




Who are We?

At West Mercia Youth Justice Service, we believe that every child deserves the chance of a positive future. Our work is about more than systems and processes. It's about people, potential, and positive change. It's about seeing beyond the offence to give everyone affected support, guidance, and opportunities.

We support children, young people and their victims who have encountered the justice system, helping repair the harm and create a positive future for themselves and those affected by their actions.

We take a child- first approach rooted in restorative justice, education, and strong partnerships. We place the needs, rights, and potential of every child and victim at the heart of our work. By building positive identities, empowering families, and promoting early support and diversion, we help young people move away from offending and towards brighter, safer futures.



Child First West Mercia



We See Children as Children

We place the needs, rights, and potential of every child and victim at the heart of what we do. Our work is child-focused, developmentally informed, and responsive to social and structural challenges.



We Build Positive Futures Through Identity

We help children develop a strong, pro-social identity by recognising their strengths and supporting their journey away from offending. Through constructive relationships and future-focused interventions, we empower them to contribute positively to their communities.



We Collaborate with Children and Their Families

Change works best when it's done together. We actively involve children, their family and victims in decision-making, ensuring they are heard, respected, and included every step of the way.



We Promote Diversion and Prevention

We believe childhood should be free from the weight of the justice system. We focus on early support, minimal intervention, and diversion wherever possible - reducing stigma and giving children the best chance to thrive.

In West Mercia, we want all children to receive a proactive, place-based service which prevents their offending or reoffending behaviour.

To provide this service:

All children's needs are identified via a YJB **approved assessment**.

After their assessment, **a plan** is developed with the child and the important people in their life. This means that children's plans connect with any existing plans they have with their network. Plans are regularly reviewed.

We work with children by seeing them regularly (at least **fortnightly**).

