



Information Booklet 2008/09

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Introduction

This information booklet is intended to tell you something about the work of Leeds Youth Offending Service (YOS) and in particular our recent achievements and forthcoming challenges for 2008/09. It also tells you where you can obtain more information about aspects of the service if you would like more detail. Leeds has a population of around 720,000 of which 73,196 are aged 10-17. This means that the YOS is one of the busiest in the country and in 2007/08 we worked with 1,758 of those young people.

Around 170 staff and 120 volunteers now work for Leeds YOS. Staff are organised into four area based operational teams. We have a team based in the Youth Court and specialist teams covering Intensive Supervision and Surveillance, Resettlement and Aftercare Provision, Referral Orders and, in the last year, we have created a separate team for our work with Victims and Restorative Justice. We are proud to hold the Investors in People and the Investing in Volunteers Awards.

Over the last year Leeds YOS has continued to focus on **preventing young people entering the justice system** and on **preventing re-offending** with positive outcomes in both areas. The number of first time entrants has continued to reduce year on year. In 2004/05 a total of 2,076 young people entered the system with no previous convictions. This figure had been reduced by around 8% in 2005/06 to 1,925. In 2006/07 this figure was reduced by a further 2.6% to 1,875 first time entrants. A further reduction of 6% to 1,760 has been achieved in 2007/08.

Leeds YOS has robust information systems and monitors the re-offending of young people who have been subject to interventions over a 12-month period to ascertain whether they have offended and, if they have, whether the frequency or the seriousness of the offences has been reduced by the intervention. In March 2008 Leeds YOS reported that it has recorded a 15.6% reduction in re-offending since 2007 and 19% reduction when compared with the 2002 YJB baseline. This far exceeds the YJB target of a 5% reduction. The Leeds 2006/07 performance of 38.2% overall recidivism is comparable to the National Average of 37%, a Family Group performance of 38.1% and a regional performance of 37.9%.

These are just the headline figures. Every year Leeds YOS publishes a Youth Justice Plan that includes much more information and outlines the actions the service has taken to achieve the results and outlines the business plans for the future. This is available from our web site.

The success of Leeds YOS is directly attributable to the commitment of its staff and volunteers. We operate a 7 day a week service to ensure that we are in the best position to meet the needs of young people, their families and victims. The passion and dedication of staff and volunteers and their ability to build positive working relationships is the single most important factor in preventing and reducing offending by young people in Leeds.



