



# Education and Training for Young People in the Youth Justice System: what next?

## Report of an Ideas-Building Event at St. George's House, Windsor Castle, 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> July 2007

The purpose of this event was to consider how we can improve education and training for young people supervised by the youth justice system, principally through developing a clearer and more robust accountability framework. Through doing so, we aimed to develop proposals which would make a significant impact in helping to reverse the statistic that 78.2% of young people sentenced to custody, and 70.3% of young people given community sentences, re-offend within one year.

Our discussions built on responses to the recent Government consultation on how to improve the learning and skills of children and young people, aged between 10 – 17 years, who are supervised by the youth justice system within England. Responses to the consultation highlighted the importance of establishing an effective framework of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, which needs to be in place first to enable improvements in participation, curriculum and workforce development to follow rapidly, in line with mainstream education policy where appropriate.

As with all Open Agenda reports, this report aims to reflect from an **independent** standpoint the main ideas and views put forward during the event, with the understanding that not everybody involved in the discussions may have endorsed *all* of the ideas included. Nor should they be viewed as a policy statement on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools & Families or anyone else! Phrases that are italicised are direct quotes from the event, and a list of participants is included at the end of the report.

The main outcomes of our discussions are outlined under the following headings:

- Why a clear, strong accountability framework is important (pages 1 – 2)
- The key design elements that the framework should include (pages 2 – 3)
- Four propositions to reverse the trend towards re-offending, together with the actions that will be needed to make them happen. The propositions include the following:
  - Place powers and duties on Local Authorities so that, through Children's Trusts, and as part of mainstream accountability and to mainstream standards, they have responsibility for commissioning learning and skills provision for all child and young offenders, including those in custody. (pages 3 – 6)
  - To extend 'Care Matters' duties and responsibilities to all children and young people who have offended and those on youth inclusion projects. (pages 6 – 8)
  - Engage young people in all aspects of their learning, and make sure that the curriculum they follow meets their personal needs and employers' needs. (pages 8 – 11)
  - Professionalise staff in all settings, and introduce a new style of leadership. (pages 11 – 13)

### Why a clear, strong accountability framework is important

At the moment accountability for child and young offenders' learning and skills is fragmented. Entitlement and access to learning is unclear and patchy. *"It can feel like a battle to secure the learning"* that these young people need, not only while waiting for and during sentencing, but also post-sentence, and all too often *"frustration builds – then people give up."*

Provision is generally dislocated, with little or no continuity, which gives limited scope for progression and achievement. While children and young people can have access to learning in custody that meets their needs, this is often not linked or does not lead back into mainstream provision. The average custodial sentence is around 4 months. There is currently little opportunity to build on the learning and skills developed during this period on release.

It was pointed out that *"if we expect children and young people to be accountable for their offending behaviour then we need to demonstrate our accountability to them"* with regard to guaranteeing them the same quality and standards of education that is provided to **all** children and young people. Indeed, throughout our discussions we often returned to the issue that child and young offenders are far too often excluded from the Government's aim for 'every child matters' whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. They need *"to understand the consequences of offending behaviour"*, but this should not include losing their entitlement, often permanently, to the aims encapsulated above.

We recognised there is an important difference between *"being accountable to and being accountable for."* If we are to be accountable **to** the offender, their family and community to help them learn, *"stop their offending behaviour and develop their skills"*, we need a clear framework of accountability **for** doing this to provide the necessary *"authority, resources and duty of care."*

This framework of accountability *"needs to be part of **mainstream** roles and responsibilities at both strategic and operational levels"* to reverse the trend of re-offending and avoid placing child and young offenders in an educational silo that makes it even more difficult for them to move back into the mainstream. It was felt that there is a real *"risk of institutions and planners forgetting this vulnerable group"*, unless they feel that they have a responsibility for their learning and skills development. But we recognised that this isn't their only responsibility. They are also accountable to children and young people for their education, as well as parents, staff members, governors inspection bodies, Local Authorities. The challenge is finding an approach that will meet very different strands of accountability that does **not** exclude child and young offenders from the mainstream.

