

**Partnership Agreement between North East Lincolnshire**

**Youth Offending Service (YOS)**

**and**

**Children’s Assessment and Safeguarding Service (CASS)**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
Approved	11.06.2018	Paul Caswell / Julie Swinburn / Donna Abernethie
Previous Updated	30.09.2016	YOS / CASS management
Review Date	01.06.2019	YOS / CASS management
Review Date	16.04.2021	YOS/CASS management

**Contents:**

**Page Number:**

1. Purpose	3
2. Requirements	4
3. Partnership Processes	7
4. YOS Case Management Process	9
5. Court	11
6. Resettlement from Custody	13
7. Referrals and Information Sharing	13
8. Non-active cases to SWS	15

## 1. PURPOSE

This document details the partnership arrangements between the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Service (CASS) to work together to identify, provide help, safeguard and meet the needs of children and their families in North East Lincolnshire. It specifies roles and responsibilities of the services.

This document sets out the framework to ensure that:

- 1.1 Services provided for children in North East Lincolnshire consider their needs, having regard for the same principles, practise and processes that are endorsed and promoted by the Safer Partnership Board and other partnership agreements.
- 1.2 Relevant legislation and guidance is adhered to in all activities and provisions.
- 1.3 Children's needs are clearly assessed, and interventions are planned in consultation and partnership with children, their parents/carers and all relevant services providing or involved in providing services to meet their needs.
- 1.4 Services work in partnership to coordinate interventions that provide opportunities, support and guidance to reduce need, improve safeguards and address offending and anti-social behaviour (ASB). CASS and YOS both work with the Signs of Safety (SOS) model ingrained within their practice. The Signs of Safety is an innovative strengths-based, safety-organised approach to child protection casework.
- 1.5 Children's health and development is considered in all areas of work with clear objectives being set to achieve interventions that are co-ordinated and have measurable improvement targets and are outcome based.
- 1.6 Children's diversity, additional vulnerabilities and individual needs are recognised and addressed with regard to disability, race, culture, religion, sexual identity including LGBT, identity, age and any other differences. The impact of parental/carer mental health, domestic violence, disability, learning difficulty, substance misuse and risky behaviours is considered in all activities. Specific steps are taken in working with girls to ensure that their differing needs are fully considered.

- 1.7 There are clear communication pathways, information sharing partnerships and agreements between the Youth Offending Service and Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Service (CASS). CASS will assist and work in partnership with the Youth Offending Service through sharing relevant information to assist the YOS in relation to referral, assessment, planning, intervention, reporting and review.
- 1.8 CASS and YOS will inform each other of any significant information they receive in relation to children where there is active involvement by YOS and/or joint partnership or activity alongside CASS.
- 1.9 CASS will take referrals, providing advice, guidance, and support to YOS practitioners who share concerns relating to complex child in need, child protection and safeguarding issues including vulnerability concerns such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Criminal Child Exploitation (CCE) and Missing from home and care concerns. On cases where YOS has mild to moderate child in need concerns consultation will take place between YOS and Families First Youth Justice staff and ensure that team managers have agreed referrals for CASS as necessary prior to the referral being made.

## **2. REQUIREMENTS**

### **Guidance and legislation**

- 2.1 The Youth Offending Service will consider all children who receive a service from them as vulnerable or in need of additional services and having due regard for their vulnerability and safeguarding requirements in all activity from referral through to assessment, planning, intervention and review processes. The YOS will also ensure that in all cases, due consideration is given to the risk children present to themselves, to others, to the public and to the local community.
- 2.2 All children referred to the YOS will be assessed in accordance with national guidance and principles outlined in statutory Youth Justice Assetplus Assessment requirements. For diversion cases a smaller assessment is used based on the assetplus sections.

- 2.3 YOS interventions will adhere to legislative requirements contained within criminal Justice Legislation including the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Prosecution of Offenders Act 2012, the Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004 and Children Act 2002 and Working Together 2017. Working Together 2017 state that;  
Effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:
- Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
  - A child-centered approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.
- 2.4 The duties outlined in S17, S20 Children’s Act 1989 are relevant and will apply in the context of service provision for all children who are deemed to be in need of additional services to safeguard and promote their welfare or who are in receipt of services from North East Lincolnshire YOS. Insofar as it is consistent with their duties, the YOS will work to promote the upbringing of such children by their families through provision of a range and level of services appropriate to those children’s needs to prevent them becoming looked after unnecessarily.