Jim Hopkinson
Head of Service
Leeds Youth Offending Service



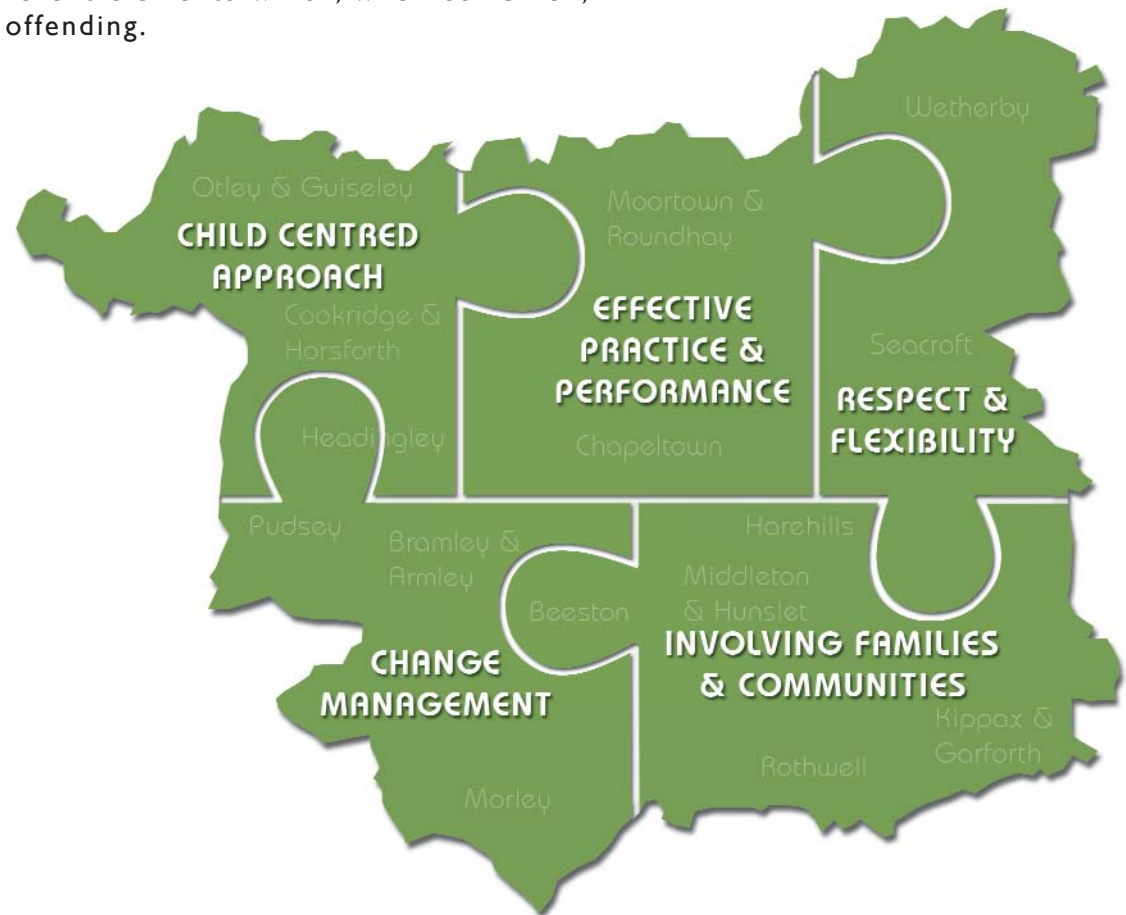
Mission Statement

"The Leeds YOS works with children, young people and their families to prevent and to challenge offending, encourage responsibility, develop victim empathy and reduce fear of crime in communities."

We are successful because our staff are committed to going the extra mile. We work effectively in a flexible, imaginative, and child-centred way, piecing together the different elements which, when combined, produce a comprehensive and effective response to youth offending.



An innovative arts project in partnership with Opera North produced many positive outcomes.



Inspection of Leeds Youth Offending Service

“We were impressed with much of the work carried out with children and young people. The YOS coordinated much of the prevention work across the city and had a range of diverse interventions for those who entered the criminal justice system.”

In November 2007 Leeds YOS was inspected and a report was published by the Joint Inspection Team in May 2008. The judgements on our work were pleasing and a number of areas of good practice were identified. We were found to be performing particularly well in our work with young people who have offended and in our work with parents/carers.

The positive inspection report builds on a successful 2007/08 for Leeds YOS. Headlines include:

- Reduction in first time entrants to the criminal justice system
- Reduction in re-offending
- Smaller caseloads for those working with young people
- Education, training and employment rates increased
- More programmes to young people following Final Warnings
- More substance misuse assessments undertaken
- More mental health assessments undertaken
- More work with parents
- Our best ever record for compliance with National Standards

As part of the inspection 116 young people completed questionnaires:

- The overwhelming majority felt YOS staff were really interested in helping.
- All indicated that they were treated fairly and with respect.
- More than three quarters said things had got better as a result of their work with the YOS and they were less likely to reoffend as a result.

However the Inspectors felt that we could make some improvements, particularly in our services to victims and restorative justice and they accepted our action plan to address this. Some of their recommendations have already been achieved while others require longer term strategies. These are included in the section 'Our Challenges for 2009' on page 9 of this document.

There is a link to the full Inspection report from our web site - www.leedsyos.org.uk

“The YOS enjoyed a good level of strategic management support from its partners. It displayed an appetite for continual improvement, and was at the forefront of pioneering innovative technological and service initiatives.”

Frequently Asked Questions



Q What is a Youth Offending Team or Youth Offending Service?

Youth Offending Teams were set up under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Teams were formed from April 2000 providing a multi-agency approach to achieving the principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people. They are staffed by professionals from Children and Young People's Social Care, Police, Probation, Health, and Education. Every local authority in England and Wales has one and some of the larger Youth Offending Teams have become known as Services.

Q. What is the core work of the Youth Offending Service?

The YOS has two main types of core work:

I - Pre-crime prevention (to prevent young people becoming involved in crime)

Leeds continues to show progress in reducing the number of first time entrants into the criminal justice system. Since 2005 the numbers of young people recorded as entering the Youth Justice system for the first time has continued to fall. This year on year reduction can largely be seen as the result of Prevention Activities in Leeds which are making a considerable impact in the localities they serve. In 2007/08 more than 700 young people received targeted prevention work. The YOS is confident that this work continues to have a demonstrable impact on First Time Entrants.

Much of the Prevention work takes place through Youth Inclusion Programmes (YIPs) delivered by our partners. The emphasis is strongly on working with the families and parents of young people as well as the young people themselves allowing problems and behaviours which may result in criminal or anti social behaviour to be tackled constructively at a very early stage.

