

Youth Offending Service

The Youth Offending Service aims to prevent young people from offending, and to reduce re-offending by young people already known to the police and the courts. The team is made up of staff employed by the council to provide youth justice services, and specialists from partner agencies such as the police, social services, education, youth and connexions services, health and probation services and voluntary organisations.

The YOS works with young people aged 8 and above in its preventative service and 10 and above in the statutory sector. Young people aged 10 and above are considered to be criminally responsible and can be sentenced to fines, community orders or custody at this age. The following information outlines the roles of the staff that are involved in working these young people and the court orders and voluntary provision that are available.

For any further questions or information about the YOS service please contact:

Ealing Youth Offending Service
2 Cheltenham Place
Acton
London W3 8JS
0208 993 9555

Youth Inclusion and Support Panel

The aim of YISP is to identify children and young people who are considered at risk of offending and help them to avoid entering the Youth Justice System. The services offered provide support to the young people by providing activities that divert them away from crime.

Police

Police have access to information about the offending histories of young people referred to the Youth Offending Service which also takes referrals from the police after final warnings; contact the victims of young people's offending to establish whether direct reparation (making amends for the crime committed) is appropriate; and participate in crime diversion schemes.

Education

Young people who are excluded from School are more than twice as likely to commit offences as young people in school. Therefore good links with school and alternative education provision are maintained to ensure any education needs are addressed and young people are supported in their school place. A supplementary education Teacher is also available to offer one-to-one tuition in order to support young people re-engage with education. The young people aged 16 and over are also helped to find college courses, either directly or through the Connexions service.

Parenting

A Strengthening Families and Strengthening Communities parenting programme is run for parents who are referred to the YOS either for voluntary or statutory parenting support. In addition to this programme one-to-one support is offered by the parenting worker to further support families.



Mentoring

Ealing YOS has a partnership with SOVA (Supporting Others through Volunteer Action) to match young people with a volunteer mentor.

Health

The health worker undertakes assessments and referrals in the areas of mental health and support young people on a one-to-one basis, they liaise regularly with both internal and external services to ensure these needs are addressed and met appropriately.

Substance Misuse

The substance misuse worker works with young people who have issues with drug or alcohol use and support them in addressing these issues.

Offending Behaviour Work

Youth Offending Service supervising officers work with young people and manage any court order they are on. They address their offending behaviour and welfare issues in individual and group sessions and refer to appropriate services both within and external to the YOS with the view to preventing further offending.

Youth Offending Disposals

A Reprimand is a formal verbal warning given by a police officer to a young person who admits they are guilty of a minor first offence.

A Warning is a formal verbal warning given by a police officer to a young person who admits their guilt for a first or second offence. Unlike a Reprimand, however, the young person is also assessed to determine the causes of their offending behaviour and a programme of activities is identified to address them.

Acceptable Behaviour Contract

An Acceptable Behaviour Contract is given when a local authority and youth offending team (YOS) identify a young person who is behaving anti-socially at a low level. With the young person and their parents/carers, they agree a contract under which the young person agrees to stop the patterns of behaviour that are causing nuisance to the local community and undertake activities to address their offending behaviour. If they breach the terms of the contract, the local authority can use this to get an Anti-Social Behaviour Order applied to the young person.

An **Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)** can be used against anyone who is 10 years of age or over who has behaved in a manner that caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to someone or some people who do not live in their own household. An ASBO may prohibit the young person from going to particular places or doing particular things. If the person subject to an ASBO does not comply with the order, they can be prosecuted.

Any one of the following agencies can apply for an order, subject to a legal obligation to consult with other agencies.

- Local authorities
- Police Forces including British Transport Police· Registered Social Landlords (as defined by Section 1 of the Housing Act 1996)
- Housing Action Trusts (as defined by Section 62 of Housing Act 1988)

Compliance with an ISO is a condition that may be contained within a stand-alone ASBO for 10-17 year olds and impose positive conditions on the young person to address the underlying causes of the behaviour that led to the ASBO. An ISO may last up to six months and can require a young person to attend up to two sessions a week under the supervision of the youth offending team (YOS). Breach of an ISO is a criminal offence which may be punished by way of a financial penalty.

A **Referral Order** is given to a young person being dealt with for the first time in court for an offence to which they have pleaded guilty. A Referral Order requires the young person to attend a referral order panel, which is made up of two volunteers from the local community and panel adviser from YOS. The panel, with the young person, their parents/carers and the victim (where appropriate), agree a contract lasting between three and 12 months. The purpose the contract is to address the causes of the offending behaviour and may involve reparation.

The conviction is 'spent' once the contract has been successfully completed. This means that in most circumstances the offence will not have to be disclosed by the young person when applying for work.

A young person receiving a **Conditional Discharge** receives no immediate punishment. A period of between six months and three years is set and, as long as the young person does not commit a further offence during this period, no punishment will be imposed. However, if the young person commits another offence during this period, they can be brought resentenced for the offence for which the discharge was imposed in addition to the new offence. Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, courts can only use this sentence for offenders who have received a warning in the preceding two years in exceptional circumstances.

