

A2: Steering Vulnerable young people away from crime (Youth Diversion)

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As per the Police and Crime Commissioners Make Notts Safe Plan, Nottinghamshire Police are committed to steering vulnerable young people away from crime by developing and working in partnership with colleagues to create new initiatives.

Working closely with the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Nottinghamshire Police have supported the Divert Plus Project, which strengthens the use of custody diversion for young people.

Divertplus, is Home Office secured funding until March 2024 and provides additional provisions delivered by qualified Youth Justice Services (YJS) staff for children and young people aged 10-17years.

The Divert Plus teams are based at Mansfield and Nottingham custody suites providing an opportunity, at what is referred to as a 'reachable moment' in time when a young person may be more open to accepting help and support.

The Young Persons engagement in Divert Plus is voluntary and currently offered to all young people that offend on their own. They are provided with speech and language and well-being assessments which supports them having access to a tailored prevention intervention which may also include signposting to specialist services such as child and adolescent mental health services and substance misuse services and access to speech and language therapy where a need is identified. The project includes mentoring support services from a number of local voluntary providers, Building Bridges Breaking Barriers, Stronger People and Remedi.

The scheme complements existing custody work delivered through the NHS Liaison and Diversion Team, which offers mental health support to young people.

Twenty-nine young offenders are part of the Divert Plus pilot scheme which started in May 2022. The project is working with young people that have been arrested for committing a wide range of offences including drug possession, weapon possession, inappropriate sexual behaviour and violence to others.

Key findings from a previous local YJS speech and language pilot for children showed that 82% of young people referred to YJS had such difficulties. Divert Plus incorporated the input of speech and language therapy services to ensure that those young people that find themselves in police custody are appropriately communicated with so they can be supported to fully understand the judicial process and the consequences of their actions. Case studies include; assessment that identified young person x was unable to tell the time or know the months of the year, and young person y already had a diagnosis of autism but had limited support and was struggling in mainstream education.

The support of Divert Plus aims to prevent reoffending and entry into the Criminal Justice System. Nottinghamshire Police are supporting this work within the custody environment to drive down crime and divert young people away from offending.

Nottinghamshire Police are working with the Violence Reduction Unit in the commissioning and implementation of a targeted outreach programme. This has provided fresh opportunity to reflect and redesign a model of working which will provide mobile teams within the City

boundary using a framework to afford flexibility in terms of addressing both geographic and demographic hotspots according to demand and identified in collaboration with Police and Local Authority partners.

In early November the VRU held a market engagement event to discuss the context, requirements, and procurement process with opportunities for questions and one to one discussion. The requirements include engaging groups of young people at risk; proactive signposting to diversionary and supportive activities; referrals for wraparound support and safeguarding; application of the principles of trauma informed practice; advocacy for young people within the wider community to facilitate community cohesion; consideration for environmental and physical factors to the detriment of the locality; and engaging with partners.

Detached youth work

- Uses the principles and practice of informal education
- Engages young people in a constructive dialogue about their needs, interests, concerns and lifestyles
- Supports them in their personal and social development
- Takes place in 'non-institutional' settings, spaces young people have much more control over
- Primarily, but not exclusively, the work takes place in the street, but also in parks, cafés, shopping centres, and other spaces young people have chosen to be
- It is accessible to young people who may not attend building-based provision

The event was well attended with feedback considered and applied to the specification design. It is anticipated the tender will launch at the end of November with services starting in February/March 2023.

Further to the above Nottinghamshire Police are committed to a partnership approach with the Violence Reduction Unit to implement the Serious Violence Duty and are working with key partnership colleagues, including:

- Probation Services
- Youth Justice Services
- Fire and Rescue
- Health - Integrated Care Boards
- Local authorities – district and county councils and CSPs

This collective approach provides a thorough understanding of requirements under the Duty and ensuring as a partnership, we are working to achieve these, this includes working as part of a Data Steering group, reporting to the Serious Violence Duty Implementation Group, focusing on the requirement in the Serious Violence Duty for developing the Strategic Needs Assessment.

As well as working closely with the Violence Reduction Unit, Nottinghamshire Police have developed a strong network of providers of local support for young people, identifying particular support groups for specific needs of children and young persons. These details have now been shared across Local Policing Areas to increase awareness and signposting to these provisions.

Nottinghamshire Police continue to develop strong partnership links, with statutory and non-statutory partners, this includes working with Youth Justice colleagues to review working practices, seeking where possible to use appropriate and proportionate interventions and outcomes.

Further to the above, Nottinghamshire Police continue to develop Force wide and local structures to develop and steer vulnerable young people away from crime

The police youth outreach team continue to support young people in a diversionary capacity. Since April 2022 they have received 35 referrals and female referrals have increased since recruitment of a female apprentice within the team, which has increased our ability to increase inclusivity of those we support.

The police outreach team currently have 15 cases and often have more on the waiting list, hence are seeking funding support from the VRU to increase staffing within the team.

The Police Cadet Programme is going from strength to strength with 93 cadets and 97 on the waiting list to join. Nottinghamshire Police have 38 cadet leaders, with a further 2 pending.

As part of the Police Cadets scheme, there is opportunity for community engagement through several events, including Pride parade, Remembrance Day parade, poppy selling and much more. A new progressive programme has also been developed for the cadets to work towards to earn badges in recognition of their work.

Nottinghamshire currently has 11 Schools and Early Intervention Officers (SEIO's) supporting 109 schools throughout the neighbourhood areas as well as a number of Alternative Provision schools within Nottinghamshire. SEIOs work in schools to guide young people, giving them an insight into the work of police officers and accessibility to the police, normalising contact with the police while supporting them through school. SEIOs often help with local investigations or are able to quickly solve problems for young people and their families, bridging the gap between the schools and local officers.

In addition, Nottinghamshire Police have a team of officers dedicated to working with Children in Care and Care Leavers to reduce the unnecessary criminalisation of some of the most vulnerable young persons across the Nottinghamshire. The Officers currently work with over:

- 88 Ofsted Regulated Care Homes
- 50 high need placements; and
- 157 semi-independents across the county and city

Supporting multi-agency colleagues working with circa 900 children and young persons any one time.

The team have developed bespoke individual and group interventions and supporting young persons, this includes a young girls boxing club, which has now seen vulnerable young persons, securing independent living and seeking to join Nottinghamshire Police.

The team also work across partnership colleagues, to develop information sharing and identify early intervention opportunities to create diversionary opportunities.

Further Local Neighbourhood Policing is committed to supporting steering young people away from Crime and have been proactive in seeking to increase referrals / use of the Ben Kinsella Choices and Consequences Exhibition.

Local Neighbourhood Policing has also been instrumental in developing community engagements particularly for young people and these have included Kick off@3 event, this brought together young people from across the City to play football with the winners

participating in the final in London. This was linked into youth groups to reach out to groups who had previously engage with the police.

Operation Reacher Teams provide further support and opportunities for young people across the Neighbourhoods. For example, in September, Mansfield and Ashfield Reacher teams established weekly sports drop in session in conjunction with West Notts College, Amazon and the Support Through Sport charity. These weekly sessions take place in West Notts College and are open to 8- to 11-year-olds, and 12 to 18 year olds. This follows a successful initiative by Ashfield Reacher where weekly sports sessions are run every Friday in Sutton.