Children in Need are those who fall within the following categories:

- They are unlikely to achieve, or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision [for him] of services by a Local Authority under this part.
  - Their health and development is likely to be significantly impaired or further impaired without the provision of such services
  - They are disabled
- 2.5 The duties under S47 Children’s Act 1989 are relevant and will apply in cases of significant harm:

The Local Authority has a duty to make enquiries where it has reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering significant harm. It is the duty of the Local Authority to investigate where there is a child who is: “

*The subject of an emergency protection order, or is under Police Protection, or has contravened a ban imposed by a curfew notice”.*

OR

*If there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. The authority shall make enquiries, as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child’s welfare”.*

### **YOS Activities and Service Provision**

- 2.6 The YOS will have particular regard for ensuring that Equality and Diversity issues are considered in all assessment and provision. All referrals, assessments, intervention, planning and reviews will consider relevant legislation and guidance. With regard to children with disabilities, Safeguarding Disabled Children Practice Guidance 2009 should be followed.
- 2.7 YOS assessments, plans, interventions and reviews should have clear objectives that recognise the need to achieve improved outcomes and promote prevention and reduction in youth crime, reduces the likelihood of re-offending, reduces the risk of safety and well-being, serious harm to others and reduces the need for custody.
- 2.8 The Youth Offending Service assessment framework works in conjunction with the signs of safety model ensuring a common language throughout services to children. This ensures the child and family needs and risks are assessed and planned for in a joint approach rather than separate plans and duplication of work. The Youth Offending Service adopted this approach to ensure best outcomes for children and their families and more robust public protection.
- 2.9 The YOS service will work in partnership with key partners, from both universal and targeted services - to provide services to children in need and those in need of safeguarding.

- 2.10 YOS activities, referrals, assessments, planning and review will be undertaken in partnership; with clear participation of the voice of the child, and their parents and carers. The service should ensure that children and families are fully involved in all interventions and plans, whilst developing provision and interventions that are based on evidence-based outcomes, customer feedback, legislation and guidance. The YOS has a clearly structured performance framework that has service users and children's needs at its centre.

### **3. PARTNERSHIP PROCESSES**

- 3.1 The YOS service will undertake statutory checks as required through guidance and legislation with regard to all activities relating to referrals, assessments, planning and reviews. In relation to enquiries, checks will be made of CASS to identify whether the young person is known to the service, has any active involvement and establish whether there are any ongoing or historical Child in Need or Child Protection Planning processes, a vulnerability assessment (including CSE / CCE and Modern Slavery through the National Referral Mechanism – NRM concerns) will be completed in respect of all children and children, with referrals made as appropriate.
- 3.2 The YOS Service will have access to Liquid Logic (LL), Children's Services database to undertake such checks. For those cases where there is active social work involvement, contact should be made directly with the designated Social Work practitioner who case manages the young person, or with their supervisor or line manager.
- 3.3 The YOS practitioner should always consult with a YOS team manager (or Head of service) whenever there are concerns that a young person may have suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm (likelihood). A judgement as to whether or not this is the case must be made by the team manager (or Head of Service), having weighed all information and evidence available and recorded decisions and outcomes appropriately.

#### **Contact with the Integrated Front Door**

- 3.4 If further analysis reaffirms concerns, immediate contact should be made with the Integrated Front Door and a referral made. In the event that no

