



Bath and North-East Somerset Youth Justice Anti-Racism Plan 2024-25

Introduction

A wide variety of evidence shows the lived experience and youth justice outcomes for children from minority ethnic backgrounds are poorer than for children from most white backgrounds. For example:

- Black children are nine times more likely to be stopped and searched than White children (Hunter 2022 ¹)
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children are more likely to make 'no comment' interviews and not be eligible for an Out of Court Disposal (Lammy 2017 ²)
- Children from Asian, Black, Mixed Ethnicity and Other Ethnicity backgrounds aged under 18 account for 49.6% of the youth custodial population³
- After demographic and offence-related factors are considered, disproportionality in some Court sentences persisted for Black children but not for other minority ethnic groups (ZK Analytics, 2021⁴)
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic children are less likely to get a formal Out of Court Disposal (ZK Analytics, 2021⁵)

Children who are also in Care and / or have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can also have poorer experiences and outcomes.

Children from mixed heritage backgrounds are over-represented in the youth justice system in Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES).

The Youth Justice Service (YJS) and the YJS Partnership Board have written an anti-racist vision which is:

B&NES Youth Justice Service Anti-Racism Vision

- To commit to being an anti-racist service.
- To uphold social justice and challenge inequality and racism in the actions of individuals, in services and in society.
- To value and celebrate diversity and promote equality of opportunity.

¹ Hunter, Katie: 'Out of place: the criminalisation of Black and Minority Ethnic Looked After Children in England and Wales, Prison Service Journal, January 2022 No.258, pages 13-18

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lammy-review-final-report>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-custody-data>

⁴ ZK Analytics in collaboration with the YJB, 2021: Ethnic disproportionality in remand and sentencing in the youth justice system – analysis of administrative data

⁵ ZK Analytics in collaboration with the YJB, 2021: Ethnic disproportionality in remand and sentencing in the youth justice system – analysis of administrative data

This ambition is held by the Youth Justice Partnership Board and by paid and volunteer members of the Youth Justice Service at administrative, practitioner and manager level.

We are also committed to B&NES Council Equality Objectives:

1. Ensure that services are designed to meet the needs of the community;
2. Improve access to services and outcomes across protected characteristics;
3. Ensure that equality monitoring data is used to inform and influence the delivery of fair services to all;
4. Recognise and celebrate the growing diverse communities of Bath & North East Somerset;
5. Ensure that the Council has fair employment practices.

Our ambition is to work for justice for all by tackling racial disproportionality and racism in our service and in the wider system. This means that all children should expect the same positive outcomes from the youth justice system and their work with us regardless of their ethnicity.

B&NES Youth Justice Service adopts a Child First approach to all its work. This is particularly important in relation to children from minority ethnic backgrounds for whom adultification can be an issue.

The key principles for Child First work are:

1. Prioritise the best interests of children and recognise their particular needs, capacities, rights and potential.
2. All work is child-focused, developmentally informed, acknowledges structural barriers and meets responsibilities towards children.
3. Promote children's individual strengths and capacities to develop their pro-social identity for sustainable desistance, leading to safer communities and fewer victims. All work is constructive and future-focused, built on supportive relationships that empower children to fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to society.
4. Encourage children's active participation, engagement and wider social inclusion. All work is a meaningful collaboration with children and their carers.
5. Promote a childhood removed from the justice system, using pre-emptive prevention, diversion and minimal intervention. All work minimises criminogenic stigma from contact with the system.

The actions in this plan have in part been informed by:

- **HMIP thematic:** HMI Probation thematic inspection of the experiences of black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system
- **HMIP Effective Practice Guide:** HMI Probation Effective Practice Guide: Black and mixed heritage boys in the youth justice system
- **Identifying Disproportionality**, Avon and Somerset Criminal Justice Board 2022

Progress so far:

B&NES created an anti-racism action plan in 2023 and it is a plan which will be reviewed annually. There are longer term aspects to the plan, which involve co-operation across Avon and Somerset and on a multi-agency basis and some shorter term actions, many of which have been completed.

Accountability for this action plan is through the Youth Justice Partnership Board. Some aspects of the plan are being monitored by the Police and Crime Commissioner department who are leading on work across the Avon and Somerset area to Tackle Disproportionality.

YJS actions from the previous year's plan that have been completed are:

- The YJS Partnership Board and YJS Team agreed a vision statement and this has been added to relevant documents and our webpage.
- We created an Anti-Racism Action Plan that was shared and signed off by the Partnership Board.
- We have made sure that YJS staff are familiar with the HMIP Effective Practice Guide and this will be ongoing for all new staff.
- We procured and delivered 2 days Cultural Competency and Unconscious Bias Training for all staff.
- We included positive, representative images of children and adults on noticeboards and in leaflets in our Broad Street Office where children have some appointments with the YJS.
- The YJS Head of Service and the B&NES Virtual School Headteacher have joined the Youth Pillar of the Avon and Somerset PCC led Tackling Disproportionality group. This group is working to meet the recommendations in the Identifying Disproportionality report ⁶ B&NES also have representation at the Data and Insights Pillar and the HR and Workforce Pillar. More detail on this work is in the following section.
- We updated our templates such as the Out of Court Disposal Assessment and PSR Quality Assurance to ensure that diversity and identity were included in all assessments and reports.
- We include discussion on the Social GRACES ⁷ in case work supervision.

