



CordisPulse

June 2026

Welcome to June's edition of the CordisPulse – a monthly digest of key research and policy developments across the sectors in which Cordis Bright provides research and consultancy services, i.e. adult social care and health, children and young people's services, and criminal justice.

This month's Pulse continues to highlight strong and recurring themes across our sectors: the need for earlier, more joined-up and more person-centred responses to complex risk. This is reflected in our own work, including the recently published [evaluation protocol](#) for the Youth Endowment Fund-funded Randomised Controlled Trial of United Borders' Building an Understanding of Self (B.U.S.) programme. B.U.S. is a trauma-informed, music-based mentoring intervention for young people at risk of, or already involved in, violence and offending. Our evaluation will explore not only whether the programme improves outcomes for young people, but also how it is implemented and experienced in practice.

We are also pleased to be working with FitzRoy and KeyRing on tackling cuckooing and related forms of exploitation affecting people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs. Our forthcoming [Lunch & Learn webinar](#) will share learning from this work and introduce plans for a Cuckooing Prevention Group to support ongoing collaboration and practical improvement.

These issues connect closely with several developments covered in this month's Pulse, including the government's youth justice White Paper, Barnardo's research on online misogyny, DfE analysis of young people at risk of becoming NEET, NSPCC's work on multi-agency safeguarding in Family Hubs, and new evidence on disabled people's experiences of the justice system. Collectively, they underline the importance of prevention, trusted relationships, lived experience, and coordinated support across organisational boundaries.

If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in this month's Pulse, please do contact us on 020 7330 9170 or email stephenboxford@cordisbright.co.uk.

Best wishes,



Dr Stephen Boxford
Director & Head of Research

If you would prefer not to receive future editions of the CordisPulse, please click 'unsubscribe' at the very end of this email. If you would like to discuss anything that arises from the Pulse (or if there are others who you think would like to receive copies) then please contact Dr Stephen Boxford on stephenboxford@cordisbright.co.uk or 020 7330 9170.

Cordis Bright Ltd, 23/24 Smithfield Street, London, EC1A 9LF.

Telephone: 020 7330 9170

Email: info@cordisbright.co.uk  [@CordisBright](https://twitter.com/CordisBright)

Website: www.cordisbright.co.uk  [Cordis Bright](https://www.linkedin.com/company/cordis-bright)



Cordis Bright News

Evaluation protocol published for the efficacy study RCT of United Borders' B.U.S. programme

Cordis Bright and United Borders are pleased to announce the publication of the evaluation protocol for the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF)-funded efficacy trial of the Building an Understanding of Self (B.U.S.) programme.

B.U.S. is a trauma-informed, music-based mentoring intervention designed to support young people aged 10–17 who are at risk of, or already involved in, violence and offending across Greater London. The programme combines one-to-one mentoring with creative music production, delivered on custom-fitted mobile recording studio buses and in community venues.

The published protocol sets out plans for a large-scale randomised controlled trial (RCT) and implementation and process evaluation, which will assess the impact of the programme on self-reported offending, wellbeing, behaviour and peer relationships. The evaluation will recruit 684 young people, who will be randomly allocated either to receive the B.U.S. programme or business-as-usual support.

Alongside the RCT, the study will explore how the programme is delivered in practice, how young people experience the intervention, and the factors that support successful implementation and engagement.

Fieldwork and programme delivery began in January 2026, with final reporting expected in Autumn 2028.

The full evaluation protocol is available [here](#).

For more information about the evaluation, please contact [Emma Andersen](#) at emmaandersen@cordisbright.co.uk.

Lunch & Learn Webinar: Tackling Cuckooing Together - Wednesday 15th July 12:30-13:30

Cuckooing is an increasingly recognised form of exploitation, yet many organisations continue to face challenges in identifying risks and coordinating effective responses.

Join FitzRoy, KeyRing and Cordis Bright for a Lunch & Learn webinar exploring how organisations can work together to prevent and respond to cuckooing and related forms of exploitation affecting people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs.