A young person is given an **Absolute Discharge** where he is found guilty of an offence but no action is taken against them.

The size of a **fine** reflects the offence committed and the offender's financial circumstances. For a person under 16 years of age, the payment of the fine is the responsibility of their parents/carers and their financial circumstances will be taken into account when the level of the fine is set.

An **Action Plan Order** is an intensive, community-based programme lasting three months. The order is supervised by the Youth Offending Service (YOS). The programme developed by the YOS is specifically tailored to the risks and needs of the young person. It can include reparation, education and training, attending an Attendance Centre or a variety of other programmes to address a young person's offending behaviour.

An **Attendance Centre Order** sentences a young person to attend an attendance centre.

The main purpose of attendance centres is to put a restriction on young offenders' leisure time – they are open on Saturdays for two or three hours. Their programmes concentrate on group work to give attendees basic skills – such as literacy and numeracy, life skills, cookery, first aid and money management – as well as encouraging attendees to make better use of leisure time.



The programme also includes victim awareness sessions, which consider the impact of offending on individuals and the community and how the young person might make amends; and sessions on drug and alcohol awareness, and sexual health matters.

The order can last up to 36 hours depending on the age of the offender and the seriousness of the offence.

Reparation Orders are designed to help young offenders understand the consequences of their offending and take responsibility for their behaviour. They require the young person to make reparation for their offence either directly to the victim (this can involve victim/offender mediation if both parties agree) or indirectly to the community. Examples of this might be cleaning up graffiti or undertaking community work. The order is overseen by the YOS.

Curfew Order

This sentence requires a young person to remain for set periods of time at a specified place, and can be given along side other community orders. The time period can be between 2-12 hours a day and the sentence can last no more than:

- six months for those 16 years of age and above
- three months for those under 16 years of age.

A **Supervision Order** can last up to three years. A range of conditions can be attached to a Supervision Order when the sentence is used for more serious offences. These are called 'specified activities' and can last for up to 90 days. Examples of 'specified activities' might be participation in an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP), drug treatment (for young people aged 16+), curfews or residence requirements, which might require a young person to live in local authority accommodation for the period of the sentence.

A young person receiving a Supervision Order is also required to take part in activities set by the Youth Offending Team (YOS), which could include make reparation either to the victim or the community and programmes to address their offending behaviour, such as anger management.

Community Rehabilitation Order

This sentence is only available to courts for young people aged 16-17. It is equivalent to a Supervision Order, but for this specific age range. It is supervised by a Youth Offending Team (YOS) and can include activities such as repairing the harm caused by their offence, programmes to address offending behaviour or an **Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP)**.

This sentence is only available to courts for young people aged 16-17. It requires a young person to complete unpaid community work for a period of 40-240 hours. Examples of the type of activities involved are:

- carpentry
- conservation
- decorating
- working with the elderly or vulnerable.

The sentence is supervised by the Probation Service Community Service Team.

The **Drug Treatment and Testing Order** is used for young offenders aged 16 or 17 who have drug misuse issues that require treatment. The order lasts between six months and three years and the young person must agree to comply with it before it can be made. Under the order, the young person receives regular drug testing and treatment in the community. The young person receiving the order is supervised by the Probation Service.

Parenting Orders can be given to the parents/carers of young people who offend, truant or who have received Anti-Social Behaviour Order or Sexual Offences Prevention Order. It does not result in the parent/carer getting a criminal record. A parent/carer who receives an order will normally be required to attend counselling or guidance sessions for a period of up to three months. They will also have conditions imposed on them such as attending meetings with teachers at their child's school, ensuring their child does not visit a particular place unsupervised or ensuring their child is at home at particular times. These conditions can last for a period up to 12 months. A parent/carer can be prosecuted for failing to keep the requirements of the order.

The **Detention and Training Order (DTO)** sentences a young person to custody. It can be given to 12- to 17-year-olds. The length of the sentence must be either 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 18 or 24 months. The first half of the sentence is spent in custody while the second half is spent in the community under the supervision of the YOS. The court can require the young person to be on an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) as a condition of the community period of the sentence.

A DTO is only given by the courts to young people who represent a high level of risk, have a significant offending history or are persistent offenders and where no other sentence will manage their risks effectively. The seriousness of the offence is always taken into account when a young person is sentenced to a DTO.

If a young person is convicted by the Crown Court of an offence for which an adult could receive at least 14 years in custody, they may be sentenced to long term detention up to the same maximum period as applies to adults or, for murder, during Her Majesty's pleasure. If they are sentenced to less than four years, they will leave custody at the halfway point of their sentence and be supervised on licence by their supervising officer until the three-quarters point. If certain conditions apply, the young person may be released on a tag up to 134 days earlier, under the Home Detention Curfew scheme. For young people sentenced to four years or more, if they are successful at their parole hearing, they will leave custody at the half-way point. If they are unsuccessful, they will leave at the two-thirds point. In both cases, they will be supervised by their supervising officer until the three-quarters point.