2 - Post-crime reduction (to help young people stop offending)

Leeds YOS works with young people who have committed offences ranging in seriousness and delivers a range of interventions aimed at helping them to change their behaviour. Every young person is assessed across a number of important areas in their life and a programme of work is then planned for them focusing on the higher risk areas.

Q. What are the different Orders that young people receive?

This depends upon the seriousness and persistence of their offending behaviour. If a young person commits a minor offence for the first time they will usually receive a Reprimand from the Police. If they re-offend and the matter is not too serious they will receive a Final Warning and may be offered a voluntary intervention programme by the YOS. The YOS worked with 243 young people who were subject to a Final Warning in 2007/08. If they continue to re-offend they will go to court and be sentenced by magistrates. They may receive one of the following which is supported by a service from the YOS.

Bail Supervision

If the court feels that unconditional bail is not appropriate for a young person awaiting sentence the YOS can provide intensive supervision in the community ensuring that they attend their court appearances. In 2007/08 we provided bail supervision for 99 young people.

Referral Orders

Young people admitting guilt who have not been sentenced before receive a Referral Order unless they are sent to custody. The magistrates decide the length of the Order and the young person and parents/carers appear before a local panel of trained volunteers. The victim of the offence may also be present. The YOS undertakes an assessment for the Panel members who then agree a programme for the young person. In 2007/08 612 young people were sentenced to Referral Orders.

Supervision in the Community

Young people who commit further offences may receive a community sentence from the court. In such cases the YOS undertakes an assessment and plans a programme of individual or group work designed to help them avoid offending and strengthen the positive aspects of their life. In 2007/08 we provided supervision for 1,217 Orders including Referral Orders.

Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP)

Young people who meet specific criteria relating to serious or persistent offending can be made subject to intensive orders which involve a minimum of 25 hours a week of contact time. The programme can be ordered as a condition of bail or attached to supervision or community rehabilitation orders or as part of the community element of custodial orders. ISSP has recently restructured to work with young people in four 'clusters' based largely on age and ability. 128 young people were worked with by Leeds ISSP in 2007/08.

Supervision in the Secure Estate

Some young people are sentenced to custody for varying lengths of time. Most males from Leeds sentenced to custody go to HM Young Offenders' Institution at Wetherby, although they can be sent elsewhere in the country. In 2007/08 229 custodial sentences (including concurrent sentences) were made in Leeds. YOS supervising officers are involved in assessment and planning throughout a custodial sentence. The second part of this sentence is served back in the community and supervised directly by the YOS.

Resettlement and Aftercare Provision (RAP)

The RAP team was formed in January 2005 to offer packages of intensive support to young people with substance misuse and related difficulties who are being released from custody. Involvement is for 3-12 months following release and the specialist team includes a nurse, accommodation officer and volunteer mentors who help young people make positive changes and get their lives back on track. RAP support has now been extended to young people on community supervision too.

Q. How does the YOS help young people change their behaviour?

National Standards for Youth Justice Services set minimum standards on how frequently we should see young people and their parents/carers. When YOS staff meet with them they deliver a programme of work based on an individual plan. There is a range of interventions that are run by YOS staff or in partnership with other agencies and some of these will form the elements of the programme. Examples include:

- Drug dealing group
- Weapons awareness programme
- Retail theft initiative
- D'Fuse and Short Fuse anger management programmes
- Respect programmes (sex education and treatment for sex offenders)
- Parenting programmes (group and individual)
- Dance United
- Substance use clinics
- Alcohol group
- Referral Order Saturday group
- Fire Service reparation scheme
- Thinking skills programme
- 'Ripples' - victim awareness group
- Teen talk offence focused programmes
- Racial awareness group
- Sport and arts focused activity groups

We regularly monitor the range of programmes and refresh or renew to meet the needs of the young people we work with.



Q. What about victims of the crimes young people commit?

Leeds YOS is committed to maximising victim involvement, participation and satisfaction in its everyday work. Specialist workers make contact with all victims of crimes committed by young people known to the YOS. They are offered the opportunity to receive information about sentencing, to communicate with the offender and to take part in mediation as well as to receive direct reparation for the crime which has been committed. These restorative justice processes enable victims to have their say and receive answers to questions they may have, whilst offenders are given the opportunity to help put things right. In addition to their direct work the specialist victim workers meet with young people to promote a greater understanding of the consequences of their crime on their particular victim as well as run the 'Ripples' group where young people learn about the impact of crime on victims in general.

Q. How can young people try to make amends for what they have done?

Many young people engage in reparation as part of their programme. Reparation means 'saying you are sorry and doing something to prove it'. It involves meaningful activity for the young person which also enables them to make a contribution to the community or directly to their victim. Examples of current projects include young people undertaking environmental clean-up work, working in charity shops, delivering leaflets or helping people with disabilities. Providing the opportunity for young people to make a positive contribution in this way can help reassure the public and reduce the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Some comments by young people who have undertaken reparation

"I feel really happy that I was helping people. I would like to be a midwife when I leave school and this really gave me confidence to take responsibility".