Progress that has been made in B&NES towards the Avon and Somerset Tackling Disproportionality Recommendations are:

- B&NES Virtual School is leading on a School Exclusions Strategy Group. The group are monitoring school exclusion and suspension data and it takes a focus disproportionality. The Attendance and Welfare team monitor the issue of 'off rolling'. Work is being undertaken to monitor the issue and request schools take a more proactive and preventative approach to suspensions and exclusions.
- YJS collects data and monitors the number of children who have been permanently excluded and the link is clear that children entering the YJS have a higher rate of being suspended or excluded across all ethnic groups.

⁶ <https://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Identifying-Disproportionality-Report.pdf>

⁷ <https://proceduresonline.com/trixcms/media/7086/social-graces.pdf>

- Within B&NES there are also working groups within children's services including the Race Equality Task Force and the Disproportionality group. These groups are working on wide ranging issues such as school exclusions, Race Equality Charter in Schools⁸, and other disparities in services such as early help and children in care.

This Action Plan is arranged into the following sections:

1. Participation and Service Delivery
2. Management Oversight
3. YJS Partnership work with Education
4. YJS Partnership work with Police
5. Human Resources

⁸ <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/race-equality-charter-schools#:~:text=Sign%20up%20to%20the%20Charter,cultural%20diversity%20are%20actively%20promoted>



	Recommendations and learning	Actions	Who	When	Intended impact
1. Participation and Service Delivery	1.1 Make sure staff understand what is expected of them in their work with black and mixed heritage boys and that they are inducted, trained and supported to work effectively with this group of children (HMI Probation thematic recommendation 15).	a. Create a good practice guide that is based on participation work with children and families from minority ethnic backgrounds, to set out clear expectations of staff. The guide will be used in staff inductions.	BP	Sept 2024	Staff work with children effectively. Staff challenge racism, advocate for children and/or escalate issues. Staff understand and recognise disproportionality and have skills to discuss race and racism with children.
	1.2 Establish effective processes for gaining feedback from black and mixed heritage boys on the services they receive and use this feedback to assess, review and improve the quality and suitability of service provision (HMI Probation thematic recommendation 14)	b. Continue delivery of cultural competence and unconscious bias training, ensuring this is relevant to all staff.	CC	Jan 2025	Staff acknowledge positions of power and privilege and utilise systemic tools such as social GRACES (link)
	1.3 Address gaps in specialist provision for black and mixed heritage boys, either by delivering it in-house or by commissioning it from appropriate local community organisations and evaluate referral and uptake rates for the services provided (HMI Probation thematic recommendation 17)	c. Ensure feedback is collated from all children and parents/carers which is curious about children and family's identity, and ensure the feedback is used to review and improve service provision and identify gaps.	BP	Jan 2025	All children have an opportunity to share their experiences of working with the YJS and that this is used to develop the service provision.
	1.4 Offer suitable and appropriate support and intervention to the parents and/or carers of black and mixed heritage boys and regularly review the uptake and suitability of this provision (HMI Probation thematic recommendation 18)				All children's needs are met, not necessarily by the Youth Justice Service, but we ensure there is provision in place.

	Recommendations and learning	Actions	Who	When	Intended impact
2. Management oversight	2.1 Improve the quality of management oversight to make sure it is sufficiently focused on diversity and what this means in practice and that there are clear escalation routes to address any barriers to black and mixed heritage boys accessing the services they need (HMI Probation thematic recommendation 16)	a. Participate in the pan authority YJS case audits and include a focus on ethnicity.	KB	Sept 2024	We ensure all children get the services they need. We ensure that diversity and identity are key considerations throughout case work. We can monitor the data to track progress.
		b. In local case audits, ensure management oversight appropriately focusses on ethnicity and diversity.	CC	Sept 2024	
		c. Produce a local ethnic disproportionality report using 18+1 ethnic categories to analyse offences and outcomes by ethnicity groups, to be shared with and scrutinised by the Partnership Board twice yearly.	CB	July 2024	
	Recommendations and learning	Actions	Who	When	Intended impact
3. YJS Partnership Work with Education	3.1 Partnership Board to have a joint set of partnership targets, for example with schools and children's services, for improving service delivery to black and mixed heritage boys, and make sure mechanisms are in place to track, monitor and evaluate outcomes (HMI Probation thematic recommendation 13) 3.2 Local Authorities to urgently address the current issues with the collection, quality and scrutiny of up-to-date detailed local school exclusion data to include managed moves, internal exclusions, 'off-rolling' and	a. Participate in the Avon and Somerset PCC working group Youth Justice Pillar to tackle disproportionality.	CC and SG	Through out 2024/25	Ensure B&NES is collecting, monitoring and scrutinising school suspension and exclusion data. Ensure children who have had multiple suspensions from school are offered early help services to reduce the likelihood of them becoming permanently excluded and / or entering the youth justice cohort.
		b. Participate in the School Exclusion Strategy Group which is collating and scrutinising data about suspensions and exclusions, including disproportionality.	CC	Through out 2024/25	

