



December saw a flurry of meeting requests keeping us busy up until the festive break. ...

AYM Activities at a glance...

- Roundtable event talking about YJ with Sir Nic Dakin MP
- Attending the Home Office Roundtable to discuss Policing, Crime and Justice
- Executive Board Members meeting
- Changes to our AYM team
- Attending the Youth Future Hubs Roundtable



In this issue:

- Page 2: News and highlights from the Executive Board
- Pages 3 & 4: Highlights & Updates for all
- Pages 5, 6 & 7: Updates & Research
- Page 8 & 9: Training, Events and Vacancies
- Page 9: Dates for your diary
- Page 10: AYM Regional Representatives
- Page 11: Stay in touch with the AYM



News from the Executive Board -



Welcome back from what were hopefully some restful days. Best wishes from us all at AYM for a happy productive and successful 2025.

Anticipation for the year ahead is high, with numerous work streams underway with the Ministry of Justice and wider departments such as DfE and DoH linking in with areas including potential secure school two and Youth Futures Prevention Partnerships. We will keep you updated on any outcomes for the Spending Review and anticipated 'quick wins' for our new government.

This year also heralds the AYM 25th Anniversary! Watch out for events like the AYM Members Day in June and extra briefs from our Chair, Jacqui Belfield-Smith MBE as she returns to articulate the AYM priorities for the coming year.



A welcome to Ruth Hayles (IOW YJS) and Bea Nigolian (Wokingham YJS) who join us as the AYM regional and deputy representatives for the Southeast. More on our newest members in the next edition.

A busy meeting period in December (in the run up to holiday period). Alison Sabaroche attended the ministerial roundtable on Youth Justice and heard how the government are determined to improve custodial options, whilst still investing in targeted prevention. Charlie Spencer met with the DfE and wider AYM executives were invited into the Home Office to discuss the ongoing aim to establish Young Futures hub models. No clear timelines or detail to share as yet, but the engagement was perceived as positive interest in improving youth justice outcomes.

Finally, please do remember to make contact with your good news, updates and opportunities to share across the AYM membership.

Happy New Year All!
The AYM Team.

Highlights & Updates:



...to the Wakefield Youth Justice Service area partnership for attaining the **Youth Justice SEND Quality Lead Status with a Child First Commendation**

Wakefield Area Partnership has been an active participant in the SEND Youth Justice Award framework since 2020 multi-agency provision has further evolved:

- ETE Team resources include a full time Speech and Language Therapist, a Careers Guidance Practitioner and an Education and Intervention Support Worker; Professional development of Trauma Informed/Awareness, Neurodiversity, Autism Education Trust, and Emotionally Based School Avoidance; Embedding of Case Formulation; Enhanced information sharing and escalation across all partners; Deep-dive activities undertaken to inform the Youth Justice Partnership Board of emerging strengths as well as enabling the targeting development.

The district achieved the highest possible rating in inspection, and services working together under “We are Wakefield”.

Follow [this link](#) for more information about how YJS can work towards gaining this award via AYM and Microlink working in collaboration.



Last month the Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) published their **tackling disproportionality action plan**.

Having accepted that there is evidence of disproportionality in their decision making, plans reference a need for listening to lived experience, challenging partners and selves and proactively working to restore public confidence with affected communities. Awareness of, and working with, localised action plans will be key for Youth Justice Services and wider justice partnerships.

British Transport Police will be contacting heads of service with a view to signing off a revised information sharing agreement between each local authority and BTP. Richard Gardner from BTP wrote: *“The intention is as per the process three years ago. If the Association of Youth Offending Team Managers (AYM) and YOT Manager Cymry (YMC) can provide feedback / agree the contents. We will then reach out to the heads of service to sign the agreed version. Obviously as a national police force, BTP must work to maintain a level of consistency and corpocracy within their national agreements. As such, we are unable to establish individual bespoke ISAs with every YOT / YOS.”*

The AYM exec reviewed the document in December we were content to recommend its acceptance at a local level.





Consultation:

The London Mayor's Office [police-and-crime-plan-2025-2029](#) is out for consultation until 23:59 on Wednesday 12th February 2025.

Sadiq Khan - Mayor of London



Youth Justice Board Review:

Youth justice minister Sir Nic Dakin MP has [announced](#) a review of the Youth Justice Board (YJB), conducted as part of the Public Bodies Review Programme.

Steve Crocker (former President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services) and well known across youth justice, to lead on the review. He will provide objective analysis of the YJB and the department. Steve Crocker will also lead a period of stakeholder engagement across England and Wales. AYM will keep members updated.



Steve Crocker - Former President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services



Department
for Education

Working Together to Safeguard Children Review:

Working Together to Safeguard Children is the multi-agency statutory guidance that sets out expectations for the system that provides help, support and protection for children and their families, giving practitioners clarity about what is required of them individually and how they need to work in partnership with each other to deliver effective services. In December 2023, this guidance was updated with a focus on the following core themes: improved multi-agency working, a clear child-centred approach in working with children and their families, and decisive and effective multi-agency child protection response.