"I can't believe the improvement I've made to the church grounds - I feel really good about it."

"I really enjoyed it this week - especially people telling me how good it looked and thanking me. It made me feel good and happy to be doing work for someone else."

"I thought it was great digging and weeding and moving stuff all over, I really like it here and want some extra hours so I can keep coming."

Q. How are volunteers involved in the YOS?

The YOS relies greatly on the contribution made by volunteers. The main areas of involvement are in being volunteer mentors with the RAP team, acting as Appropriate Adults to young people being interviewed in police custody and being a community panel member for Referral Orders. We provide full training for volunteers and we hold the Investors in Volunteers Award. We were the first YOS in the country to receive this, building on our record of being the first YOS to receive the Investors in People Award a few years ago.

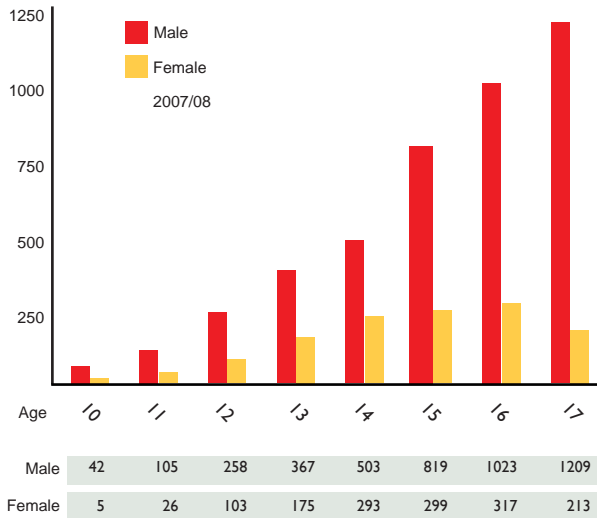
Our Challenges for 2009

We are proud of what we have achieved in 2007/08. We are always striving to improve our performance and the quality of our work and we hope to do well in the coming year. Here are some of the things that we will have to work hard on.

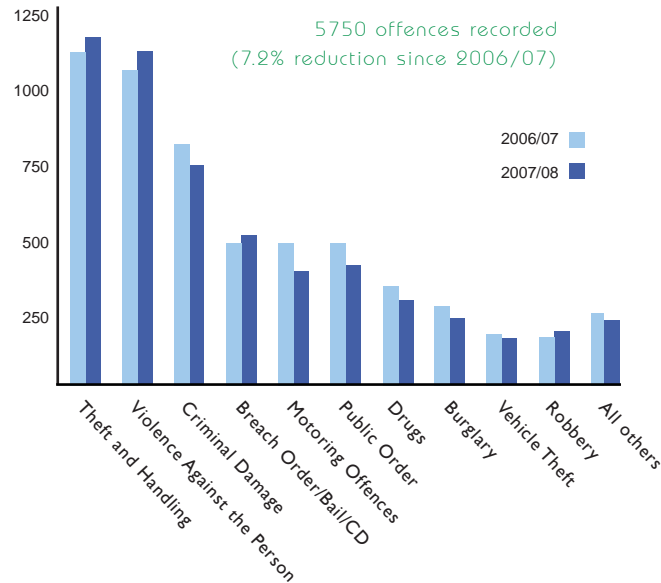
- Introduction of the Scaled Approach (risk led case management) and the new sentencing framework for young people expected in 2009
- Development of Safer Schools Partnerships
- Positive promotion of prevention activities, including preventing violent extremism
- Working with the courts to reduce the number custodial sentences and addressing the over representation of some groups of young people
- Working with Social Care to reduce offending by looked after young people
- Sustaining high compliance to National Standards
- Opportunities and challenges presented by the Youth Crime Action Plan
- YOS contribution to increasing public confidence
- Ensuring case management data base and management information systems meet service requirements
- New national indicator set of targets and management information
- Developing work with girls and young women
- Increasing opportunities for young people to participate in service development
- Expanding services to victims
- Increasing opportunities for reparation and extending range of placements
- Improvement in quality of assessments
- Improving delivery of group work
- Introduction of national data base - Contactpoint
- Working with wider criminal justice community to join IT systems and technologies together