<p>informal exclusions. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 16)</p> <p>3.3 LA to develop a strategy and action plan to ensure accurate detailed local school data is collected, analysed and published annually to quantify and tackle any disproportionality for any minority ethnic groups. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 17)</p> <p>3.4 LA and YOTs in Avon and Somerset urgently need to collate and analyse accurate linked school exclusion and offending data. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 18)</p> <p>3.5 LA, Police and YOT to collaborate and create a Youth Justice Working Group to scrutinise the links between school exclusion and young people's entry into the criminal justice system to proactively tackle any disproportionality for BAME children and young people. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 19)</p>	<p>c. Contribute to a working group to scrutinise suspension data and support schools to enhance their early help offer to children over-represented in this group.</p>	<p>CC and SG</p>	<p>Jan 2025</p>	<p>Ensure children from minority ethnic groups who are at risk of offending are offered a prevention service, if appropriate.</p>
	<p>d. Consider how the Compass Prevention Service can increase referrals from children from minority ethnic backgrounds.</p>	<p>RC</p>	<p>Jan 2025</p>	
	<p>e. Agree with the Director of Education in B&NES where the monitoring information on disproportionality will be reported to and scrutinised.</p>	<p>CC and SG</p>	<p>Jan 2025</p>	
	<p>f. Race Equality Task Force to provide an overview of impact as an exception report to the YJS Partnership Board</p>	<p>CW</p>	<p>Jan 2025</p>	

	Recommendations and learning	Actions	Who	When	Intended impact
<p>4. YJS Partnership Work with Police</p>	<p>4.1 YOTs and Police to analyse offence outcomes for 10- to 17-year-olds by offence type (e.g. Drugs, Robbery etc.) with individual ethnicity groups defined (18 plus 1) to quantify any disproportionality. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 20)</p> <p>4.2 Police, LA's and YOTs, to collaborate with the new Youth Justice Working Group to scrutinise the experiences of children and young people through</p>	<p>a. Analyse and quantify any disproportionality in Youth Out of Court Disposal processes and through the twice-yearly B&NES YJS Ethnic Disproportionality Report and the Annual Out of Court Resolution Report to the Partnership Board.</p>	<p>CC</p>	<p>Through out 2024/25</p>	<p>We ensure that there is no disproportionality in the offer of diversion and out of court disposals and seek to address any issues as they arise.</p> <p>Ensure defence solicitors are aware of the Out of Court Resolution</p>

<p>each stage of the criminal justice system to identify and proactively tackle any disproportionality. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 24)</p> <p>4.3 Collaboration is required between Police, YOTS and the CPS to analyse the diversion process in terms of needs assessment and evaluation of outcomes for young people to ascertain if there is any disproportionality for BAME young people in accessing diversion schemes. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 25)</p> <p>4.4 Avon and Somerset Constabulary and Local A&S YOTs to review and quantify youth out of court processes. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 25)</p>	<p>b. Work with neighbouring Authorities to produce an Avon and Somerset-wide leaflet for defence solicitors about Out of Court Resolutions.</p>	<p>KB</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>	<p>framework so they can appropriately advise their clients in police interviews.</p>
	<p>c. Participate in the Avon and Somerset OOC Scrutiny Panel that has a focus on disproportionality.</p>	<p>KB</p>	<p>July 2024</p>	

	Recommendations and learning	Actions	Who	When	Intended impact
5. Human Resources	<p>5.1 YOTs in Avon and Somerset: Bristol, BANES, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire need to quantify the latest Recruitment, New joiner, Graduate/ apprenticeship, Promotion, Retention, development and Leaver data across the ethnicity groups at local level for Avon and Somerset to baseline the HR life-cycle across ethnicity groups (18 plus one) and quantify if there is any disproportionality at local level for BAME applicants and employees in the YOTs within Avon and Somerset CJS. (Identifying Disproportionality recommendation 79)</p>	<p>Complete a review of recruitment data and consider ways to attract a more diverse workforce.</p>	<p>CC and MH</p>	<p>Through out 2024/25</p>	<p>To monitor ethnicity groups in the YJS workforce.</p> <p>To increase diversity in the YJS workforce.</p>