## The key design elements that the framework should include

There was a strong consensus that the accountability framework for learning and skills should *"be designed to reverse the trend of re-offending."* We acknowledged that for many, access to first-class learning and skills provision alone will not be enough to do this. Equally important are other key elements essential to a child's or young person's well being, security, desire to be law abiding, social inclusion, and interventions to reduce the risk of offending in the first place.

It is the combinations of interventions and support to meet the different needs and circumstances of each child/young person that will really make a difference.

Even so, we felt that much can be gained by focusing on putting in place a more effective framework of accountability for learning and skills development. Not only can it begin to reverse the trend, but it could also provide the *"vanguard for a model that has the capacity to deliver a holistic approach"* to meeting personal needs.

Within this overall context, key design elements for the provision of learning and skills should include:

- **Being part of the mainstream** The system needs to enable *"travel between the closed and open box."* By this we meant that offenders need to be able to continue to follow their learning plans in different settings, including mainstream settings when they are ready to do so. It also means that improvements in mainstream policy and services will result in improvements for services for young people supervised by the youth justice system.
- **Capacity to unlock doors of access** Those responsible to offenders in accessing the learning and skills development they need require a level of authority to enable them to ensure access to provision. Of course, *"what an offender might need does not always coincide with what they may want!"* That said, education and training programmes must have the agreement and buy in of the child or young person. Committing an offence should not be seen as a route to priority access to learning and skills development for which all children and young people should have access. However, we must recognise that this group of young people have often been disadvantaged in their previous experiences of education, may have particular needs, and can benefit significantly from engagement in appropriate education and training which meets their personal needs.
- **The concept of a lead professional** At the core of a new system of accountability should sit the concept of lead professionals. They would establish a *"close relationship with the child"* or young person from pre-sentencing right the way through until they were established and thriving back in mainstream or other appropriate education, training or employment. A lead professional would provide *"the continuity of care and support that children and young offenders need"*, this is in line with support provided to other vulnerable children and young people. The lead professional would act as a mentor and 'bridge' to learning and skills provision that tackles their offending behaviour and enables them to begin to live in a way that is valued by themselves and society.

## Four propositions to reverse the trend towards re-offending

Below are four key propositions focused on the part that improving accountability for learning and skills development could play in improving education experiences and outcomes for children and young people in the youth justice system and to reducing re-offending. Following each proposition are short (within the next 12 months) and medium (within 24 – 36 months) actions that we felt will be needed in order for the changes to happen.

Inevitably, although our focus was on accountability for learning and skills, the need for this to form part of a wider package of reforms is reflected within the propositions. In addition, there is some overlap in the actions that will be required to take each proposition forward.

- 1. Place powers and duties on Local Authorities so that, through Children's Trusts, and as part of mainstream accountability and to mainstream standards, they have responsibility for commissioning learning and skills provision for all children and young people supervised by the youth justice system, including those in custody.**

The rationale behind this proposition is that Children's Trusts are best placed to provide a *"holistic approach"* to coordinating services, in line with 'mainstream' provision which best meets the needs of children and young people supervised by the youth justice system through different combinations of support. Children's Trusts are a partnership of local services involved in meeting the needs of children and young people.

We envisaged that a team of lead professionals would work on an individual caseload basis with child and young offenders. Supporting the lead professionals would be "*Local Authority champions to enforce continuity of ownership and funding*" and ensure that "*whoever is holding 'the baby'* [ie: the offender] *needs to find the next pair of arms*" before letting go of their responsibility.

At the core of the concept is the idea that "*Children's Trusts are responsible for children's and young people's education in all circumstances. The money for their education follows the child.*" While "*we must work towards the aim that no child should be held in a custodial setting outside of their home local authority*", we acknowledged that, in the short term at least, this would be very hard to achieve. Therefore, local authorities will need to work co-operatively with one another (in the same way that Primary Care Trusts do now) in ensuring that funding for individuals' learning and skills is transferred to the local authority in which they are being held.