Outputs & Outcomes

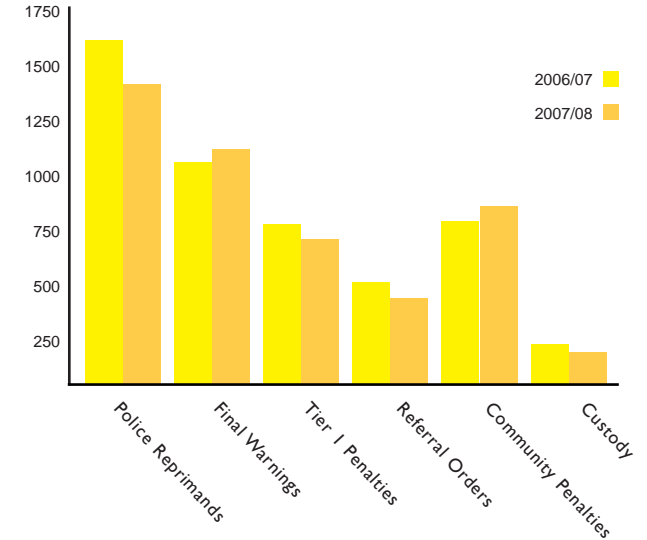
Offenders by Age/Gender



Main Offences



Sentencing



KEY FACTS

75% of offenders are boys while 25% of offenders are girls.

Only 3 offence types account for 50% of all offences committed by young people in Leeds - Theft & Handling, Criminal Damage and Violence Against the Person.

Theft and Handling is the most common offence for girls making up 38% of all female offences.

KEY FACTS

Leeds has shown a significant reduction in 6 of the 10 most common offences since 2006/07.

Theft and Handling has shown an increase since 2006/07 due to an increase in the prevalence in this offence by girls.

Violent Offending shows an increase since 2006/07 across both genders, the increase consists almost entirely of low level assaults.

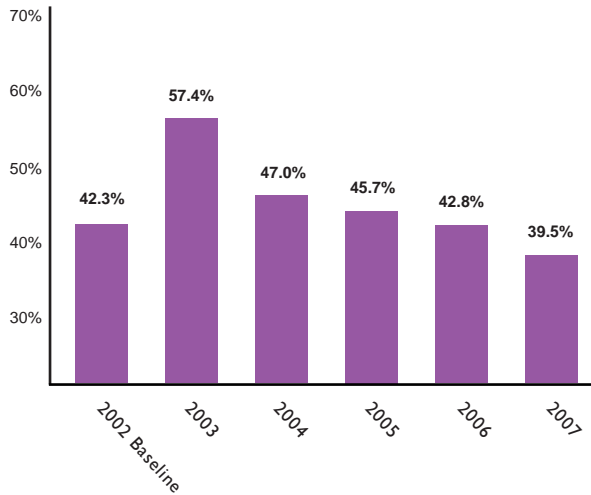
KEY FACTS

Leeds YOS track a cohort of young offenders from each sentencing group for 12 months.

The frequency and seriousness of re-offending of young people working with Leeds YOS has fallen significantly and is also significantly better than the National average.

Re-offending rates of young people on community orders working with the YOS have fallen 6.6% when compared to the 2005 baseline.

Recidivism Rates



KEY FACTS

Leeds has shown a decrease in re-offending rates for the 4th year running, the lowest rate since 2002.

Re-offending rates for Young People on Referral Orders fell by 15% since 2006/07.

Leeds showed a 25% reduction in re-offending on leaving Custody since 2006/07.

KEY STATISTICS

10-17 year old population of 73,196

6th busiest YOT in the country

1,760 new entrants to CJS (6% reduction)

5,750 offences recorded (7.2% reduction)

3,142 offenders (3.8% reduction)

4,500 disposals from Police & Courts (7.2% reduction)

2,163 orders supervised by YOS (6.2% reduction)

The Arts in Youth Justice




Leeds YOS is committed to the use of the creative arts as part of our strategy to engage young people and reduce offending. Our experience has shown that, whether as part of prevention or rehabilitation, the arts provide an opportunity for self-expression and positive achievement.

The photographs below were taken at the 2008 Summer Arts College. The young people attended for 6 weeks and achieved nationally recognised Bronze Arts Awards for their work. The theme of the programme was conflict resolution and how the perception of young people has changed from generation to generation.