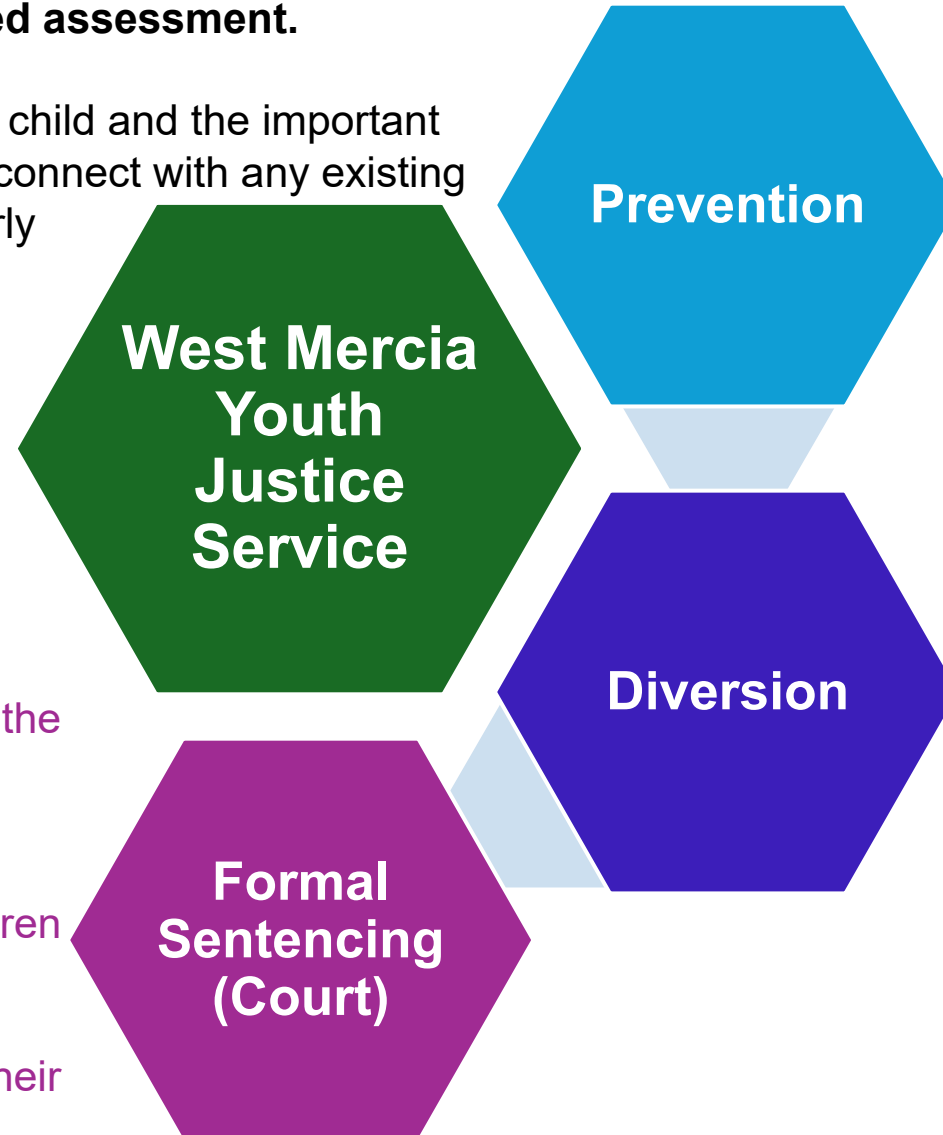
FORMAL SENTENCING

This is our work with children through court.

We proactively offer support to children, their connected network and their victims in navigating the time before, during and after their court appearance.

At court, the judge or magistrate determines and announces the legal consequences for children who are found guilty of a crime.

We work with these children in accordance with their sentence.



PREVENTION

This is our proactive offer of support to children at their earliest contact with criminal justice services.

If children and their connected network would like support, we provide support which complements any plans already in place.

DIVERSION

This is our work with children through our Joint-Decision-Making Panels.

Children can be referred to the Panel by the Police, CPS or the Court.

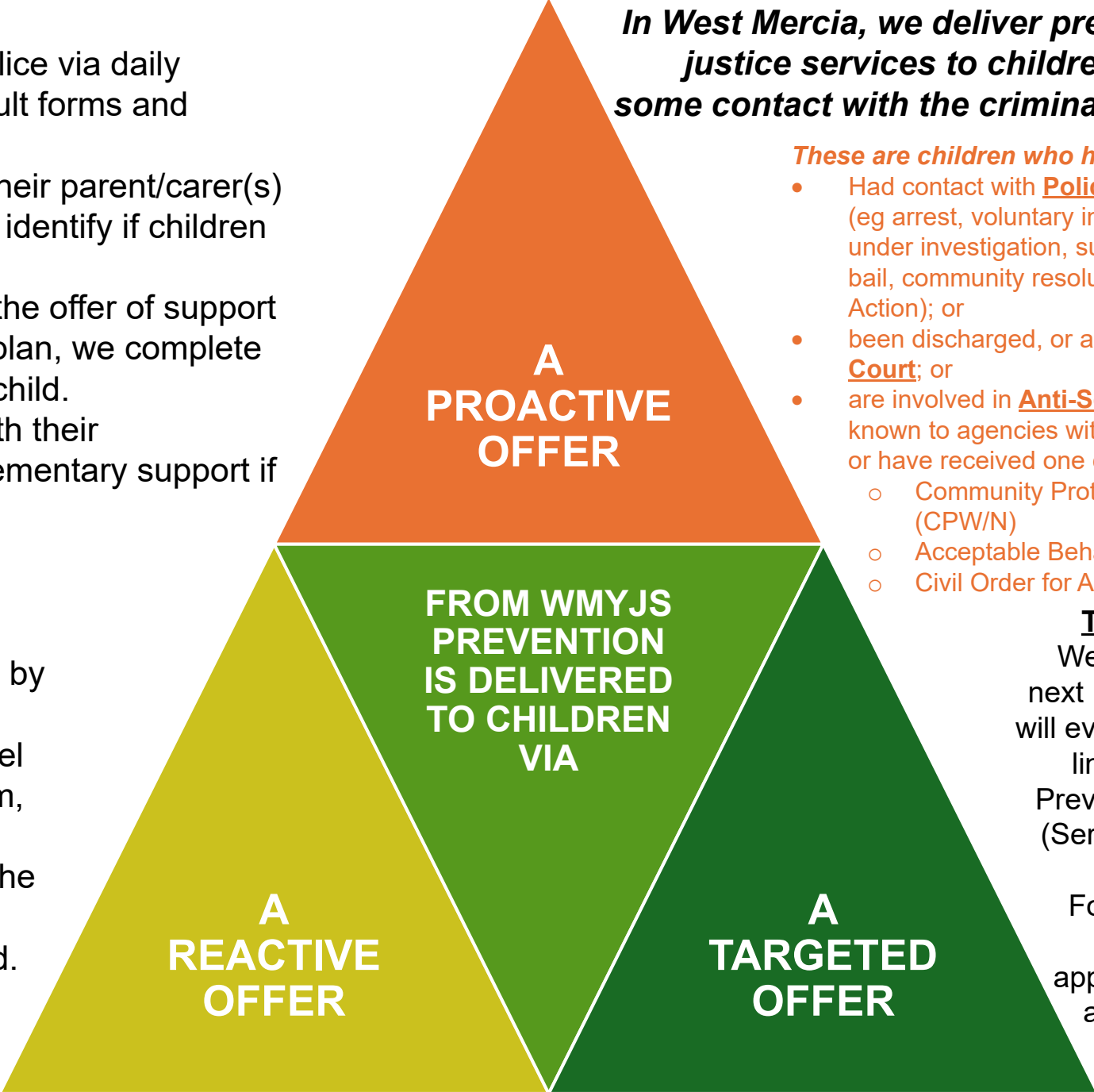
The Panel determines the diversionary outcome. We work with these children in accordance with their diversionary outcome.