This proposition will require legislative changes to give local authorities responsibility for the education of children and young people held custody. Some also strongly favoured the idea of Children's Trusts becoming accountable bodies in their own right rather than just being a partnerships of various organisations, and this may be necessary in order to affect this change. There was one cautionary note about moving authority for commissioning provision to Children's Trusts: "*not to lose what is working well now in the transition.*" We recognised that there is some excellent provision and approaches already in place, albeit patchily. It will be important that this is captured and retained in any transition plans.

***Taking the proposition forward: short and medium-term action plan focused on proposition 1***

<b><i>Suggested Actions</i></b>	<b><i>National, regional, local</i></b>
<b><i>Short-term, next 12 months</i></b>	
<i>Put together a proposition for Ministers to remove the clause in the Education Act 1996 which dis-applies young offenders in custody, with a view to it being included as part of 'Extending Participation' plans, thus making the local authority responsible for education in custody.</i>	
<i>Strengthen the role of local authorities in providing suitable education for children and young people supervised by the youth justice system in the community. (see proposition 2: extending the children in care model)..</i>	
<i>Revisit the issue of schools' duty to co-operate with Children's Trusts.</i>	
<i>Create a framework to assess the impact of a new accountability infrastructure and approach in reducing re-offending. Ensure framework can capture what works under what conditions, and include clear cost/value benefits.</i>	
<i>Link and engage sentencers with the proposed changes.</i>	
<i>Clarify and monitor inspection framework.</i>	
<i>Instruct Local Authorities that their Children's Plans should include the complete youth justice system.</i>	

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<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<b><i>Short-term, next 12 months</i></b>	
<i>Define the relationship between Children's Trusts and Youth Offending Teams services to ensure continuity and retention of good practice.</i>	
<i>Draw up a comprehensive transition plan that includes the Learning &amp; Skills Council, Local Authorities, Prison Service, Youth Justice system and secure estate.</i>	
<i>Redefine the communication strategy and operation between the Dept. for Children, Schools and Families, the sector and the media.</i>	
<i>Ensure prompt, accurate and required data flow.</i>	
<i>Provide Local Authorities with guidance so that they understand the rationale behind the propositions being put forward and what this will mean for them.</i>	
<i>Involve the sector in the vision, changes and the journey that will be taken to make the changes.</i>	
<i>Bring together and make sense of criminal justice and skills work at regional level.</i>	<i>Regional</i>
<i>Clarify the support that Regional Development Agencies might be able to offer to support the skills development/work placement of young offenders.</i>	
<i>Clarify accountabilities of Children's Trusts and introduce the concept of lead professionals for young people in the youth justice system.</i>	<i>Local</i>
<i>Change Children's and Young People's Plans to ensure that they incorporate children in the Youth Justice system.</i>	
<i>Consider employer involvement in Children's Trusts.</i>	
<i>Ensure that Children's Trusts work with Head Teachers to help them find ways of balancing accountabilities to offenders, non-offending children, parents and teachers.</i>	
<i>Ensure that curriculum (learning, skills, employability) offers are linked to and reflect Regional Economic Strategies (see Regional.)</i>	
<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<b><i>Medium--term- next 24 – 36 months</i></b>	
<i>Agree high level key performance indicators.</i>	<i>National</i>
<i>Produce annual national report to Parliament on outcomes.</i>	
<i>Determine scale and numbers of offenders amongst wider cohort of young people per region.</i>	<i>Regional</i>

<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<i>Measure trends and impact of learning and skills on young offenders for inclusion in annual report to Children's Committee.</i>	
<i>Provide sentencers with systematic feedback on what has happened to the young people they have sentenced.</i>	
<i>Educate and encourage local politicians to:</i> → <i>champion learning and skills strategies that reduce re-offending, and;</i> → <i>change local public discourse on child and young offenders, and ways of reducing re-offending.</i>	<i>Local</i>
<i>Ensure Local Authorities are accountable for the quality and continuity of education for <b>all</b> children and young people.</i>	
<i>Work with Children's Trusts to provide continuity of learning at key age transition points.</i>	

## 2. Extend 'Care Matters' duties and responsibilities to all children and young people who have offended and those on youth inclusion projects.