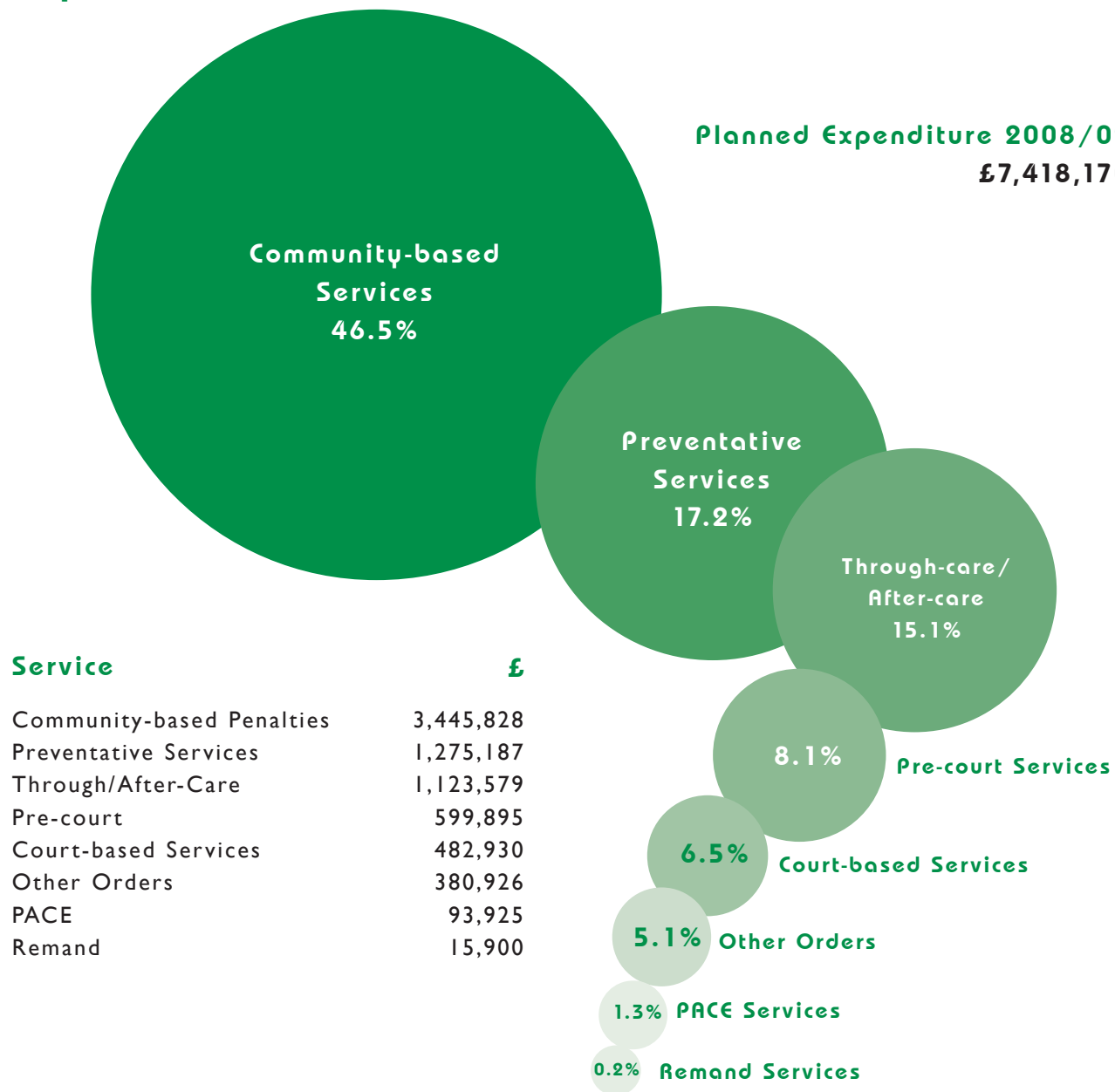
Leeds YOS Targets 2008/09

Code	National Indicator	Baseline	Target 2008/09	Required Direction of Travel	Performance 2007/08
NI19	Rate of Proven Re-Offending (Recidivism)	47.1%	43.0%	Reduction	39.5%
NI43	Use of Custody (Sentencing)	10.6%	6.8%	Reduction	10.6%
NI44	Ethnic Composition of Offenders (Over Representation)	4.6%	4.1%	Reduction	4.6%
NI45	Engagement in Education, Training and Employment (ETE)	68.2%	73.0%	Increase	76.0%
NI46	Access to Accommodation	91.5%	95.9%	Increase	92.1%
NI111	First Time Entrants to Youth Justice System	2076	1877	Reduction	1760
National Standard	All National Standards	None	80%	Increase	78.3%

Exceeded target 
 Very good 
 Focus for improvement 

Expenditure

Planned Expenditure 2008/09
£7,418,170



Quality Control

It is very important that we monitor the quality of our work and seek to continually improve it. The Youth Justice Board has identified effective practice as a key element in developing and improving youth justice services and we are committed to ensuring that work with young people is as effective as possible and based upon best practice and research evidence.