- YOS manager is available, and if actual harm has taken place or is likely, the YOS practitioner will contact MASH for a consultation as to whether or not to make a referral. Where the case is already open, active and allocated to a social worker in CASS, then the referral should be made directly to the relevant team and allocated social worker.
- 3.5 YOS case managers who make referrals for a targeted assessment and social work services will continue to retain statutory and lead working responsibilities for offending issues alongside the assessments and subsequent interventions by Children's Social Care. All referrals will be confirmed in writing on the agreed referral format and saved by YOS staff onto the YOS electronic records and database Child View.
  - 3.6 Where cases become allocated for child in need, child protection or CLA services, the key worker roles will be in accordance with Working Together 2018 guidance, Safeguarding policy and relevant agreements regarding Children in Care. Case responsibility will be retained by the designated qualified social workers. In particular circumstances i.e. harmful sexual behaviour cases, joint work will be undertaken in assessing risk.
  - 3.7 For Children in Need (CIN) subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) the YOS practitioner will remain actively involved for the duration of the youth justice order or intervention. In all instances this will include YOS attendance at CIN Meetings, Core Group Meetings and Case Conferences. Where the Order or intervention ceases during the period of CIN, LAC or CP process, ongoing involvement with the Youth Offending Worker will be determined and agreed on a case-by-case basis dependent upon assessed need, including in CCE / CSE cases, whether the YOS case manager is the most appropriate person to remain involved. This would be based on the relationship with the young person and their views.
  - 3.8 There should be clear identification of needs, objectives and planned outcomes with clarity around lead working responsibilities, roles, communications, timescale interventions and co-ordination. The YOS practitioner will contribute to the Child in Need Plan/Care Plan / Child Protection Plan recognising both services' specific responsibilities and those objectives and outcomes that are jointly owned via partnership agreements and multi agency provision.

- 3.9 YOS Practitioners should fully participate in the North East Lincolnshire approach to managing identification of need, assessment, and provisions of service through Families first. In circumstances where either the Assetplus is not required, the YOS service will have due regard to other assessment frameworks to complement its duties towards children at risk of offending.
- 3.10 CASS will ensure direct access to LL at YOS by trained LL operatives. These operatives will be identified from within the YOS workforce. Additional operatives can be trained dependent on need.

#### **4. YOS CASEWORK MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

- 4.1 When a child enters the Criminal Justice System for the first time, the YOS Practitioner will check LL to establish whether or not the young person is currently or previously known to CASS. If there are any issues or safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with Integrated Front Door to share the concerns. If the child is an open case to CASS, the allocated YOS worker will make contact with the child's Social Worker to share information.
- 4.2 Confirmation that this check has been made should be recorded on the young person's ChildView record/file by staff in order to alert staff working with the young person to current or historical Social Work Service involvement.
- 4.3 The YOS officer will consider any relevant information in preparing their AssetPlus assessment, risk and safety and well-being assessment to inform planning and implementing interventions and service provision. Where the case is open to CASS, the YOS worker will liaise directly with the allocated social worker or relevant duty team worker to inform assessment.
- 4.4 Authors of Pre-Sentence Reports or Referral Order Reports should access LL in the first instance to ascertain the level and nature of CASS involvement. YOS workers, who either have no access or have not been trained to use LL, should seek assistance from YOS staff with access to LL and those who have had relevant training on the system.

- 4.5 Where attempts to establish background information using LL have been unsuccessful, or where social care records pre-date electronic database and/or are paper-file based, CASS duty workers will assist YOS workers by providing relevant historical information about the young person within one working day of a formal request being made. Formal requests should be confirmed by email.
- 4.6 YOS officers completing Pre-Sentence Reports, Referral Panel Reports and AssetPlus Assessments should document that CASS have been contacted and should detail whether the service is currently or previously involved with the young person and/or their family. In addition, YOS workers are expected to document the date and nature of any previous Social Work involvement to ensure that safeguarding practices are robust. Consideration should be given to all information gathered as part of the YOS assessment to identify whether there are any Child In Need (CIN) or Safeguarding Concerns. YOS workers should consult and seek supervision from a YOS manager immediately if any concerns exist that may warrant a referral.
- 4.7 All safeguarding concerns emerging during assessment processes that identify a young person may be suffering or likely to suffer harm, should be immediately referred to Integrated Front Door. All other safeguarding / CIN concerns should be recorded on the YOS file and evidence of analysis and judgement recorded alongside any decisions. The decision-maker should be clearly identified on record. Where the judgement identifies safeguarding concerns then a professional discussion should be held with CASS to seek advice and guidance, alongside considering whether CASS should complete an Assessment.
- 4.8 Where safeguarding issues are identified on cases open to CASS, these should be notified to the relevant caseworker or Social Worker. If contact cannot be made with the worker or no response is received, the information should be given to the social worker's supervisor or line manager. All safeguarding notifications should be confirmed and recorded in writing within 48 hours in the agreed referral format.
- 4.9 Where appropriate, the designated social worker will have oversight of actions to be taken on referrals on cases that were not known to CASS that become Looked After as a result of Youth Court remands, known

cases that are already in care, known cases that are not in care but become looked after due to offending behaviour.