While our first proposition was about ensuring that child and young offenders receive the support that the Government states is their **entitlement** under 'Every Child Matters', this proposal goes further. It advocates that child and young offenders should receive additional support such as support which children in care are now entitled to. Of course, it is well known that some children in care do offend, young offenders and children in care often have very similar complex and disadvantaged backgrounds, although clearly it is the case that many children in care have very successful transitions to adulthood. Under the proposals in the recent Care Matters White Paper and the forthcoming Children in care Bill this autumn, Children in Care will have the right to additional support to help counter the disadvantage they may otherwise encounter.

There is a presentational difficulty in extending additional support to children and young people who have offended. However, this point was challenged with the argument that these are predominately very vulnerable children and young people, and many young people 'in need' who are applicable for additional support are actually young people in similar circumstances, though not all young people committing anti-social behaviour and crimes will have been caught and have not entered 'the system'. Indeed, it was pointed out that "*some want to be caught, finding custody a safer and more stable place to be than at home or in care.*"

Young people in the youth justice system are usually as vulnerable, or more vulnerable than children in care. A significant number of us felt strongly that they should be **entitled** to additional support, and not only additional learning and skills support but a full range of services that, together, provide the holistic approach they need to feel safe and make a positive contribution to society.

We were aware that there is little sympathy in the media or amongst the general public for what they may dismiss as "*woolly liberalism*." Many feel little sympathy for these children and young people or their parents. They would argue that there are others who cope with equally difficult circumstances and do not break the law.

One way of winning support could be to test out whether there could be **cost savings** in extending the Care Matters entitlement to child and young offenders. The sort of evidence needed includes data to show that the additional support provided makes a real impact in improving educational outcomes and reducing re-offending and, consequently reducing the number of children and young people in the youth justice system.

The proposition put forward is to extend the entitlement to children and young people in the youth justice system. This would include a whole range of interventions to more thoroughly encourage local services to meet the needs of this group of young people, including greater responsibilities on local authorities, including the concept of the 'virtual head-teacher' in each local authority to champion the needs of these young people and monitor outcomes, etc.

***Taking the proposition forward: short and medium-term action plan focused on proposition 2***

<i><b>Suggested Actions</b></i>	<i><b>National, regional, local</b></i>
<i><b>Short-term, next 12 months</b></i>	
<p><i>Put together a proposition for Ministers to trial extending the Care Matters entitlement to 5,000 most vulnerable child and young offenders.</i></p> <p><i>Gain direction and a clear message from Government that this group should be treated as a priority.</i></p> <p><i>Working up a methodology to define and identify 5,000 most vulnerable offenders.</i></p>	<i>National</i>
<p><i>Create a framework to capture what works under what conditions, and include clear cost/value benefits.</i></p> <p><i>Link and engage sentencers with the proposed changes.</i></p>	
<p><i>Identify and bring to the notice of Ministers perverse incentives at both national and local level that leads to unnecessary or unjustified conviction of children and young people. For example, the 'Offences brought to justice' target.</i></p>	
<p><i>Develop a media strategy to change the discourse of children who offend and encourage the general public to gain a better understanding of the circumstances that can lead to offending behaviour.</i></p>	
<p><i>Clarify accountabilities of Children's Trusts.</i></p>	
<p><i>Change Children's and Young People's Plans to ensure that they incorporate children in the Youth Justice system and extend Care Matters entitlements to children and young people in the youth justice system.</i></p>	<i>Local</i>

<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<i>Medium-term, next 24 – 36 months</i>	
<i>Agree high level key performance indicators.</i>	<i>National</i>
<i>Produce national report to Treasury on outcomes and cost value benefits.</i>	
<i>Provide sentencers with systematic feedback on what has happened to the young people they have sentenced.</i>	
<i>Educate and encourage local politicians to champion learning and skills strategies that reduce re-offending, and change local public discourse on children and young people in the youth justice system and how to reduce re-offending.</i>	<i>Local</i>
<i>Ensure local authorities are accountable for the quality and continuity of Care Matters extended to children and young people supervised by the youth justice system.</i>	
<i>Work with Children's Trusts to provide continuity of care and learning at key age transition points.</i>	

