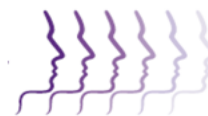


Leicestershire & Rutland
Safer Communities Strategy
Board



Making Leicestershire & Rutland Safer

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD

25 June 2026

YOUTH JUSTICE ANNUAL UPDATE

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Board Members with an annual update on matters relating to Youth Justice. This relates to those children who are engaged with the Youth Justice Service through a voluntary prevention offer or through statutory work directed by the Out of Court Disposal Panel or through Court.
2. Leicestershire County Council is commissioned to deliver prevention and statutory youth justice work on behalf of Rutland County Council.

Relevant Action Log Updates – Action 3

3. **Neurodiversity data** – A snapshot of data taken in June across the Youth Justice caseload found that 49% children were assessed as having a neurodevelopmental need.
4. **Disproportionality data** – Data relating to over-representation in the criminal justice system can only be accessed for Leicestershire, therefore, no comparison can be made locally or nationally. Work with a Race Equity Expert is due to commence in July and is funded through a project called the Whole Area Model through the Youth Endowment Fund. This creates an opportunity to understand how the partnership can best address issues of disproportionality.

Performance Headlines 2025-2026

5. Performance continues to be strong across Leicestershire and mirrors the positive performance from 2024-2025.
6. **First Time Entrants (FTE's)** into the Criminal Justice System (CJS) – This measure remains low at 90 between Jan 2024- December 2025. Performance is well ahead of the East Midlands rate of 128, that of the average Youth Justice Service (YJS) at 148 and the England rate at 163.
7. **Use of Custody** - The use of Custody for children across Leicestershire remains low and has continued to do so for the last four years at the rate of 0.04. Again, performance remains strong when compared with the East Midlands and England at 0.10.

8. **Offence type** - Violence against the person remains the offence that children are most convicted for. The peak age of children becoming involved with Youth Justice is 16-17, this used to be 13-14.
9. Performance is monitored quarterly by the statutory Youth and Justice Partnership Board which is chaired by the Director of Children's Services at Leicestershire County Council.

Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-2027

3. The Youth Justice Plan 2026-2027 was approved by Full Council on 13 May 2026. It was prepared by the Youth and Justice Management Board and provides strategic direction for the current year with a focus on preventing children from entering the criminal justice system and improving outcomes for those who are in the criminal justice system. The Plan is Appendix One of this report.
4. In pulling key headlines from the Youth Justice Plan; over the past year, the Service has continued to embed Child First practice across the service through a comprehensive training plan that has involved improving the knowledge of the workforce, improving service approaches and to focus on supporting children to communicate and engage better with adults and professionals. This has been bolstered with a strengthened focus on health and addressing and understanding inequalities.
5. Significant work has been undertaken to support victims. This has included the establishing of a Restorative Approaches Team, a full victim offer which includes a dedicated pathway for victims who are children and ensuring that victim voice is heard. This is a focus area for His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) when they inspect the Service.
6. Work has been undertaken in collaboration with the Police around the appropriate diversion of children away from Court. This has included the development of a Joint Decision and Resolution Panel (JDRP), engaging children in full assessments and meaningful interventions and ensuring victims are engaged in the process where they consent to be. The partnership has developed a Deferred Prosecution Scheme for low-level motoring offences.
7. From 1st April 2026, the Service and partnership was compliant with the newly introduced Knife Crime legislation which offers stringent oversight of decision making, monitoring the impact of interventions and scrutiny responsibilities being placed on the Youth and Justice Partnership Boards as written in statute.
8. Over 2026-2027, there are five key areas of focus, two of which are a continuation around health and wellbeing and services for victims. During this year a Speech and Language Therapy service will be commissioned.

9. There is a focus on improving education, training and employment outcomes for children. This has continually presented as a challenge in the service as offending related behaviour and criminal convictions are significant barriers for children. More recently, education and training opportunities for young people in general are significantly worse than they have ever been.
10. Turnaround Funding has been received for a three-year period to focus on prevention and diversion work. The service is working in collaboration with the Police to develop a triage and intervention function to ensure that every child who has had contact with the Police has a pathway of support offered where they consent. Finally, for those children who have complex support systems in place, it is important that this makes sense to children and that this is co-ordinated around expertise.
11. In May 2026, a new white paper was agreed called “Cutting Youth Crime Changing Young Lives.” This paper focuses on reforming the youth justice system. The detail that helps deliver on this white paper has not yet been developed and it has confirmed that this will be undertaken in collaboration with the sector.

Recommendations for the Board

12. The Board is asked to note the contents of this Report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Youth Justice Plan 2026-2027

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