safety and wellbeing
- Staff development on race equality, diversity and addressing unconscious bias
- The perspectives and experiences of black and mixed heritage boys
- The services available for black and mixed heritage boys, including access to mainstream services

Case specification and sample

The inspectors will be looking at work with our black and mixed heritage boys released from custody or commencing community supervision, remand cases, pre-sentence reports and out-of-court disposals.

The inspectors will be looking for examples of good practice in individual cases and in how services are delivered, with the intention of producing an effective practice guide to accompany the thematic inspection report.

As in their routine performance inspections the inspectors will assess the cases by review of the electronic records and reports, which will be done remotely. The fieldwork activity will involve meetings, focus groups and semi-structured interviews with black and mixed heritage boys. There will also be a staff survey.

Information in advance

We are also required to provide information in advance including:-

- A structure chart or explanation outlining governance arrangements for the Youth Justice service
- Any strategies, policies and guidance relating to the provision of services to black and mixed heritage boys
- A breakdown of ethnicity of staff and volunteers
- Evidence of any training that has been delivered to support staff in their work with black and mixed heritage boys
- Details of quality assurance processes and any related documentation
- Management information reports and performance data on service delivery and outcomes segmented, by white, black, Asian, mixed and 'other' category
- Any evidence of disproportionality in the delivery of services by ethnicity, and any plans to address inequality
- Any analysis of education data segmented by ethnicity
- Any analysis of social care involvement segmented by ethnicity
- Analysis of service user need, risk of harm and safety and wellbeing by ethnicity

- Details of any services designed specifically to meet the needs of black and mixed heritage boys, including any links with relevant community organisations
- Details of interpreting and translation services provided and any analysis of usage.

Feedback

HMIP will provide headline verbal feedback to the nominated managers on the final day at the conclusion of the inspection

Focus on the YJS Partnership and Wider Children's and Council Services

HMIP will be looking for answers to the following:-

- How the governance and leadership of the YOT supports and promotes the delivery of high-quality, personalised and responsive services for black and mixed heritage boys?
- How is addressing the over representation of black and mixed heritage boys in the justice system prioritised by the local strategic partnership?
- How Staff within the YJS are empowered to deliver high-quality, personalised and responsive services that meet the needs of black and mixed heritage boys
- Is there a comprehensive range of high-quality services in place, enabling personalised and responsive provision to meet the needs of black and mixed heritage boys.
- How do the YJS's partnership arrangements facilitate effective service delivery to meet the needs of black and mixed heritage boys?
- Does the YJS have the volume, range and quality of services, including commissioned services, to meet the needs of black and mixed heritage boys?
- Does the profile of staff and managers support the delivery of high-quality services for black and mixed heritage boys?
- How does the wider organisation promote safe discussion about race and racism, and how are concerns responded to?
- Is the wider organisation and YJS service delivery culturally responsive?
- How does the wider organisation and YJS Partnership understand the needs of the parents of black and mixed heritage children to actively support and encourage their engagement?

The final three questions are unusual from an HMIP inspection perspective, the wider partnership considered usually relates to that of the Youth Justice Partnership Board.

Contact Officer: Amanda Adams, tel: 0114 273 6424/07557801578 or email amanda.adams@sheffield.gov.uk