PROACTIVE OFFER

- We receive automated referrals from Police via daily arrests, custody checks, Appropriate Adult forms and voluntary interview data.
- We proactively contact all children and their parent/carer(s) to offer them support. As part of this, we identify if children are already receiving support.
- If a child and their parent/carer accepts the offer of support and they do not have a current support plan, we complete an assessment, plan and work with the child.
- If a child already has a plan, we work with their professional network to offer any complementary support if needed.

REACTIVE OFFER

- Children are identified and referred to us by someone in their connected network.
- We identify if the child has had some level of contact with the criminal justice system, and, if so, we offer them support.
- If a child and their parent/carer accepts the offer of support we complete an assessment, plan and work with the child.
- Sometimes, we might be asked to do a specific piece of work as part of a plan which is already in place for the child.



In West Mercia, we deliver preventative youth justice services to children who have had some contact with the criminal justice system

- These are children who have***
- Had contact with Police in the last 3 months (eg arrest, voluntary interview, released under investigation, subject to pre-charge bail, community resolution, or No Further Action); or
 - been discharged, or acquitted or fined by a Court; or
 - are involved in Anti-Social Behaviour and known to agencies with enforcement powers or have received one of the following
 - Community Protection Warning/Notice (CPW/N)
 - Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC)
 - Civil Order for ASB

TARGETED OFFER

We know that over the next 12 months this offer will evolve and develop in line with West Mercia Prevention Partnerships (Serious Violence Duty) and Focussed Deterrence initiatives. We will apply similar principles as our proactive and reactive offers

How is our success measured?

Key Performance Indicators

- First Time Entrants into the Criminal Justice System
- Reoffending rates of Children
- Number of Children in Custody

KPI 1 - Accommodation

The proportion of children in suitable accommodation at the end of their intervention programme/order

KPI 2 - Education, training and employment (ETE)

The proportion of children in suitable ETE at the end of their intervention programme/order

KPI 3 - Special educational needs or disability (SEND)/Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

The number of children with a formal plan in place as a proportion of children with an identified SEND need (or ALN in Wales)

KPI 4 - Mental health and emotional wellbeing

The number of children with a screened or identified need for an intervention to improve mental health or emotional wellbeing at the end of their order as a proportion of children with an order ending in the period

KPI 5 - Substance misuse

The number of children with a screened or identified need for intervention/treatment to address substance misuse at the end of their order as a proportion of the number of children with an order ending in the period

KPI 6 – Out-of-court disposals

The number of children who completed intervention programmes in the period as a proportion of the number of children with an out-of-court disposal ending in the period

KPI 7 - Wider services

The proportion of children connected to/supported by wider care and support services at the end of their order

KPI 8 - Management board

The number of senior partners attending management boards (out of 5)

KPI 9 - Serious violence

The number of proven serious violence offences as a proportion of the 10 to 17-year-old population

KPI 10 – Victims

The number of victims engaged in restorative justice opportunities as a proportion of the total number of victims who consent to be contacted

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