

Prevention Strategy

(Croydon Youth Justice Service and Youth Engagement Team)

DRAFT

Summary:

In compliance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the Youth Justice Team has a duty to prevent and reduce offending behaviour. In line with this core statutory duty this document sets out the prevention strategy applied in the London Borough of Croydon detailing operationally the prevention offer in collaboration with the Youth Engagement Team and the Voluntary Community Sector in addition to Primary Partners such as Education, Police, Health and Croydon Social Care.

Definition of prevention and diversion (as set out by the Youth Justice board)

What is prevention?

Prevention is 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.

What is diversion?

Diversion is where children with a linked offence receive an alternative outcome that does not result in a criminal record, avoids escalation into the formal youth justice system and associated stigmatisation. This may involve the YJS delivering support / intervention that may or may not be voluntary and/or signposting children (and parent/carers) into relevant services. All support should be proportionate, aimed at addressing unmet needs and supporting prosocial life choices.

Aims and objectives of the Prevention and Diversion programmes and projects

The Croydon Youth Justice Service, in partnership with the Youth Engagement Team, aims to stop children from entering the youth justice system, and for young people who enter the youth justice system, to minimise occurrences of re-offending.

This is achieved through the child first approach which focuses on treating young people as children (rather than like adult offenders), empowering young people to develop their individual strengths and capacities, and to develop a pro-social identity. We also promote supportive diversion and try to minimise the stigma that stems from being involved with the youth justice system. Lastly, we aim to meaningfully involve young people in the decision making around the programmes we offer, ensuring that the work we do is tailored to the needs of the specific young people we work with, which encourages their engagement and social inclusion.

We do this by capturing the voice of the young people in regular quarterly consultation events, where young people who we work with are invited to take part and give us feedback on the work we do and the programmes we provide. We also provide questionnaire versions of the consultation, for young people who are unable to attend the consultation events.

Young people who take part in the consultation events, are then invited to represent the views of their peers in the Croydon Youth Assembly meetings.

Prevention programmes delivered in Schools and community:

- **Safe and Well:**

This is a tailored programme for pupils that have been referred due to one of the following reasons:

- Had at least one fixed term exclusion or are approaching this
- Are displaying ASB in their local community and/or school
- Families have been affected by knife crime

The six-week programme focuses on building resilience in students alongside helping them identify and understand risky situations within their communities. The aim of the programme is designed to provide each student with a range of strategies to support and equip them to be their best self and identify problematic situations. A classroom with tables and chairs will be required.

Some specific areas of focus will include:

- Safety within and around the community
- Identifying different types of risky situations
- Behaviour
- Social skills and peer relationships

The programme is designed to be reflective and engaging with developing new skills, teaching students to learn about themselves being the foundation of the programme.

- **Exploitation Programme:**

This programme is used to create awareness around exploitation, in order to prevent and also help young people who are already victims or are at risk or becoming victims of domestic violence and or sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and child criminal exploitation (Grooming).

This programme will use different tools and resources to create awareness for young people and to identify if young people may need additional help if they are going through any of the issues mentioned or related issues.

This programme is delivered in mainstream schools, PRU's and youth provisions, such as the youth clubs, after school clubs and many other settings.

This programme is also delivered to young people who have been identified to be in the justice system, whereby young people can attend these sessions as part of their probation order.

This programme is aimed at young people between the ages of 11 – 18

- **Transition Programme:**

This is a tailored programme for pupils that have been referred due to schools concerns about making a successful transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

The programme is focused on increasing confidence and reducing anxiety in relation to moving from Year 6 to Year 7.

The Transition programme focuses on several areas for consideration linked to safety and wellbeing and also looks to inspire young people with the benefits they will gain for their future ambitions through secondary school and how the Youth Engagement Team and its partners can provide engagement outside of school.

- **Empower Me**

This is a tailored programme for pupils that have been referred due to one of the following reasons:

- At risk of being excluded
- Not being able to control their behaviour or manage their emotions effectively

The programme will empower young people and help them to be able to reflect on their emotions , look at how to channel negative emotions in positive ones and changing the meaning to the behaviour that is being displayed. It will also help them to be able to communicate effectively based on their emotional regulation.

