

Diversity impact assessment

TITLE Medway Youth Justice Plan 2026-2029
DATE 6th October 2026
LEAD OFFICER: Nicoleta Stangu
1 Summary description of the proposed change What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
Medway's Youth Justice Service are required to submit a plan as part of the statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act. The plan is submitted to the national Youth Justice Board for England and Wales and the requirement is included within the grant conditions for the service. The proposed change is the implementation of the Medway Youth Justice Plan 2026-2029, which sets out the strategic priorities and actions for the Youth Justice Service over the next three years. The plan aims to improve outcomes for children and young people involved in, or at risk of entering, the youth justice system through a Child First approach, early intervention, prevention, diversion from offending, reducing reoffending, improving safety and wellbeing, addressing disproportionality, and supporting positive transitions into adulthood. The plan also seeks to strengthen partnership working across children's services, education, health, police, probation and the voluntary sector to deliver coordinated support for vulnerable children and young people. The plan sets out the aims and objectives of the Youth Justice Partnership for the next 3 years. It has 4 strategic priorities: • Prevention of offending and reoffending • Victim support and victim safety • Violence and harm • Fairness, equity and inclusion
2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile
The DIA has been informed by a range of quantitative and qualitative evidence, including: • Analysis of local Youth Justice Service performance data, demographic information and trends relating to offending, reoffending, education, health, disproportionality and vulnerability amongst children known to the service. • Evidence identifying the over-representation of children from some ethnic minority group, children with Special Educational Needs and

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Disabilities (SEND), neurodiverse children, children in care and care leavers within the youth justice cohort.

- Findings from the HM Inspectorate of Probation inspection, including recommendations and areas of effective practice identified during the inspection process.
- Feedback and participation from children and young people with lived experience of the youth justice system, including engagement activities used to inform service development and planning.
- Information provided by partner agencies including education, health, police, probation, children's social care and community organisations, ensuring the plan reflects local need and partnership priorities.
- National guidance, Youth Justice Board priorities, statutory responsibilities and research relating to youth justice, safeguarding, prevention, disproportionality and child development. The evidence demonstrates that certain groups of children and young people experience poorer outcomes and are disproportionately represented within the youth justice system. The actions within the plan have therefore been designed to reduce inequalities, improve access to support and opportunities, and promote better outcomes for all children and young people, particularly those who are most vulnerable and victims of crime.

3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	No	No
Disability	No	Yes	No
Gender reassignment	No	No	No
Marriage/civil partnership	No	No	No
Pregnancy/maternity	No	No	No
Race	No	Yes	No

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Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Religion/belief	No	No	No
Sex	No	No	No
Sexual orientation	No	No	No
Care experience	No	Yes	No
Other (e.g. low income groups)	No	No	No

4 Summary of the likely impacts

Who will be affected?

How will they be affected?

The Youth Justice Plan is expected to have an overall positive impact on children and young people involved in, or at risk of entering, the youth justice system. The plan promotes a Child First approach, early intervention, diversion from offending, improved educational participation, stronger health support, and enhanced partnership working and includes a priority around fairness, equity and inclusion.

Particular positive impacts are anticipated for:

- Children with SEND, neurodiversity and communication difficulties through improved assessment and specialist support.
- Children from ethnic minority communities through a stronger focus on disproportionality and equitable outcomes.
- Girls and young women through the development of gender-responsive services.
- Children in care and care leavers through work aimed at reducing criminalisation and improving support.
- Young people experiencing deprivation through targeted prevention and access to education, training and employment opportunities.
- Victims of crime

No significant adverse impacts have been identified. However, there is a risk that some groups may not benefit equally if services are not monitored and adapted to meet their specific needs.

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5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

To minimise the risk of unequal outcomes, the service will:

- Monitor performance and outcomes by protected characteristic to identify and address disproportionality.
- Continue to analyse data relating to ethnicity, gender, disability and care experience and other identified protected characteristics.
- Ensure interventions remain accessible and responsive to children with SEND and communication needs.
- Engage with children and young people from diverse backgrounds to inform service development.
- Deliver staff training to promote cultural competence, anti-discriminatory practice and understanding of protected characteristics.
- Work with partner agencies to remove barriers to education, employment, training and health services.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of interventions and make adjustments where inequalities are identified.

6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Monitor outcomes by protected characteristic and report findings through governance arrangements- ie- Youth justice partnership board	Youth Justice Service Manager	Quarterly
Review disproportionality data and implement targeted improvement actions where required	YJS Management Team	Quarterly
Ensure children's participation activities include diverse and underrepresented groups	YJS	Ongoing
Review accessibility of assessments and interventions for children with SEND and neurodiverse needs	YJS and SEND Partners	Annually
Develop staff knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion through ongoing training	Youth Justice Service Manager	Ongoing
Monitor outcomes for children in care and care leavers involved in the youth justice system	YJS and Children's Services	Quarterly

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Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Review EET and prevention outcomes for vulnerable groups and implement targeted support where necessary	YJS Management Team and Education lead	Quarterly

7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence
If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

It is recommended that the Youth Justice Plan proceeds as proposed. No significant adverse impacts have been identified that would prevent implementation. However, to ensure equitable outcomes for all children and young people, the service should continue to monitor performance and outcomes by protected characteristic, review disproportionality data regularly, and take targeted action where inequalities are identified.

The Youth Justice Service should maintain a strong focus on participation and co-production, ensuring that children and young people with lived experience continue to influence service development and delivery.

Overall, the plan supports Medway Council's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity, reducing disadvantage and improving outcomes for vulnerable children and young people across the youth justice system.

8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

Assistant Director

Date of authorisation

09.10.26