Drawing on findings from a [white paper](#) developed by FitzRoy and KeyRing in partnership with Cordis Bright, the session will explore how cuckooing presents in practice, the factors that increase vulnerability to exploitation, and the barriers that can limit effective intervention. Alongside practical insights and real-world examples,



the session will introduce plans for a Cuckooing Prevention Group, a shared learning network which aims to support ongoing learning, resource development and collaboration across organisations.

The webinar includes a 40-minute presentation followed by a Q&A and discussion.

Who should attend?

Professionals working across social care, housing, health, safeguarding, community safety, criminal justice and advocacy, as well as anyone with an interest in preventing exploitation and improving outcomes for people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health needs.

Register your interest and book your place [here](#)

Mental Health Awareness Month at Cordis Bright

Last month, Cordis Bright took part in the Mental Health Awareness Week. We reflected on what we've learned from the last ten years of our research and evaluation work with funders and providers of services aimed at improving people's mental health. Our [latest carousel](#) shares five key takeaways from projects we have supported - from the importance of early intervention and co-production to the value of trauma-informed, joined-up support.

Adult Social Care and Health

Reports

Care Quality Commission. Annual report and accounts 2024/25



Annual report
and accounts
2024/25

The CQC's latest annual report presents a frank account of a difficult year for England's health and social care regulator. Alongside its core regulatory activity, the report acknowledges significant challenges linked to new IT systems, revised assessment processes and organisational restructuring.

HC 110

These issues affected the CQC's ability to deliver planned assessments and contributed to wider concerns about its effectiveness, governance and culture. Independent reviews, including an "Unsatisfactory" audit opinion from the Government Internal Audit Agency, have prompted a programme of reform focused on strengthening governance, rebuilding confidence and improving regulatory performance.

Despite these difficulties, the CQC continued to exercise its enforcement powers and progress planned changes to its regulatory approach. The report will be important for providers, commissioners and system leaders seeking to understand how the regulator is responding to recent criticism and what this may mean for future inspection and assurance activity.

Home Office. Process evaluation of Combating Drugs Partnership

This Home Office evaluation examines how Combating Drugs Partnerships (CDPs) are supporting local delivery of the national drug strategy through a whole-system approach. Drawing on surveys, case studies, interviews, systems-mapping workshops and lived experience perspectives, the research explores how partnerships are operating across England and the factors influencing their effectiveness.

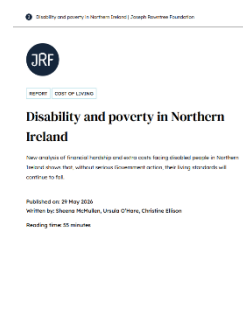
The evaluation found considerable variation in how CDPs are structured, governed and prioritised activity. Strong leadership, pre-existing relationships between partner organisations and clear governance arrangements were identified as important enablers of effective partnership working. Many partnerships placed a greater emphasis on treatment, recovery and reducing drug-related harm than on enforcement activity, reflecting local priorities and funding arrangements. The report also highlights ongoing challenges, including data sharing, performance monitoring and coordinating action across multiple agencies and sectors.

The findings offer useful insight into the opportunities and practical challenges of delivering complex public health and criminal justice agendas through partnership working, while highlighting the importance of local leadership, shared accountability and cross-sector collaboration in tackling drug-related harm.



Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Disability and poverty in Northern Ireland

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's latest report highlights the scale of financial disadvantage experienced by disabled people in Northern Ireland, drawing attention to the growing gap between the costs associated with disability and the support available to meet them. Combining analysis of poverty, employment and social security data with lived experience evidence, the report argues that disability remains a significant driver of poverty and financial insecurity.



The findings suggest that disabled people are substantially more likely than non-disabled people to experience poverty, while rising disability-related costs are placing increasing pressure on household finances. The report also highlights particular challenges for younger disabled people, who face higher costs and greater risks of going without essential goods and services. Concerns are raised about the adequacy of current financial support, with the report suggesting that existing benefits may be failing to keep pace with the realities of living with a disability.

This report will help to contribute to ongoing debates about poverty reduction, social security reform and employment support, while highlighting the importance of understanding and addressing the additional costs associated with disability.