In 2008 the YJB has refreshed the guidance documents it provides on the key elements in effective practice. There are ten themes and in 2009 Leeds YOS will begin a self assessment exercise on two of them. These are:

- Engaging Young People
- Accommodation

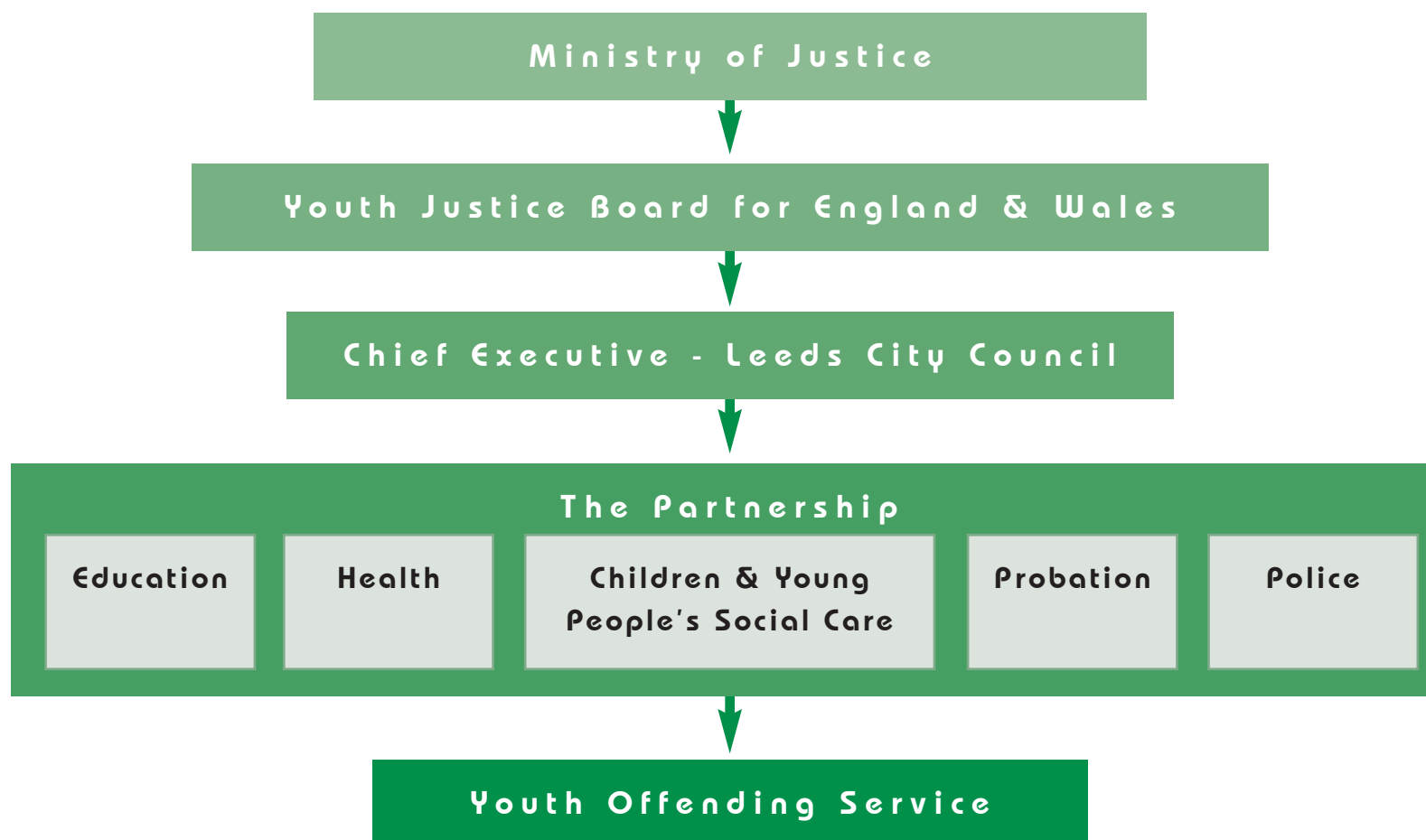
This will help us to assess our current practice and identify areas for improvement over subsequent years.