- 4.10 Similarly, where a looked after child is subject to a child protection plan or a child in need becomes an active/open case to YOS, the child's Social Worker should keep YOS updated, informed and notified formally of any significant arrangements, incidents or changes to placements. YOS should also be kept informed and invited to all statutory and other meetings on cases open to both YOS and CASS.

## **5. COURT**

- 5.1 Whenever a child looked after appears before the courts, a representative from the local authority should be present. YOS should therefore ensure that CASS are notified and fully informed of all requirements for court appearances of children where the young person is in the care of the Local Authority or has active involvement with CASS.
- 5.2 YOS officers will alert CASS at the earliest opportunity of any young person at risk of remand to Local Authority Accommodation (RLAA) or Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation (RYDA). To avoid unnecessary/inappropriate remands, the YOS should immediately devise a robust bail support package of co-ordinated interventions to manage the young person in the community.
- 5.3 Unless risk or safety and well-being assessments indicate that it is unsafe to do so, YOS officers should always consider community based options when making recommendations to the courts, having due regard for the welfare principles of the Children Act 1989 and good practice. Where safe to do so, YOS workers will actively promote the exercise of parental responsibility and work to maintain support and care through maintaining children with their parents, families, and friends.
- 5.4 There should be proactive engagement with the child and his/her parents/carers/family to support and cooperate with YOS and court processes. Parents should be reminded of their responsibilities and court requirements in relationship to court attendance, offering care and support. This will include a call on the day before court to remind the young person and their parents, and advise them about appropriate dress

- and behaviour. Within the court arena, the YOS worker should promote the principles of parental responsibility, and seek for the courts to recognise these values in court disposals and orders that directly impact on a child's domestic/residence arrangements. Where appropriate this should include promoting the making of parenting orders and planning parenting support packages.
- 5.5 Any child appearing before the courts who is likely to be subject to Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation or Remand to Local Authority Accommodation shall in the first instance be managed through the principles of bail support. YOS will in all cases conduct a bail AssetPlus assessment to identify interventions and support necessary to enable responsibility and care to be maintained by parents or appropriate extended family and friends. A plan should be developed that includes the young person, relevant family members, agencies and partnerships. (The YOS team has a relevant Bail Support Procedure in place).
  - 5.6 If the Court determines that conditional bail/bail support is not appropriate, the relevant YOS Officer will liaise with either the relevant Social Work Service department or the YJB's Secure Placement Service in order to identify the remand accommodation available.
  - 5.7 The YOS Court Officer will advise the relevant Children's Social Work Services regarding any RLAA made in court, providing details of where the child has been placed. In cases where it is deemed inappropriate for the child to return home or where the parent/s are refusing to have the child back, the YOS worker will liaise with the relevant Social Work Service to consider interventions and strategies to support a return home or identify suitable alternatives at the earliest opportunity.
  - 5.8 Once a Remand to Youth Detention Accommodation has been made the YOS officer in court will act on behalf of the Local Authority until such times as the child is in secure transport.
  - 5.9 Following a remand, the YOS Officer should, at their earliest opportunity and no later than the end of the working day, confirm with the relevant Social Work Service details of where the young person was sent and the date of the next court appearance.

- 5.10 The designated YOS case manager will advise the relevant Children's Social Work Services Team Manager of any remands made in court.

## **6. RESETTLEMENT FROM CUSTODY**

- 6.1 For any child that is serving a custodial sentence, resettlement must be considered throughout the sentence. When planning for release YOS/Children's Services to work together to ensure that there is appropriate access to services, including accommodation, for all children leaving custody. Sentence planning meetings will consider accommodation needs and the YOT will work in partnership with Children's Services to ensure children know where they will be living on release. Release on temporary licence can be used to help a child familiarise themselves with where they will live on release - subject to governor approval and risk management considerations.
- 6.2 Whilst it is hoped that a child will know where they will be living well in advance of release, the Youth Offending Team is required to notify the Assistant Director of Children's Social Care (Assessment and Safeguarding) of any child who does not have a suitable address identified two weeks prior to release.