We are currently undertaking a review of these changes to Working Together to Safeguard Children introduced in 2023 and we are seeking your feedback on the new principles for working with parents and carers, new multi-agency expectations, new national multi-agency child protection standards, and changes to section 17 including clarification that a broader range of practitioners can lead the direct work with children and their families. We want to develop an increased understanding of, and stronger evidence on, how Working Together 2023 is being implemented to inform future reviews of the guidance.

We are inviting responses from as many people as possible at all levels, across all agencies, to ensure we get a multi-agency response. The survey opens today, Monday 9th December, and will **close at 3pm on Friday 10th January**. The survey can be found [here](#)

Your responses will be used by policy teams within the Department for Education to inform future policy planning and reviews of guidance.

We look forward to receiving your responses to the survey. If you have any issues or questions, or to request a PDF copy of this survey, please contact us at workingtogether.statutoryguidance@education.gov.uk

Policy of Interest: Children's Wellbeing at School Bill



| | |
|--|---|
| Three branded uniform items maximum | Flexi-schooled pupils will need to be on council registers |
| Enhanced school attendance orders | Special school parents need council permission for home education |
| New legal definition of full-time education | Ofsted gets power to seize illegal schools' evidence |
| Teacher misconduct agency scope expanded | Councils get power to direct academy admissions |
| New non-compliance directions for academy trusts | QTS and national curriculum requirement for academies |
| No automatic academy orders | Councils can open new schools (but SoS will decide) |
| National pay rules extended to academies ... but not for CEOs! | Legal duty to co-operate on admissions... |
| And councils can object to academies' capacity | |

The Government published the children's wellbeing and schools bill earlier this month. Given the inter-agency working, interest for youth justice services will be significant. See opposite the key 15 policy recommendations.



The most recent youth custody data was released in December.

See [Youth_Custody_Population_Report_-_October_2024](#) for details

Research:

Child First?

Examining children's perspectives of their 'effective' collaboration in youth justice decision-making

We are pleased to share insightful research by Andrea Nisbet of Loughborough University. Andrea spoke at our recent Autumn conference.

Published December 2024, provides details of a Child First research project undertaken to gain a greater understanding of what children think about their collaboration in youth justice decision-making processes.

Participation and engagement of children in youth justice processes and practise is vital, particularly since the Youth Justice Board's adoption of Child First justice as its guiding principle and key strategic objective.

The study explored children's collaboration in decisions affecting them at all stages of the Youth Justice System and focused on four interconnected research questions:

1. Collaboration understandings:

How do children perceive and understand their collaboration in the decision-making processes that underpin responses to their offending across the Youth Justice System?

2. Collaboration objectives:

What do children believe should be the objectives of their collaboration in decision-making processes? Do these perceived objectives/benefits differ to those held by adult professionals – if so, how and why?

3. Effectiveness:

How do children perceive and experience 'effective' collaboration practice, such as the effectiveness of processes and how collaboration outcomes should be measured?

4. Practice development:

What is the extent and nature of children's 'Child First' (e.g., child-centric, collaborative, promotional/positive, diversionary) youth justice experiences (e.g., of decision-making processes) and how could these be improved?

Andrea will be speaking at Microlink's **Child First Effective Partnership Practice Webinar #11** around Securing the Child's Voice in the development of Youth Justice Policy, Practice and Research.

When: Wednesday 15th January 2025: 12.30-13.30

*Link to register can be found [here](#)

Social Care Services Child First practice is "no decision about us, without us". The full participation of children is an essential ingredient, not just within the context of their own pathway through the Youth Justice system, but in shaping local and national policy and practice.

Andrea Nisbet from Loughborough University and Kathy Hampson from Aberystwyth University will share some of the recent findings from a Nuffield Foundation-funded project aimed at learning more about effective participation, within Youth Justice Services, in custody, but also interactions and engagement with the police, courts and children's social care services.

You can find the full series of 'Child First Effective Partnership Practice Webinars' by Microlink PC Education [here](#).

'Too Skint for School', a new report published by the Centre for Young Lives funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.



You can read the full report [here](#).

There are 4.3m children growing up in poverty in the UK, the highest number ever recorded, with around 1 million children experiencing destitution –the most severe form of hardship – in a single year.

Schools in England are also struggling with an attendance crisis, with around 150,000 children missing half or more of their schooling.

The report highlights how children eligible for Free School Meals are more than twice as likely to be absent from school than their peers.

The report makes several recommendations to Government including:

- Putting more money into the pockets of families through the Child Poverty Strategy
- Bringing down the cost of school
- Identify families at risk of poverty at the earliest opportunity.
- Invest in effective practice and research.





YOUTH ENDOWMENT FUND

Focus on - Effectiveness of Stop and Search

Majority of teens support stop and search, but doubts remain about fairness

YEF latest theme for the 'Children, violence and vulnerability report' sheds light on teenagers' attitudes towards stop and search powers in England and Wales. While the majority (68%) support the police having stop and search powers, only 56% believe these powers are applied fairly. Learn More [HERE](#)

The [YEF Toolkit](#) highlights that increasing stop and search has a limited impact on reducing violence, with UK studies estimating only a 5% reduction in violent crime.