**3. Engage young people in all aspects of their learning, and make sure that the curriculum they follow meets their personal needs and employers' needs**

It was stressed that *"actively engaging child and young offenders in learning is not a mechanical process. It demands winning hearts and minds, and really putting the child or young person at the centre."* With this in mind, the proposition put forward is that every child and young person in the Youth Justice should have an individual learning and skills programme which is tailored to meet their needs, promote progression and achievement, and to reduce the risk of re-offending.

The important thing to note here is that there was a suggestion that the child or young person will create their own learning programme or plan: it will **not** be done for them. Of course, they will need guidance and support in doing so, and will *"not be able to produce an aspirational wish list!"* That said, it will reflect the learning, skills and employment opportunities that they recognise as a way of leaving behind offending and that *"they recognise and own as **their** personal plan."*

The idea is that the plan will be delivered in a number of different settings. It is not confined to a child's or young person's time within custody or a Pupil Referral Unit, etc. Its purpose is to take them through the stages needed, supported by a lead professional, back into full time education or a job with training. Together the plan and the lead professional provide *"continuity and a framework for progress."*

We saw it as the responsibility of the lead professional to:

- help the child or young person to identify why they have to tackle their offending behaviour and how they can do this;
- help the child or young person identify their goals and the journey they need to take to get there;
- explore with them how they feel they learn best (by experience, in a small group) and, drawing on this information;
- broker and access provision that meets their needs.

For older children and young people keen to move into work, employers' needs should also be considered in developing education and training plans with children and young people.

Whichever approach is taken, direct relationships need to be established with employers. Offenders are much more likely to take note of what employers expect if it comes direct from the 'horse's mouth' rather than through an intermediary.

Personal education plans will need to include elements related to tackling their offending behaviour and needs to reflect the specific cause and effect of individuals' behaviour: if it is too generic they are unlikely to recognise its relevance to themselves, and be ready *"to take on responsibility for their actions and the impact of their actions on themselves and others."*

***Taking the proposition forward: short and medium-term action plan focused on proposition 3***

<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<i>Short-term, next 12 months</i>	
<i>Agree a methodology to drawing up individual learning and skills plans that places the individual at the centre and gives them ownership of the plan.</i>	<i>National</i>
<i>Agree protocol for key data sharing transfer for lead professionals.</i>	
<i>Revisit the issue of schools' duty to co-operate with Children's Trusts.</i>	
<i>Link and engage sentencers with the proposed changes.</i>	
<i>Develop workforce reform and leadership training programmes for the whole sector, involving appropriate Sector Skills Councils in its design.</i>	
<i>Draw up a comprehensive transition plan that includes the Learning &amp; Skills Council, Local Authorities, Prison Service, Youth Justice system and the secure estate.</i>	
<i>Bring together and make sense of how criminal justice and skills work at the regional level.</i>	<i>Regional</i>

<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<b><i>Short-term, next 12 months</i></b>	
<i>Clarify the support that Regional Development Agencies might be able to offer to support the skills development/work placement of young offenders.</i>	<i>Regional</i>
<i>Clarify accountabilities of Children's Trusts and introduce the concept of lead professionals.</i>	<i>Local</i>
<i>Educate and encourage local politicians to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <i>champion learning and skills strategies that reduce re-offending, and;</i></li> <li>→ <i>change local public discourse on child and young offenders and ways of reducing re-offending.</i></li> </ul>	
<i>Ensure Local Authorities are accountable for the quality and continuity of education for <b>all</b> children and young people, including for young offenders.</i>	
<i>Work with Children's Trusts to provide continuity of learning at key age transition points.</i>	
<i>Consider involving employers in Children's Trusts.</i>	
<i>Ensure that Children's Trusts work with Head Teachers to help them find ways of balancing accountabilities to offenders, non-offending children, parents and teachers.</i>	
<i>Ensure that curriculum (learning, skills, employability) offers are linked to and reflect Regional Economic Strategies (see Regional).</i>	<i>Local</i>
<b><i>Medium-term, next 24 – 36 months</i></b>	
<i>Agree high level key performance indicators.</i>	<i>National</i>
<i>Contribute to national report to Treasury on outcomes.</i>	
<i>Provide sentencers with systematic feedback on what has happened to the young people they have sentenced.</i>	
<i>Educate and encourage local politicians to champion learning and skills strategies that reduce re-offending, and change local public discourse on children and young people supervised by the youth justice system and how to reduce re-offending.</i>	<i>Local</i>
<i>Work with Children's Trusts to provide continuity of learning.</i>	

<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<i>Ensure progress is achieved by enabling children and young people in the youth justice system to follow their plans in different settings and through key age transition points.</i>	

#### 4. Professionalise staff and introduce a new style of leadership to the sector

It was proposed that there should be a "*comprehensive workforce reform programme*" put in place for the youth justice sector, and for mainstream teachers and Heads to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to take forward the changes proposed and to improve education for this group of young people.

Regarding leadership, it was felt that "*the National College for School Leadership, along with other professional training organisations should provide training opportunities for the joined-up leadership that is essential for multi-agency work.*" A common standards framework should be developed for **all** those in a leadership role with responsibility for children or young people, including those who have offended.

In addition, it was felt that "*job descriptions and responsibilities of Head Teachers and school performance management regimes should be reviewed*" to help ensure that there is the support and necessary incentives for schools to adopt an **inclusive** approach to children and young people supervised by the youth justice system. We recognised that this isn't simply an issue that can be resolved through professional development. Also needed is leadership and support from Local Authorities, Governors, parents and other pupils.

This is difficult territory. Understandably, parents, pupils, and teachers are reluctant to have children and young people who have a history of disruption and bad behaviour included in their schools. But we felt strongly that this group of children shouldn't be hidden away or siloed off from the mainstream. Alongside a simpler and stronger accountability framework, we also need shared leadership and joint responsibility that works together to bring children and young people who have offended back into the mainstream.

This will mean ensuring that mainstream teachers have had the opportunity of "*professional development in identifying risk, preventing and managing offending behaviour.*" Structured career paths should also be established so that teachers working with child and young offenders "*don't themselves feel that they're stuck in a silo.*" Ideally, teachers should move between different types of settings, specialist and mainstream, in order to widen their experience and expertise.

As a minimum and starting point, there should be:

- professional registration and regulation of Qualified Teachers working with young people supervised by the youth justice system;
- pathways for people working with young offenders to becoming a Qualified Teacher, with induction standards and processes in place;

- training and qualification opportunities for those working with offenders (known familiarly as non QTs) within an Integrated Qualification Framework;
- leadership of young offender education modules available to Head Teachers, Youth Offending Team Managers, and Education and Curriculum Leaders in Youth Offending Institutions.

*Taking the proposition forward: short and medium-term action plan focused on proposition 4*

<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<i>Short-term, next 12 months</i>	
<i>Involve sector in the vision, changes and the journey that will be taken to make the changes.</i>	<i>National</i>
<i>The Training &amp; Development Agency, the National College of School Leadership, relevant Sector Skills Councils and other key stakeholders to develop and begin to roll out workforce reform and new leadership programmes for the whole sector.  The programmes should be designed for multi-agency use and include clear career pathways and options.</i>	<i>National</i>
<i>Develop a common standards framework for all professionals in leadership roles with responsibilities for children and young people, including for children and young people who have offended.</i>	
<i>Introduce professional registration and regulation of Qualified Teachers working with child and young offenders.</i>	
<i>Revisit the issue of schools' duty to co-operate with Children's Trusts</i>	
<i>Draw up a comprehensive transition plan that includes the Learning &amp; Skills Council, Local Authorities, Prison Service, Youth Justice system and the secure estate.</i>	
<i>Ensure Local Authorities are accountable for the quality and continuity of education for <b>all</b> children and young people.</i>	<i>Local</i>
<i>Work with Children's Trusts to provide continuity of learning at key age transition points.</i>	
<i>Ensure that Children's Trusts work with Head Teachers to help them find ways of balancing accountabilities to offenders, non-offending children, parents and teachers.</i>	