- **Safe and Well**

Every Choice Matters was a schools workshops programme developed over several years in Wandsworth and was updated for Croydon in 2017. An MPS Commendation was awarded for this work and seen as best practice by the Youth Justice Board.

The Aims are as follows:

- To raise awareness of the consequences of SYV/ offending and harm related to this.
- To consider the impact on the victim, the perpetrator, family and community.
- To highlight the influence of social media on offending and offer strategies to deal with this.

What is it and how does it work?

- A workshop tool to prevent young people offending.
- The resource. One hour workshop. A short film, on screen questions and answers and interviews. Scripts written by young people, they act in it and it is filmed in their community.
- Outline- To be used as a discursive tool, to raise awareness of the consequences of offending.

Appropriate for young people aged 10 upwards. **Themes include: Knife Crime, Victim, Robbery, Moped enabled theft, Stop and Sear, Drug dealing, County Lines, Gangs, Sexual bullying, Homophobia, Social Media.**

- **Outreach and detached.**
- **Hubs**

Diversion Projects:

- **Engage**

Turnaround Project

The Turnaround Programme aims to provide early intervention to prevent and divert children aged 10-17 on the cusp of entering the youth justice system by improving outcomes for them. The programme is based on the Early Help model and uses a holistic and systemic approach.

The overall aims of the Turnaround programme are to: achieve positive outcomes to prevent young people going on to offend; ensure all young people on the cusp of the youth justice system are consistently offered a needs assessment and the opportunity for support; improve the socio-emotional, mental health and wellbeing of children.

What the Programme Offers

- In line with the early help assessment processes, we complete a holistic assessment of the family within 30 days, create a plan, and hold Team Around the Family meetings. We will also complete a child friendly plan with the young people we are working with. We case record on CRS – Early Help module.
- Provides support to the family for up to 12-months.
- Work with parents and provide one to one intervention for young people around topics such: weapons awareness, victim awareness, consequential thinking, and exploitation.
- Signpost to appropriate services within the Council (in line with early help processes) i.e., parenting courses.
- Links to external services which we can utilise, such as education, training and employment opportunities, youth club/activities in the area, mentoring (Crystal Palace and Mentivity), substance use services and emotional well-being services.
- Referrals to the Education, Employment and Training Adviser and Speech and Language Therapist who sit within the YOS.
- Work with CLIP/Gangs team to organise workshops for our young people, including a Young Men's Group which includes intervention around identity.

Eligibility criteria:

- Interviewed under caution following arrest or subject to a criminal investigation attending a voluntary interview.
- Subject to No Further Action (NFA) decision (including Outcome 22).
- Issued with a Community Resolution (Outcome 8).
- Receiving a first-time youth caution, not including conditional caution.

- Released under investigation (RUI) or those subject to pre-charge bail (PCB).
- Those discharged by a court.
- those acquitted at court; and/or those fined by a court.
- In receipt of Community Protection Orders (CPO), Civil Orders and/or Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) for anti-social behaviour.

Referral Process:

Referrals must be made within three months of a child meeting the eligibility criteria. Children referred to the Turnaround Programme are not eligible if they have an Early Help plan or another existing multi-agency programme of support. YOT's have the discretion to use Turnaround funding to fund interventions for cases that are open as children in need (CIN).

Children open to child protection plans and looked after children are ineligible for the Turnaround Programme. Children referred to Turnaround Programme are not eligible if they have previously been on the YJS statutory caseload or have received intervention from the Programme in the past.

The programme receives referrals through:

- Croydon Children's Social Care – MASH.
- Police send Merlin's regarding young people who have received Community Resolutions or have been arrested.
- If a young person is open on a Child In Need Plan, Social Workers can send a referral form to YJSTurnaroundProgramme@croydon.gov.uk.

- **CLIP**
- **Service request**
- **Hubs**