## **7. REFERRALS AND INFORMATION SHARING**

### **Allocated Children and Family Support Services cases – escalation to safeguarding referrals**

- 7.1 For any child that has an allocated CASS Social Worker and new concerns or significant information emerges, the YOS Worker should contact the Social Worker and share this information within 24 hours. For all allocated CASS cases where significant harm or likely significant harm is identified, consultation between the YOS team manager must take place.
- 7.2 If significant harm concerns remain, then immediate contact with the child's Social Worker or duty worker should be made. If the identified workers are unavailable contact should be made with their line manager or supervisor. The referral should be followed up in writing and emailed within 48 hours.

- 7.3 Children within North East Lincolnshire, who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) a child-centered approach from all professionals and the risks to them and their needs are assessed effectively and are responded to. Timely sharing of information is promoted through multi-agency meetings and regular liaison. Robust plans are put in place to minimise risk to children and children. Children and their families have access to a range of services, which reduces the impact ACEs on children and children.
- 7.4 Risk of harm to children is reduced through thorough assessment leading to appropriate and targeted interventions by all professionals within CASS and the Youth Offending Service. Timely sharing of information is promoted through multi-agency meetings and regular liaison. Robust plans are put in place to minimise risk to children and children. Staff have access to training to enable them to recognise the signs of domestic abuse including the Local Safeguarding Domestic Abuse Training (Levels 1 and 2).
- 7.5 New cases are discussed at weekly Signs of Safety Meetings with team managers and National Probation Staff (NPS) to ensure that risk of harm to self (including domestic abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Youth Gang Violence and Exposure to violent extremism) and others is being managed appropriately and that there is a robust safety plan in place. There is a clear expectation on YOS and CASS staff to share safety and interventions plans to ensure safeguarding issues are agreed upon and work is not duplicated. This also ensures that support and challenge is provided to practitioners. During the course of the Court Order or Out of Court Disposal regular Signs of Safety Reviews are undertaken to ensure that all risk is being managed appropriately and all referrals have been actioned, including referrals to Early Help Assessment and Integrated Front Door.
- 7.6 Social Workers within CASS receive monthly case supervision where all risks to the child are discussed to ensure that targeted interventions for the family are appropriate. Where there continues to be concerns for the child cases are escalated quickly through Section 47 investigations and escalation to child protection when required.

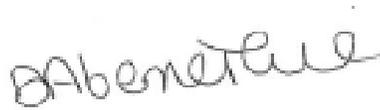
## **8. Non-active Cases to Children's Social Work Services**

- 8.1 Safeguarding concerns may arise during the assessment process or at any time during YOS involvement. For any young person/s who has no allocated Social Worker and for whom Complex CIN or Safeguarding concerns arise or concerns that indicate he or she may be, or is likely to be suffering significant harm, the YOS worker should consult with a manager. If following consultation the concern continues to be considered legitimate, contact should be made with Integrated Front Door and immediately followed up in writing as soon as the professional consultation has taken place with a duty officer.
- 8.2 The MASH team should confirm receipt and initial outcomes of referrals in writing to the referrer. However, if no written confirmation is received or outcomes are unclear it remains the responsibility of the referrer to check progress and obtain feedback.
- 8.3 Irrespective of whether a formal referral was ever made, all safeguarding concerns identified within the YOS should be regularly checked and progress monitored via supervision. Where safeguarding concerns remain at the closure of YOS cases, notification will be made to CASS by the YOS case manager and a record kept of that notification on the ChildView record. NB Where any assessments or reviews during involvement or at closure indicate ongoing concerns, consideration should be made to escalate to making a referral.
- 8.4 The YOS team will ensure that any cases assessed as medium or above in relation to safety and wellbeing are subject to management oversight via Signs of Safety meetings. Where appropriate, this panel will recommend a referral to Children's Social Work Services and or further consultation and liaison with the Social Worker on cases where referrals have not been accepted or no further action has been taken.



Signed .....  
Paul Caswell, Specialist Lead, Youth Offending Service Manager, NELC

Signed .....  
Sarah Blanchard, Children's Assessment and Safeguarding Service, NELC



Signed .....  
Donna Abernethie, Team Manager, Youth Offending Service, NELC

Date 16.04.2021