<i>Suggested Actions</i>	<i>National, regional, local</i>
<i>Medium-term, next 24 – 36 months</i>	
<i>Train and develop professionals who can lead the change and deliver leadership and workforce reform programmes.</i>	<i>National</i>
<i>Identify how the changes proposed will be resourced and managed.</i>	
<i>Roll out workforce reform and leadership programmes to the whole sector.</i>	
<i>Ensure that appropriate staff with appropriate status are in place.</i>	<i>Regional</i>
<i>Work with Children's Trusts to provide continuity of learning.</i>  <i>Ensure the necessary resources and professional expertise is in place for offenders to follow their learning plans in different settings and through key age transition points.</i>	<i>Local</i>

## Endnote

What was noticeable about this consultation was the strong consensus on what needs to happen to **reverse** the trend amongst child and young offenders to re-offend within a year of sentencing. This consensus gave our discussions a real sense of energy and commitment to take our propositions forward and make them happen.

The timing for this to happen is encouraging. The establishment of the new Department for Children, Schools and Families, the implementation of Children's Trusts in all Local Authority areas by 2008, and a chance to influence legislation through the governments plans to raise the age of compulsory participation in education and training all provide a real opportunity to bring about change. The change that we all felt is urgently needed: to reverse the poor educational outcomes and the trend of re-offending.

We acknowledged that learning and skills development **alone** will only reverse a small proportion of this trend. But even if we are able to reduce a small percentage of the number of children and young people re-offending, this is a valuable start. Moreover, we saw this as the **vanguard** of a holistic approach to children and young people supervised by the youth justice system that we envisaged should be centred within Children's Trusts.

We also felt strongly that "*all the good that has been put in place*" mustn't get lost in any changes. A comprehensive transition plan that captures what is working well must be an essential component of the change process.

**We ended the event feeling that despite the difficulties such changes were bound to involve, we *can* make an impact in reversing the trend over the next 12 months or so.**

## Participants

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Elaine Hendry	Head of Strategy & Implementation, 14 – 19 Reform Group, Dept. for Children, Schools & Families
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Jane Carr	Policy Officer, Young Offender Education Policy Team, Dept. for Children, Schools & Families
Christopher Keeffe	Policy Adviser, Ministry of Justice
Bob Reitemeier	Chief Executive, the Children's Society
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Graham Robb	Interim Chair, Youth Justice Board for England & Wales
Robert Newman	Head of Reintegration, Youth Justice Board
Susannah Hancock	Head of Region (London), Youth Justice Board
Ruth Knapton	Policy Manager (Young People 14-19), Learning & Skills Council National Office
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Martin Kyriakides	Regional Offender Learning & Skills Adviser (East of England), Learning & Skills Council
Mike Thomas	Chair, Association of Youth Offending Team Managers, West Sussex Youth Offending Service
Les Lawrence	Chairman, Children & Young People's Board, Local Government Association & Councillor, Birmingham City Council
Faith Mann	Assistant Director (Transition), Salford City Council
Jen Walters	Assistant Divisional Manager, OfSTED
Pete Knapton	Governor, HMP & YOI Brinsford
Paul Cook	Director of Children's Services, Rebound
Roy Walker	Principal Child Care Manager (Secure Services), Sutton Place Safe Centre
Chris Holmes	Secure Estate Development Lead, Women & Young People's Group, HM Prison Service
Claire Bassett	Director of Operations, NACRO
Annette Wiles	Policy & Research Manager, National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations
Kenny Frederick	Principal, George Green's School, London E14
Emma Westcott	Senior Policy Adviser, General Teaching Council
Krysia Hudek	Director, Open Agenda & Fellow, St. George's House
Simon Wilson	Director, Wilson Sherriff & Associate, Open Agenda