Governance

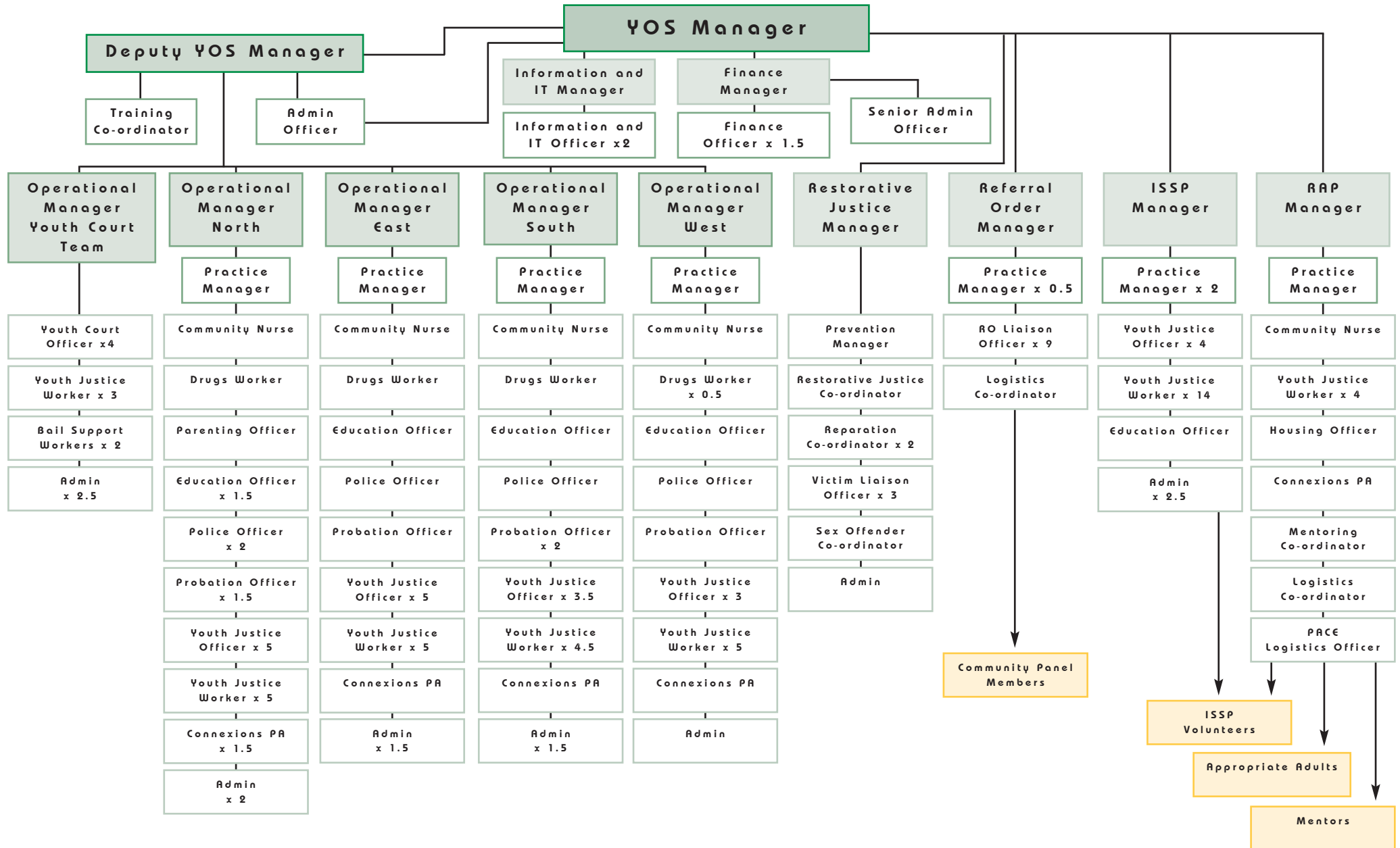
The Youth Justice Board is an executive, non-departmental public body, established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to oversee and evaluate Youth Justice issues.

The Youth Offending Service, through the Leeds City Council Chief Executive, is responsible to this body.

The Youth Offending Service Manager is supervised by the Chief Officer, Children and Young People's Social Care and, at a local level, the YOS works closely with the Leeds Community Safety Partnership, particularly the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and the Safer Leeds Partnership. Close links with Integrated Youth Support Services are also in place.



Structure



Where to find us

North, Restorative Justice and Bail

Support Teams

Enterprise House
12 St Paul's Street
Leeds
LS1 2LE
0113 247 5710

West Team

The Hough Lane Centre
Hough Lane
Bramley
Leeds
LS13 3RD
0113 3950 479

Management HQ and Referral Order Team

31 Moor Road
Headingley
Leeds
LS6 4BG
0113 214 4650

East Team

Osmondthorpe One Stop Centre
81a Wykebeck Mount
LS9 0JE
0113 247 5034

South, ISSP and RAP Teams

47 Marshall Street
Holbeck
Leeds
LS11 9RZ
0113 214 5300

Court Team

Level 5
Leeds Magistrates Court
28 Westgate
Leeds
LS1 3UP
0113 214 5110



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www.leedsyos.org.uk