Briefings

Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Tackle economic failures at root to ease pressure on Universal Credit

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's latest briefing challenges the idea that rising Universal Credit expenditure can be addressed through welfare reform alone. Instead, it argues that increasing demand for support reflects wider economic and social pressures, including poor health, rising housing costs, insecure employment and persistent low pay.

Drawing on evidence from labour market, health and housing trends, the briefing suggests that growth in health-related benefit claims is closely linked to worsening population health and increasing levels of work-limiting illness. It also highlights the growing number of people receiving Universal Credit while in work, pointing to the continuing challenges posed by insecure employment and earnings that are insufficient to meet living costs. The briefing argues that these structural factors are placing sustained pressure on both households and the social security system.

This briefing contributes to ongoing discussions about welfare reform by emphasising the connections between economic conditions, population health and benefit expenditure, and highlights the importance of addressing the root causes of poverty and financial insecurity alongside changes to the benefits system.

Tools and Guidance

Department of Health and Social Care. Learning and development support scheme for the adult social care workforce: a guide for employers

The Department of Health and Social Care has published updated guidance on the Learning and Development Support Scheme (LDSS), which provides funding to help adult social care employers in England invest in workforce training and development. The scheme enables eligible employers to claim reimbursement for a range of approved courses and qualifications completed by non-regulated care staff, supporting broader efforts to strengthen skills, career progression and retention across the sector.

The guidance outlines eligibility requirements, the types of training that can be funded and the process for submitting claims. It also confirms the continuation of funding into 2026/27, signalling an ongoing policy focus on workforce development as a key component of improving the quality and sustainability of adult social care services. Alongside recognised qualifications, the scheme covers a range of specialist learning opportunities, including the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism.

At a time when recruitment, retention and skills shortages remain significant challenges across the sector, the scheme offers practical support for employers seeking to develop staff capabilities while contributing to wider ambitions to professionalise the adult social care workforce.

Local Government Association. Partners in Care and Health

The Local Government Association's latest Partners in Care and Health prospectus sets out the improvement and support available to councils in England during 2026/27, at a time when many local authorities continue to face significant financial pressures, rising demand for services and ongoing organisational change. The prospectus brings together a range of peer-led support, leadership development opportunities and practical resources designed to help councils strengthen performance and build resilience.

A central theme of the offer is sector-led improvement, with councils encouraged to learn from one another through peer challenges, reviews and expert support. The prospectus highlights support across a broad range of service areas, including adult social care, children's services, public health and housing, alongside programmes focused on leadership, governance, workforce development and organisational culture. It also places particular emphasis on helping councils respond to financial challenges and navigate large-scale transformation.

This prospectus provides insight into the priorities currently shaping local government improvement activity and reinforces the growing importance of collaboration, shared learning and leadership development in responding to an increasingly complex operating environment.

Local Government Association. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment: a springboard for action

The Local Government Association's new toolkit seeks to strengthen the role of Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) as a driver of local action rather than simply a statutory requirement. Developed with the Association of Directors of Public Health and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, the resource provides practical guidance on how local authorities and partners can use JSNAs to better understand community needs, address inequalities and improve population health outcomes.

A key message is that effective JSNAs should be an ongoing, collaborative process that brings together quantitative data, qualitative evidence and lived experience. The toolkit emphasises the importance of engaging residents, community organisations, health services and wider partners to build a more comprehensive understanding of local priorities. It also highlights the role of JSNAs in supporting integrated care, prevention and population health management, while showcasing examples of how local areas have used them to inform commissioning, service design and strategic planning.

This resource reinforces the growing focus on prevention, partnership working and place-based approaches, while offering practical support for translating local insight into coordinated action.

Children and Young People's Services

Reports

Department for Education. Risk factors for becoming NEET: a statistical analysis using linked data

 Department
for Education

**Risk factors for
becoming NEET:
a statistical analysis
using linked data**
Research report

May 2026

 Government
Social Research

The Department for Education's latest analysis explores the factors associated with young people becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET), drawing on linked survey and education data to examine outcomes between the ages of 17–19 and 20–24. The report highlights how educational attainment, school engagement and wider social circumstances can shape young people's transitions into adulthood.

The findings show that young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including those with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, are significantly more likely to experience a period of being NEET. Care-experienced young people also face an elevated risk, while lower educational attainment, poor attendance and weaker engagement with school are all associated with less positive post-16 outcomes. The analysis emphasises that becoming NEET is rarely linked to a single factor, instead reflecting the combined influence of educational, personal and socioeconomic circumstances.

The findings reinforce the importance of early identification and targeted support for those at greater risk of disengagement, while contributing to wider discussions about reducing inequalities and improving young people's education, employment and life chances outcomes.

Department for Education. Free breakfast club adopters: interim evaluation

This interim evaluation examines how the government's free breakfast club early adopter programme is operating in practice across a diverse group of primary schools in England. Based on school observations and interviews with parents, the research explores how breakfast clubs are being delivered and the experiences of children and families using them.

The findings suggest that breakfast clubs are providing more than just access to food; clubs offered a calm and structured start to the day, with opportunities for children to socialise, build independence and engage in activities before lessons begin. Parents described benefits including reduced morning stress, support with childcare and greater confidence that children are arriving at school ready to learn. The research also highlights the value of flexible delivery models and tailored support for children with SEND, while noting that some families do not use the provision because it does not align with their existing routines or needs.

The evaluation provides early insight into the potential role of breakfast clubs in supporting attendance, wellbeing and family life as the programme moves towards wider national rollout.

National Foundation for Educational Research. High-SEND schools: Patterns and pressures in mainstream provision



Final report
High-SEND schools: Patterns and pressures in mainstream provision
National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)

This NFER report explores why pupils with SEND are increasingly concentrated in a relatively small number of mainstream schools, and what this means for inclusion, capacity and sustainability.

Drawing on national data, a survey of SENCOs and school leaders, and qualitative research with staff, parents and local authorities, the report identifies a “structural steering effect”. Schools with strong reputations for inclusion can attract more pupils with SEND, while wider shortages in specialist and mainstream capacity may also direct families towards them.



The report highlights the strengths of high-SEND schools, including inclusive cultures, specialist expertise and trusted relationships with families. However, it also shows how these schools can face significant staffing, workload and financial pressures. The findings underline the need to consider inclusion not only as a school-level issue, but as a system-wide challenge.

The Sutton Trust. Room to Grow: School-based nurseries and the disadvantage gap



The Sutton Trust’s latest report examines the government’s School-Based Nursery (SBN) programme and its potential to improve access to high-quality early education for disadvantaged children. Drawing on a literature review, survey data and case studies, the report explores whether the programme is reaching the children and communities most likely to benefit, while also considering the practical challenges involved in expanding provision.

The findings suggest that school-based nurseries can play an important role in supporting disadvantaged children and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), benefiting from closer links to schools, qualified staff and established educational expertise. However, the report raises questions about whether current investment is sufficiently targeted towards areas with the greatest need. Early analysis indicates that some funding has supported the expansion of existing provision rather than creating new places in underserved communities. Schools also report significant barriers to expansion, including limited space, high start-up costs and concerns about long-term financial sustainability.

This report highlights the importance of both access and quality in early years provision, and contributes to ongoing debates about how best to ensure disadvantaged children benefit from high-quality early education.

Barnardo's. The impact of online misogyny on children and young people's attitudes and behaviours

Barnardo's latest research examines children and young people's exposure to misogynistic content and behaviours online, and the potential impact on their attitudes, relationships and wellbeing. Based on a UK-wide survey of 4,000 young people aged 13–20, the report highlights the prevalence of harmful gender stereotypes, online harassment and image-based abuse across digital environments.

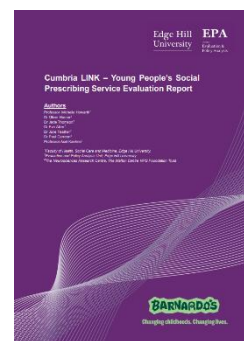


The findings suggest that harmful gender expectations are widely observed online, with many young people reporting exposure to sexist and degrading behaviour. Girls were particularly likely to report experiences of online harassment, including being called degrading names and receiving unwanted messages. The report also identifies concerns around image-based abuse, with some young people reporting pressure to share explicit images, threats relating to the distribution of such images, and exposure to intimate content that had been shared without consent.

This report helps to better understand the risks young people face online, contributing to wider discussions about online safety, healthy relationships and gender-based violence, while highlighting the need for effective education, prevention and support.

Barnardo's. Cumbria LINK young people's social prescribing service evaluation report

Barnardo's evaluation of the Cumbria LINK young people's social prescribing service explores the impact of a co-produced model designed to support children and young people's wellbeing through both coordinated signposting and one-to-one therapeutic support. The service takes a flexible, relationship-based approach, working with children and young people aged 5–19 and their families to identify and access support that meets their individual needs.



The evaluation found a range of positive outcomes for children and young people, including improved mood, confidence and emotional wellbeing, alongside greater engagement in social activities, education and family life. Participants also reported reduced anxiety, improved emotional regulation and increased optimism about the future, with many of these benefits continuing after formal support had ended. Parents described improvements in their own wellbeing and capacity to support their child, as well as reduced isolation and stress. A key theme throughout the evaluation was the importance of trusted relationships and the flexibility for young people to choose how and when they engaged with support.

The findings add to the growing evidence base for social prescribing as an early intervention approach, particularly in supporting mental wellbeing and preventing difficulties from escalating into more complex needs.

NSPCC. It takes a place: Multi-agency safeguarding in family hubs

The NSPCC's latest report explores how Family Hubs and other place-based family support services can contribute to safeguarding young children through more effective multi-agency working. Drawing on evidence from a rapid review, practitioner interviews, case reviews and a survey of more than 2,000 parents, the report examines the opportunities and challenges involved in delivering joined-up support for families with children under five.



A key theme is the importance of collaboration between services, with practitioners highlighting both the value of information sharing and the persistent barriers that can make it difficult in practice. The report suggests that safeguarding systems often remain focused on responding to crises, which can sit uneasily alongside the preventative aims of Family Hubs and early help services. Strong relationships between professionals and families, clear leadership and confidence in multi-agency roles were all identified as important factors in supporting effective safeguarding and the early identification of need. The report also highlights variation in awareness and delivery of Family Hubs across England.

The findings contribute to ongoing discussions about prevention, early intervention and integrated family support, while raising important questions about how safeguarding systems can better support collaborative, community-based approaches to helping children and families.

Buttle. No easy path: The realities of LGBTQ+ young people estranged from their families

Buttle's report explores the experiences of LGBTQ+ young people who are estranged from their families, drawing on survey, interview and focus group evidence from the *Beyond Estrangement* research project. It highlights how sexuality and gender identity can shape experiences of family rejection, harm and isolation, as well as young people's ability to access support after leaving home.

The findings suggest that estrangement is often linked to emotional or physical harm within the family home, including rejection, controlling behaviour and conflict related to identity. Many young people left harmful situations only after gaining some independence through education, employment or supportive relationships. Following estrangement, participants commonly experienced mental health difficulties, financial insecurity, housing instability, loneliness and disruption to education. The report also points to gaps in professional understanding of both estrangement and LGBTQ+ identities, which can make support harder to access.

The report adds important nuance to discussions about youth housing, mental health and family support, highlighting the need for more responsive services, clearer routes into financial and housing support, and stronger access to specialist LGBTQ+ organisations, trusted adults and community networks.

Briefings

Action for Children. Employability of care-experienced young people

Action for Children's latest briefing examines the challenges care-experienced young people can face when moving into employment, drawing on evidence from frontline services and engagement with young people. The report highlights how experiences of instability, alongside practical and emotional barriers, can affect young people's ability to access and sustain work.

The briefing suggests that care-experienced young people are more likely to experience poorer employment outcomes than their peers, often facing challenges such as housing insecurity, financial pressures and transport costs. Mental health difficulties, low confidence and limited access to trusted support networks can create additional barriers, particularly during the transition from care to independent adulthood. Young people emphasised the value of personalised support, mentoring and opportunities to develop workplace skills and confidence.

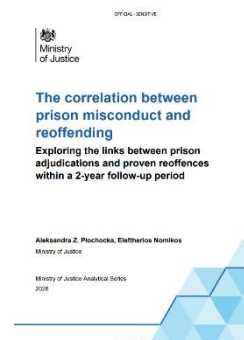
The findings reinforce the importance of viewing employability through a broader lens than job readiness alone. They highlight how employment outcomes are shaped by wider experiences of care, wellbeing and stability, and point to the role that employers, education providers and support services can play in creating accessible pathways into work and providing sustained support once young people enter employment.

Criminal Justice

Reports

Ministry of Justice. The correlation between prison misconduct and reoffending

This Ministry of Justice analysis explores the relationship between misconduct in prison and reoffending after release, using administrative data from people released from custody in England and Wales. The report finds a clear association between behaviour during imprisonment and later offending outcomes, with individuals who committed misconduct in custody more likely to reoffend than those who did not.



The findings suggest that the likelihood of reoffending increases alongside the frequency and severity of misconduct incidents, with violent misconduct associated with particularly high rates of future offending. Importantly, the relationship remained even after accounting for a range of individual and sentence characteristics. However, the report emphasises that the findings demonstrate correlation rather than causation, and do not show that misconduct directly leads to reoffending.

The analysis provides useful insight into how behaviour in custody may help identify individuals who could benefit from additional support, intervention or risk management. It also contributes to wider discussions about rehabilitation and public protection, highlighting the potential value of addressing behavioural issues during imprisonment as part of efforts to reduce reoffending after release.

Office for Equality and Opportunity. Disabled people's experiences of and access to justice in the UK: an evidence review

This evidence review from the Office for Equality and Opportunity examines disabled people's experiences of accessing and navigating the justice system across civil, family and criminal justice settings. Bringing together research from across the UK, the review highlights a range of barriers that can affect disabled people's ability to understand their rights, engage with legal processes and access appropriate support.

The findings suggest that physical, communication and digital accessibility challenges continue to limit participation in parts of the justice system. Disabled people also report less positive experiences and lower levels of satisfaction when interacting with justice services, while inconsistent provision of reasonable adjustments can create further obstacles. The review notes that barriers may be compounded by other factors, including age, ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic disadvantage, highlighting the complexity of inequalities in access to justice.

The report contributes to ongoing discussions about fairness, accessibility and inclusion within the justice system. Its findings underscore the importance of accessible information, consistent support and greater awareness of disability-related needs, while also highlighting gaps in the evidence base and the need for further research to better understand and address inequalities in justice outcomes.

HM Prison and Probation. A qualitative process evaluation of a pilot of supervision for prison officers

HM Prison & Probation Service

A qualitative process evaluation of a pilot of supervision for prison officers

Dr Georgia Barnett, Nicola Cunningham & Lydia Baxter
HM Prison & Probation Service

Ministry of Justice Analytical Series
2020



This evaluation from HM Prison and Probation Service examines a pilot supervision programme designed to provide prison officers with structured opportunities for reflection, support and professional development. Based on qualitative research across participating establishments, the report explores how the programme was implemented and how it was experienced by staff.

Participants generally welcomed the opportunity to reflect on their work and discuss challenging experiences in a dedicated setting. Many reported potential benefits for wellbeing, confidence and professional development, particularly where supervision was delivered by trusted and skilled supervisors. However, the evaluation also highlights significant implementation challenges. Staffing shortages, operational pressures and difficulties releasing staff from frontline duties affected participation and consistency, with experiences varying considerably between establishments.

The findings offer valuable insight into the practical challenges of introducing reflective practice within prison settings. They suggest that while supervision may have the potential to support staff wellbeing and development, its success is likely to depend on sustained organisational commitment, adequate resources and strong local leadership. The report also highlights the need for further research into longer-term impacts on staff retention, wellbeing and organisational outcomes.

Ministry of Justice. Mental Health support in approved premises - early process evaluation and research findings

Ministry of Justice

Mental Health Support in Approved Premises – Early Process Evaluation and Research Findings

Jemma Jones and Chloe Enveroldsen

Ministry of Justice Analytical Series
2020



This Ministry of Justice evaluation examines a pilot that embedded mental health practitioners within Approved Premises (APs) in England and Wales to improve access to support for people under probation supervision. Drawing on interviews with residents, staff and practitioners, the report explores how the model operated in practice and its perceived benefits for both residents and services.

