

Version 1.1



**CHILDREN, FAMILIES
AND EDUCATION**

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL SERVICES

**PROTOCOL BETWEEN
KENT YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE
AND
KENT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL
SERVICES**

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Date of Equalities Impact Assessment:

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1. Commitment

Kent Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Children's Social Services (CSS) are committed to:

- (i) promoting the best interests of children and young people living within the boundaries of Kent County Council
- (ii) fully co-operate in the delivery of services when any of this population, including those with a disability and those unaccompanied seeking asylum, are known to both agencies
- (iii) reviewing the effectiveness of outcomes achieved using agreed and shared performance measures
- (iv) the sharing of case related information in line with the best practice set out in the Cross Government Information Sharing Guidance

The guiding principles for this co-operation will be those detailed in "Working Together" (DfES 2006).

"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise. Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services".

Working Together 1.14

2. Organisational Status & Principal Responsibilities

The Youth Offending Service: a multi agency partnership responsible for meeting, in the county, the principal aim (Crime & Disorder Act 1998) of the youth justice system which is to prevent offending by children and young people. The partnership must also (Children Act 2004) ensure YOS promotes and safeguards the welfare of children

Children's Social Services: are managed within the Children, Families and Education Directorate of Kent County Council and like YOS are represented within the Kent Children's Trust. Core objectives include the protection of children, the keeping together of families, the provision of security for Looked After Children and the promotion of effective parenting to enable children to have healthy, safe and successful lifestyles. CSS are one of the five statutory partners within the YOS partnership and are represented on the County Youth Justice Board, the grouping responsible for the management of youth justice services in the

county, by the Director of Children's Social Services

3. Strategic Management

YOS, CSS and other partners, including Education, Health and the Police will share strategic management responsibilities at:

- (i) the Children's Trust Board
- (ii) the County Youth Justice Board
- (iii) the Kent Safeguarding Children Board

Management information will be shared between the two Services to enable the accurate monitoring of performance against targets which are commonly held.

4. The Objectives of the Protocol

This is to:

- (i) identify the circumstances in which there will be a need for the two services to co-operate and to set out the means for achieving this co-operation
- (ii) clarify the means by which differing assessment outcomes of the needs of a child / young person which will impact on their access to a service will be resolved
- (iii) detail the partnership arrangements within the county to which both CSS and YOS will be contributors and have a common interest.

5. Areas of Common Interest

(i) Looked After Children

- a. the prevention of offending by those aged 10 -17 (i.e. those of the age of criminal responsibility)
- b. the management of those children & young people who are Remanded to Local Authority Accommodation with or without a "security requirement"
- c. sentence planning and management of those "looked after children" receiving a custodial sentence and the arrangements for their resettlement within the community

(ii) Child Protection

- a. CSS to receive referrals from YOS in line with its primary task to protect children who are at risk of significant harm through abuse or neglect
- b. YOS to ensure that it is represented at management level on Children's Safeguarding Boards at the county and district levels

(iii) Children in Need (CHIN)

- a. YOS staff are kept fully aware of the Matrix of Children in Need and of the implications of the eligibility criteria for referrals by the Service to Children's Social Services – this work will be jointly led by the Director of Children's Social Services and the Director of Youth Offending and Substance Misuse
- b. consideration as to whether a child / young person in custody should be the subject of a core assessment to support the planning and service provision related to their resettlement
- c. young people aged 16 / 17 years who are CHIN as a result of homelessness. YOS and CSS to co-operate in the work with the District Councils and housing providers to avoid young people being homeless

6. Working Together

The County Youth Justice Board will ensure there are processes consistently applied across the county to ensure that staff in both Services:

- a. maintain an ongoing dialogue on all areas of common interest at the County, District and Team levels
- b. alert each other to key legislative and policy requirements which either will or may necessitate changes to procedures or practice
- c. develop shared practice guidance which is informed by national and county requirements and by learning on a case by case basis
- d. share management information which ensures an understanding of the outcomes for children and young people where both YOS and CSS have been jointly concerned
- e. promote best practice

7. Planning Together

The County Youth Justice Board will oversee a shared approach by both Services to:

- a. all relevant planning and performance review processes
- b. the identification of the resource commitments to be made, annually, by CSS to the YOS partnership to support the delivery of the Youth Justice Plan

8. Social Workers in YOS

Both Services will agree:

- (i) the roles and responsibilities of those staff in "social worker" posts in YOS
- (ii) the competencies required to meet the agreed roles and responsibilities

- (iii) the means for ensuring that social workers in YOS have their training and development needs met

9. Escalation Procedures

Both Services will ensure there is a clear escalation procedure to enable a resolution to be readily achieved if differences occur with respect to the assessed needs of a child / young person.

Both Services will take responsibility for ensuring their staff are fully aware of the procedures.

10. Reviews of the Protocol

CSS and YOS will jointly review, on an annual basis, the Protocol. The first review will be undertaken in April 2008 and will report to the Strategic Management Teams for both YOS and CSS.

11 Authorisation – the Signatures of the Directors of Children’s Social Services & of YOS

Bill Anderson
Director of Children’s Social Services

Date:

Angela Slaven
Director of Youth Offending & Substance Misuse

Date: