



Charlie Taylor, Chief Inspector of Prisons

Youth Justice in England and Wales

Jan 2024

The Chief Inspector of Prisons – Charlie Taylor

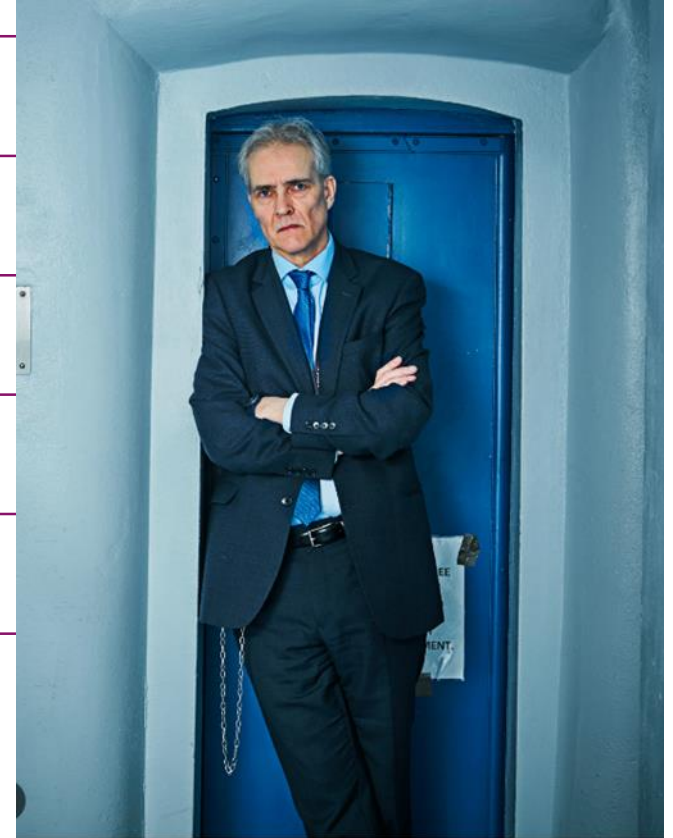
Schools

Headteacher

Review of Youth Justice

Youth Justice Board

Chief Inspector of Prisons

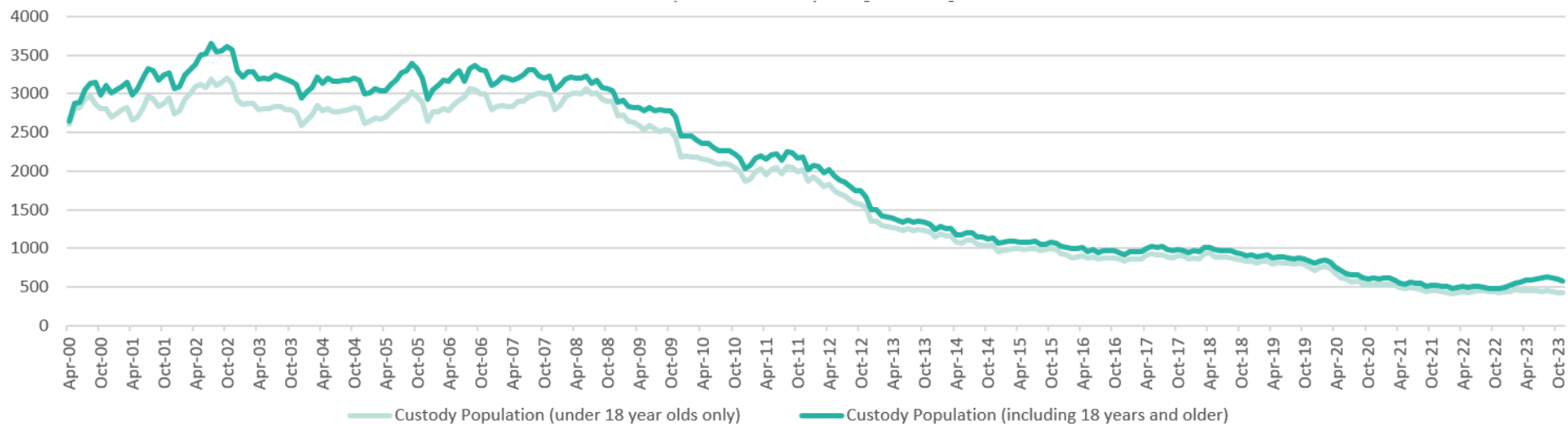




2016 Review of the Youth Justice System

- Courts
- Community
- Custody
- Care

Youth custody population – England and Wales



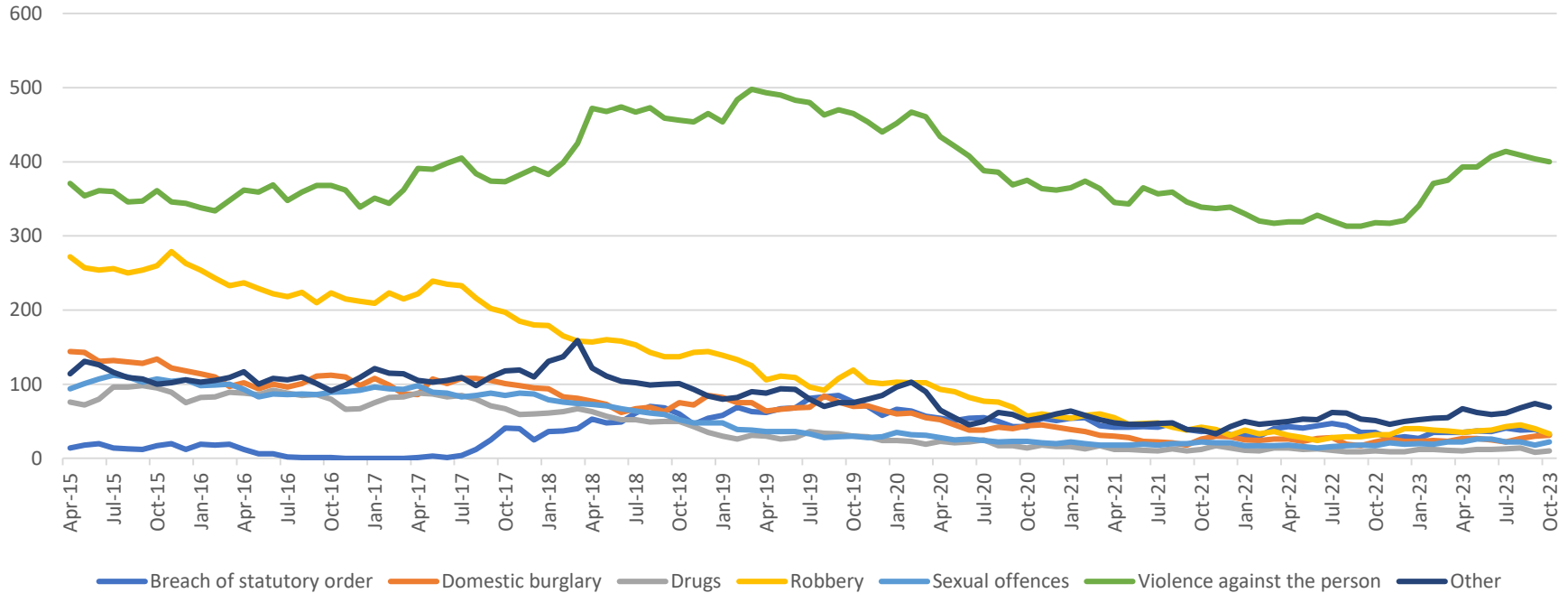
Youth custody data - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)





[Image source: Tony Blair urged 'radical' measures to cut asylum, archive papers reveal - BBC News](#)

Youth custody population by offence group – England and Wales



- Proven reoffending rate for juvenile offenders was **32.5%** (Oct - Dec 2021 cohort); this is compared to adult offenders whose rate is **25.1%** (MoJ stats).



Secure schools

"Oasis Restore is at the forefront of a long-awaited revolution in youth justice. Our school offers therapeutic, integrated, and bespoke support for children, along with pathways for successful transition that equips them to contribute to a safer community."

Steve Chalke, Oasis Founder







HMIP – What we do

- The UK is a party to the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).
- HMIP provide independent scrutiny of the conditions for and treatment of prisoners and other detainees and report on our findings.
- We inspect prisons, Young Offender Institutions (YOIs), Secure Training Centres (STCs), Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs), court custody suites and military detention.
- Inspections are carried out against published inspection criteria known as Expectations. The Inspectorate sets its own inspection criteria to ensure transparency and independence.
- Expectations for adult male and female prisons and YOIs are brigaded under the four tests of a 'healthy establishment'.



Types of prison in England and Wales

Types of prison

adult males

women

children and young people

Categories

A long term high secure estate

B reception and training prisons

C resettlement and training prisons

D open prisons

Children in custody

Young offender institutions (5 x YOIs: Cookham Wood, Feltham, Parc, Werrington, Wetherby)

- Holds children between the ages of 15-18.
- Inspected annually.

Secure training centres (3 x STCs: Medway, Oakhill, Rainsbrook)

- Hold young offenders between the ages of 12-18.
- Inspected annually.
- Ofsted lead these inspections, accompanied by HMI Prisons inspectors.

Secure children's homes

- Run by local authorities or other providers.
- Hold children between the ages of 10-17.
- Can also house those detained for welfare reasons.
- HMI Prisons has no remit to inspect SCHs.



MoJ and HMPPS

- **Ministry of Justice (MoJ)** is the government department responsible for courts, prisons, probation and attendance centres.
- **His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS)** is an agency of MoJ and made up of HM Prison Service, Probation Service, Youth Custody Service and a headquarters.

Responsible for:

- running prison and probation services
- rehabilitation services for people in our care leaving prison
- making sure support is available to stop people reoffending
- contract managing private sector prisons and services such as:
- the prisoner escort service
- electronic tagging



What is custody for children like in the UK?

Almost QUARTER of children in youth prisons and secure sites are Black, report shows

The damning findings, from the Children's Commissioner, looked into the children aged 10 to 18 in youth custody in England and Wales as of December 2022

Youth jail turns to therapy rather than steel doors

6 October 2020



"Secure schools" will aim to stop young offenders becoming adult prisoners. A scene from the youth justice TV drama 'Out of Control'

Fix 'endemic' problems in youth custody, urges prisons watchdog

Monitoring boards chief warns of poor conditions at four young offender institutions in England



The watchdog wrote to the prisons minister saying concerns had 'considerably heightened'. Photograph: Andrew Matthews/PA Media

Young offender institutions 'more violent than adult jails' – prisons inspector

HM Inspectorate of Prisons published two new reports which it said 'paint a bleak picture of youth custody in England and Wales'.



THE INSPECTORATE SAID LEVELS OF VIOLENCE AND SELF-HARM ROSE IN YOUNG OFFENDER INSTITUTIONS (VICTORIA JONES/PA).

PA WIRE







2004 09 05 11:02:22















[Image source: One in five young prisoners are Muslim, report reveals | Prisons and probation | The Guardian](#)



Image source: [Coronavirus: Violence fears over longer lockdowns in prisons - BBC News](#)

How do we inspect children & young people in custody?

- **Week 1**
 - Includes, but not limited to:
 - Take an initial view of the environment and meet the governor/manager of the establishment
- **Detainee survey**
 - Survey of a representative proportion of the detainee population – key source of evidence, gathering perceptions.
 - Participants chosen at random across all wings/units of the establishment.
 - Confidential and anonymous.
- **Staff survey**
 - Online staff survey – open for 7 days.
- **Week 2**
 - Lasts five days – relevant version of Expectations used for each inspection. Five key sources of evidence for inspection: observation, detainees, staff, relevant third parties, documentation.



Survey – over 100 questions

	HMP Exeter 2022	Local prisons surveyed since May 2021
PRISONER SURVEY QUESTIONS		
HEALTH CARE		
If there are currently COVID-19 restrictions in place here:		
Do you know what the restrictions are here?	26%	54%
Have the reasons for the restrictions been explained to you?	73%	70%
Do you agree the restrictions are necessary?	64%	53%
Do you feel you have been kept safe from the virus?	31%	47%
Is it very/quite easy to see:		
Doctor?	12%	21%
Nurse?	34%	39%
Dentist?	8%	11%
Pharmacist?	29%	33%
Mental health worker?	33%	20%
Substance misuse worker?	47%	26%

	HMP Exeter 2022	Local prisons surveyed since May 2021
PRISONER SURVEY QUESTIONS		
ALCOHOL AND DRUGS		
Did you have an alcohol problem when you came into this prison?	31%	22%
<i>For those who had/have an alcohol problem:</i>		
Have you been helped with your alcohol problem in this prison?	68%	46%
Did you have a drug problem when you came into this prison (including illicit drugs and medication not prescribed to you)?	44%	33%
Have you developed a problem with illicit drugs since you have been in this prison?	7%	8%
Have you developed a problem with taking medication not prescribed to you since you have been in this prison?	10%	8%
<i>For those who had/have a drug problem:</i>		
Have you been helped with your drug problem in this prison (including illicit drugs and medication not prescribed to you)?	44%	49%
Is it very/quite easy to get illicit drugs in this prison?	22%	28%
Is it very/quite easy to get alcohol in this prison?	16%	19%
Is it very/quite easy to get tobacco in this prison?	7%	16%



How do we inspect children & young people in custody

Safety

Care

Healthy Prison Tests

Purposeful activity

Resettlement

How do we score on our inspections?

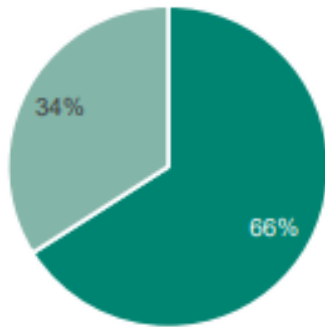
Healthy Prison Scores

- 1 poor
- 2 not sufficiently good
- 3 reasonably good
- 4 good

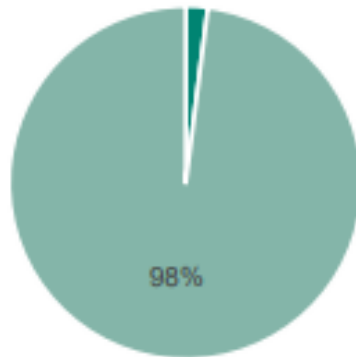
Which children end up in custody?– some of our survey findings

Of the children we surveyed in STCs and YOIs in 2022-23:

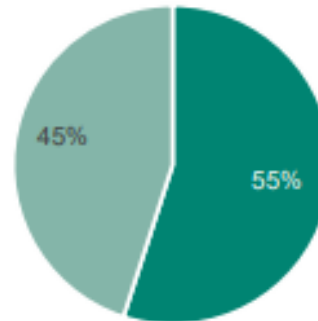
- 66% reported having been in local authority care.



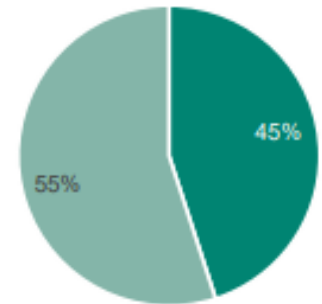
- Just 2% were girls.



- Over half (55%) reported being from a minority ethnic background.



- 45% reported having health problems.



[Children in custody 2022-23 \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/children-in-custody-2022-23/)

Which children end up in custody?– some of our survey findings

Of the children we surveyed in STCs and YOIs in 2022-23:

- Just **46%** of children reported feeling cared for by staff.
 - o Particularly concerning due to the link between good, trusting relationships and effective behaviour management.
- **32%** of children did not have a member of staff they felt they could turn to for help if they had a problem.
- **55%** of children thought their experiences of custody made them less likely to offend in the future.



Key concerns in the youth estate

- High levels of violence, use of weapons.
- Use of 'keep apart' and poor behaviour management approaches e.g. Cookham Wood: 90% of boys were being kept apart from other prisoners, with nearly 600 keep apart instructions. Lack of meaningful incentives across YOIs.
- Limited regime and levels of purposeful activity, made worse by use of 'keep apart's'.
- PAVA incapacitant spray.

Key concerns in the youth estate

- Despite significant resources, most sites are unable to deliver one meaningful conversation with each child a week – as a result many children do not feel cared for.
- Many children are placed too far from home e.g. **37%** of children were placed 50 or more miles from their home in 2022-23 (MoJ stats).
 - o This situation is particularly acute for girls.
- Demographics of youth custody population.
 - o Black children – 26%.
 - o 5 girls, 563 boys – includes 18+ in youth custody (MoJ stats).



Youth custody workforce

- YCS have the highest sickness absence rate at **18.2** average working days lost in the 12 months ending Sep 2023 (compared with **11.5** for all HMPPS staff).

Cookham Wood:

Out of 148 operational posts, only 65 staff were able to be deployed.

Despite 360 staff in post, (including 44 managers) for 77 children, outcomes were still incredibly poor.

Cookham Wood inspection– April 2023

- Complete breakdown of behaviour management, with widespread weapon use.
- **90% of children** were subjected to 'keep apart' and staff were managing **583 individual conflicts in a population of 77.**
- Over a quarter of the population was completely segregated from the main population – two boys had been subject to these conditions for **100 days.**
- Acceptance of low standards e.g. uniform.
- Education, skills and work provision was inadequate.
 - o Allocations were based on 'keep apart' lists.



Cookham Wood inspection – April 2023

Full report - [HMYOI Cookham Wood Urgent Notification \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)



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Parc – a more positive story

- Positive inspection in 2022 - [Report on an unannounced inspection of HMYOI Parc by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons 28 March - 8 April 2022 \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmip/hmip-parc-report-2022/)
- Strong relationships between children and staff that resulted in largely positive outcomes for children.
- Very supportive culture.
- Excellent enrichment programme.
- Good amount of time out of cell.



Challenges

- Reduce violence
 - Improve purposeful activity
 - Improve staff-prisoner relationships
 - Caring for girls in custody
-
- The Secure school



Thank you for listening!
Any questions?



HM Inspectorate of Prisons



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HMIP thematic research – links to reports

- [Children in custody report 2022-23](#)
- [A joint thematic inspection of work with children subject to remand in youth detention – Nov 2023](#)
- [Restricted status children and prisoners held in women's establishments – May 2023](#)
- [Outcomes for girls in custody – Sep 2022](#)
- [Outcomes for young adults in custody – Jan 2021](#)
- [Separation of children in YOIs – Jan 2020](#)
- All HMIP reports can be found [here](#).