The findings suggest that co-located practitioners made mental health support more accessible by offering a visible and readily available service within APs. Residents valued the ability to access support quickly and informally, while practitioners provided assessment, emotional support, care planning and referrals to specialist services. Staff reported improved communication and collaboration between probation, AP staff and mental health services, alongside increased confidence in responding to residents' mental health needs. However, the evaluation also identified challenges, including variation in local service provision, uncertainty around practitioner roles and difficulties maintaining support when residents moved on from APs.

The report adds to a growing body of evidence on integrated and place-based approaches to support. Its findings suggest that co-located mental health provision

may help address unmet need, strengthen multi-agency working and improve continuity of care for people with complex needs within the criminal justice system.

HMCIFRS. National Crime Agency: An inspection of effectiveness and efficiency



This inspection by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services assesses the National Crime Agency's effectiveness and efficiency in tackling serious and organised crime. The report concludes that the NCA continues to play a vital role in protecting the public, developing intelligence and coordinating responses to complex criminal threats across the UK and internationally.

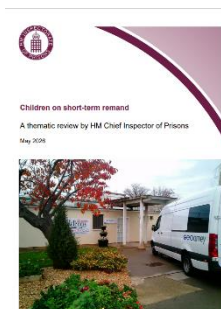
National Crime Agency
An inspection of effectiveness and efficiency

While the inspection found the agency to be effective in its core functions, it highlights growing pressures arising from increasing demand and the evolving nature of serious and organised crime. Workforce capacity remains a key challenge, with ongoing difficulties in recruitment, retention and the development of specialist skills. The report also raises concerns about financial sustainability and the risks associated with ageing technology infrastructure, which may affect the agency's long-term resilience.

The findings provide insight into the operational challenges facing one of the UK's principal law enforcement organisations and highlight the importance of workforce planning, sustainable resourcing and modern technology in maintaining an effective response to increasingly complex criminal threats.

HM Inspectorate of Prisons. Children on short-term remand

This thematic review from HM Inspectorate of Prisons examines the experiences of children placed on short-term remand and how effectively youth justice, custodial and wider support services respond to their needs. Drawing on inspection evidence, the report highlights the significant disruption that remand can cause for children, many of whom have experienced trauma, exploitation, mental health difficulties and involvement with children's social care.



The review found considerable variation in the quality of assessment, planning and multi-agency working. While examples of effective support were identified, information sharing between agencies was often inconsistent, and planning for release frequently began too late to support a smooth transition back into the community. The report also raises concerns that children's views were not always reflected in decisions about their care and support.

The findings reinforce the importance of viewing remand as more than a temporary custodial measure. They highlight opportunities to strengthen safeguarding, improve continuity of support and ensure that periods of remand are used to address

children's welfare, educational and developmental needs, helping to reduce disruption and support more positive long-term outcomes.

Briefings

Ministry of Justice. Cutting Youth Crime. Changing Young Lives

This White Paper sets out the government's vision for reforming the youth justice system in England and Wales, with a stronger emphasis on prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation. The proposals reflect a shift towards addressing the underlying factors associated with offending, with the aim of improving outcomes for children and young people while reducing reoffending.

Ministry
of Justice

Cutting Youth Crime.
Changing Young Lives.
The youth justice system reform
and delivery plan

CP 1001

A key theme is the adoption of a more child-centred approach, recognising the role that trauma, exploitation, adverse childhood experiences and unmet needs can play in shaping behaviour. The White Paper also highlights the importance of better support for vulnerable groups, including children with SEND, mental health needs and care experience, alongside stronger collaboration between youth justice, education, health, social care and policing services. Increased use of community-based interventions and a greater focus on education, skills and employment are proposed as ways to support rehabilitation and reduce reliance on custody.

