

Wirral Short Quality Screening (SQS) Report 2013

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Report of Short Quality Screening (SQS) of youth offending work in Wirral

- This presentation outlines the findings of the recent SQS inspection, conducted during 30th September -2nd October 2013
- As an independent inspectorate, HMI Probation provides assurance to Ministers and the public on the effectiveness of work with those who have offended or are likely to offend, promotes continuous improvement by the organisations that they inspect and contributes to the effectiveness of the criminal justice system.
- Good quality assessment and planning at the start of a sentence is critical to increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes. The purpose of the SQS inspection is to assess the quality and effectiveness of casework with children and young people who have offended, at the start of a sample of 34 recent cases supervised by Wirral Youth Offending Service. Wherever possible this is undertaken in conjunction with the allocated case manager, thereby increasing the effectiveness as a learning opportunity for staff.

Summary

Overall, we found a very positive picture in Wirral YOS.

The previous inspection had taken place just over four years ago and at that point in time substantial improvement was required in all areas of work.

It was pleasing to see that significant progress had been made. Staff were well supported and committed. They produced good quality reports, assessments and plans and had access to a range of services. There was still scope for further improving the quality of work by ensuring risk and vulnerability plans were more specific and linked to decisions made in other meetings.

Inspection Themes

- Reducing the likelihood of re-offending
- Protecting the public
- Protecting the child or young person
- Ensuring that the sentence is served
- Operational management

Key strengths

The best aspects of work that we found in Wirral included:

- the quality of PSR's prepared for the courts
- the engagement of children and young people and parents/carers in assessments
- the use of a wide range of sources to inform and verify assessments
- the attention paid to encouraging and achieving compliance. Different tactics were employed, and mostly these were successful. Enforcement was used only as a last resort
- the assessment and consideration of diversity factors
- there were several examples of positive initial outcomes for children or young people.

Areas requiring improvement

The most significant areas for improvement were:

- planning for work to manage risk of harm to others and reduce vulnerability
- management oversight of the quality of assessments and plans.

Post Inspection Action

Wirral YOS will now focus our post-inspection work on the identified areas requiring improvement.

A comprehensive action plan will be completed which will be monitored and reviewed regularly by the Management Team to ensure continuous improvement is made within set timeframes.