Alternative strategies like [hot spots policing](#) (14% reduction) and [focused deterrence](#) programmes (33% reduction) show greater effectiveness.

Support for stop and search and perceptions of fairness differ according to children's experiences.

Support for Stop and Search

68% of teenagers support police stop and search, but opinions vary by ethnicity:

- White children: 70% support
- Asian and mixed ethnicity children: 63% support
- Black children: 59% support

Perceptions of Fairness:

Fairness in stop and search is questioned, with only 49% of Black and mixed ethnicity teens feeling it's applied fairly, compared to 57% of White teens.

Experiences of Stop and Search:

Among the 11% of teenagers stopped and searched in the past year:

- 70% reported police politeness
- 66% felt respected

However, minority ethnic teenagers were less likely to feel treated respectfully compared to their White peers.

Teens' Overall Views on the Police:

- 54% believe the police do a good job in their local area, though perceptions vary by ethnicity.

Teenagers with direct police contact tend to view the police more positively, with 59% rating their local police positively compared to 53% without contact.

What do children and young people think about the police?

Training, Events & Vacancies:

YJLC Summit 2025 Collaborating with Children Applying Child First Principles in Practice

King's College, London
Monday 03 February 2025
13.30 – 17.30

YJLC
Youth Justice Legal Centre

Youth Justice Legal Centre: Collaborating with Children - Applying Child First Principles in Practice

Preventing 'lost learning' through increasing attendance and reducing exclusions.

See [here](#) for more details.

Children & Young People Now conference; in partnership with TCES on 12th February 2025 at the Hallam Conference Centre, Central London.



Children &
Young People Now

To book your place please see [here](#).

Vacancies:



CQC staff have a wide range of skills and work across many disciplines.

Current vacancies include Inspector (Local Authority Assessment Team); Benefits Manager; Facilities Assistant; IT Business Systems and Operations Manager.

Benefits include generous leave entitlement, NHS or Nest pension schemes and a wide range of employee discounts. Most roles offer flexible locations with the choice to be home-based.

See the individual job listings for [more information](#).



**Barking &
Dagenham**

Team Manager – Youth Justice Service (Barking & Dagenham)

Location: London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

Salary: £55,620.00 to £59,736.00 PA (Full time/Permanent)

Closing date: 06/01/2025

For more information see [here](#).



Youth Justice Service Social Worker

Location: Isle of Wight YJS
 Salary: £36,778.00 to £39,522.00 PA, plus marketing supplement and standby allowance (Full time/Permanent)
 Closing date: 05/01/2025
 For more information see [here](#).



Business & Performance Manager (Youth Justice)

Location: Cheshire Youth Justice Services (Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Halton & Warrington)
 Salary: £40,476.00 to £46,581.00 PA (Full time/Permanent)
 Closing date: 02/02/2025
 For more information see [here](#).



Dates for Your Diary

| Title | Date | Venue |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Executive Board meeting | 10th March 2025 | MS Teams |
| Executive Board meeting | 17th June 2025 | Warwick Conference Centres |
| Annual General Meeting | 18th June 2025 | Warwick Conference Centres |
| Annual Members Day | 18th June 2025 | Warwick Conference Centres |
| Executive Board meeting | 17th September 2025 | MS Teams |

Click [here](#) for contact details of all Executive Board members.

AYM Regional Representatives

Please contact your regional representative (see below) if you wish the Executive Board to consider a particular issue, or if you have an item you would like to bring to their attention at one of their meetings.

We welcome observers at our Executive Board meetings, if you wish to attend one, please contact our secretary at secretary@aym.org.uk

NORTHWEST

Regional Rep: Kathy Gill (Wirral YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Tom Lang (Manchester YJS)

NORTHEAST

Regional Rep: Kay Dargue (South Tees YOS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Sam Starmer (Cumbria YJS)

YORKS & THE HUMBER

Regional Rep: Sarah Goddard (Bradford YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Chris Sweeting (Kirklees YJS)

WESTMIDLANDS

Regional Rep: Celia Payne (Wolverhampton YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Nick Jeffreys (Coventry YJS)

EAST MIDLANDS

Regional Rep: Carly Turner (Leicestershire YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: John Evans (Nottinghamshire YJS)

SOUTHWEST

Regional Rep: David Webb (Dorset Combined YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Michael O'Connor (North Somerset YJS)

EAST OF ENGLAND

Regional Rep: Pat Jennings (Bedfordshire YOS)
Deputy Reg Rep: VACANCY

LONDON

Regional Rep: Michelle Edwards (Newham YOT)
Deputy Reg Rep: Alison Sabaroche (Hammersmith & Fulham YJS)

SOUTHEAST

Regional Rep: Ruth Hayles (Isle of Wight YJS)
Deputy Reg Rep: Bea Nigolian (Wokingham YJS)





Get in touch...

Visit our website here - www.aym.org.uk



Follow us on LinkedIn [here](#)

Email our Editor - lisa.harvey-messina@aym.org.uk



For general enquiries or to contact the AYM,
please email us at -
aymsupport@aym.org.uk



This AYM Bulletin shares items which we feel are of interest. Inclusion should not be taken as user endorsement for products or views.