The proposals signal a continued move towards prevention-focused and partnership-based approaches, reflecting broader efforts to improve life chances for children in contact with the justice system while maintaining a focus on victims, communities, public protection and confidence in the youth justice system.

Home Office and Ministry of Justice. Crime and Policing Act 2026: overarching factsheet

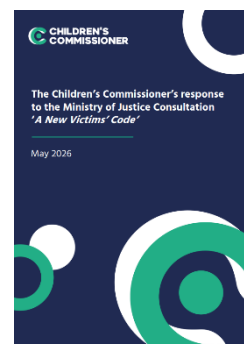
This factsheet provides an overview of the Crime and Policing Act 2026, setting out the government's key reforms to policing, crime prevention and public protection. The legislation introduces a broad package of measures aimed at strengthening responses to crime and antisocial behaviour, while supporting wider ambitions to improve community safety and public confidence in the criminal justice system.

A central theme of the Act is earlier intervention and stronger enforcement. The measures include enhanced protections for victims, particularly in relation to violence against women and girls, alongside reforms intended to tackle serious violence, organised crime and the exploitation of vulnerable people. The legislation also introduces changes designed to support more effective policing, investigations and criminal justice processes, with the government positioning these reforms as part of a wider strategy to prevent harm and improve outcomes for victims.

Children's Commissioner. The Children's Commissioner's response to the Ministry of Justice Consultation 'A New Victim's Code'

The Children's Commissioner's response to the Ministry of Justice consultation on a new Victims' Code argues that children's experiences and needs should be more clearly reflected within the framework of rights and support available to victims of crime.

Drawing on evidence from children and young people who have engaged with the criminal justice system, the response highlights concerns that many child victims are unaware of their rights and do not consistently receive appropriate information, support or updates throughout the process.



A central theme is the need to recognise children as a distinct group of victims, requiring communication and support that is tailored to their age, development and circumstances. The response also emphasises the importance of professional understanding of trauma, safeguarding and child development, particularly when working with children who may face additional vulnerabilities, including those with SEND, children in care and those affected by exploitation or abuse. It further calls for children's views to play a greater role in shaping services and support.

The recommendations contribute to wider discussions about child-centred justice and raise important questions about how effectively current systems support children to understand, access and exercise their rights as victims of crime.

Tools and Guidance

Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation. Supporting prisoners with care experience policy framework

This policy framework from the Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation Service sets out how prisons in England should identify and support people with care experience throughout custody and resettlement. The guidance reflects growing recognition that care-experienced people are overrepresented in the prison population and may face additional challenges linked to childhood trauma, adverse experiences and disrupted family relationships.

The framework requires prisons to identify and record care-experienced prisoners, ensure they are aware of available support, and provide opportunities to discuss their needs with designated staff. It also emphasises the importance of trauma-informed practice and collaboration with local authorities and other agencies to support wellbeing, rehabilitation and successful resettlement. Particular attention is given to key transition points, including entry into custody, transfers between establishments and release into the community. The guidance also highlights the importance of maintaining positive relationships and improving access to services that support rehabilitation and resettlement.

The framework reflects growing recognition of the specific vulnerabilities and support needs associated with care experience within the prison population and reinforces

the role of personalised, coordinated support in helping individuals navigate custody and prepare for life after prison.

Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation. Remand prisoners policy framework

This policy framework from the Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation Service sets out expectations for the management and support of people held on remand in prisons in England. Recognising that remand can be a period of significant uncertainty, stress and vulnerability, the framework aims to ensure that individuals receive appropriate information, support and access to services while awaiting trial or sentencing.

The guidance emphasises the importance of promptly identifying remand prisoners and ensuring they understand their rights, entitlements and the prison regime through clear communication and accessible information. It highlights the need to support contact with legal representatives, courts and family members, including attendance at court hearings, while also responding to mental health, self-harm and wider welfare needs. Remand prisoners should be able to access healthcare, education, employment and other appropriate activities, alongside support to engage effectively with legal processes.

The framework reflects a broader focus on safeguarding wellbeing and protecting legal rights within custody. It also highlights the importance of partnership working between prisons, healthcare providers, legal professionals and other agencies to support people during what can be a particularly challenging period of their involvement with the justice system.