

Info sheet 44 – November 2024

Reviews for Young People in Custody

This information sheet is designed to provide information for local authorities regarding reviews for young people (aged under 21, in some circumstances 26) in custody as part of the [Whole System Approach](#) extension. Since its inception in 2011, the plan was always for the Whole System Approach to include provision for those under 21.

[A pilot, involving four local authorities](#), provided positive evidence of improved partnership working and outcomes when the age was extended to all those under 21. Following discussions with key stakeholders, it was agreed that the WSA should be extended to include all young people under the age of 21, in line with the [Scottish Government's vision and priorities](#). This extension to include young people up to 21 will be effective across all local authorities from 1st April 2023.

What is expected of local authorities?

On the day a young person is remanded or sentenced to custody, you should submit **CJSWRs and a Young Person's Plan** (where appropriate and available). Any other relevant information should be shared in keeping with the principle of proportionality, information-sharing protocols, and statutory guidance. These documents should be submitted to the SPS secure email: PolmontCasework@prisons.gov.scot. This information will then be shared as appropriate across establishments (Polmont, Grampian and HMP YOI Stirling) and with relevant staff within these establishments (Personal Officers, First Line Managers, health etc). These should not be shared directly with personnel.

It is the local authority where the young person ordinarily resides that is responsible for **organising and chairing** all reviews. SPS establishments will notify local authorities (via their identified WSA lead or through their generic email address) of the need for the initial custody review.

Contact details for establishments:

- HMP YOI Polmont casework team: **01324 722288**, PolmontCasework@prisons.gov.scot, or Out of Hours contact PTSeniorManTeam@prisons.gov.scot
- HMP YOI Grampian: Banff Hall First Line Manager: **01779 485834**
- HMP YOI Stirling: **01786832591** or criminaljustice@stirling.gov.uk

If you are unable to get a response, please contact the Duty Manager.

If you have concerns about a young person's mental health or well-being please contact the dedicated phoneline available here [Raise a concern | Scottish Prison Service](#)

Purpose

The purpose of the initial custody review is to ensure that a plan is developed for the young person throughout their stay, including a plan for their release. The release plan will promote discussion on: who will meet the young person at the gate; options for early release where appropriate; how agencies will keep in touch with the young person; and who is the named contact with responsibility for this.

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The type and timescale for **initial custody reviews** depends on the young person's legal status:

For young people entering custody **on remand or who have been sentenced** reviews should be held **WITHIN 10 working days** of being detained. Family members should be encouraged to attend reviews for all young people who have been sentenced or fully committed.

For young people on a **seven-day remand**, a **telephone call** should be undertaken with the Personal Officer ASAP.

For young people who were **looked after by the local authority**, reviews should be recorded as per local arrangements and both minutes and the young person's plan should then be shared with SPS.

During the review information should be shared, including strengths, needs and risks. Supporting young people throughout their time in custody requires continuity of planning and support. This includes during both their sentence and their release and will require the promotion of partnership working. Engaging young people and their families (where appropriate) in this process is crucial.

Subsequent review meetings should take place throughout the young person's detention, at a frequency determined by the length of the sentence and the young person's needs. A pre-release meeting should take place at least 10 days prior to liberation, and prior to the SPS pre-release case management board.

Reviews will be held in an appropriate setting within the YOI, or via video conferencing. Reviews should be attended by the young person; their family (where appropriate); the allocated community-based social worker/Lead Professional/a social worker from the young person's home area who knows or has full information about them; the chair from the local authority; staff from the receiving establishment; and any other relevant professionals, including third sector organisations. The number of professionals attending reviews should be limited; as much notice as possible should be given to maximise the chances of appropriate attendance.

If the review is in person, SPS should be notified in advance about who will be attending, and whether any worker in attendance wants to complete further work with the young person immediately after the review.

A [template](#) has been developed to support the chairing of reviews. Reviews should be recorded as per local arrangements and the Young Person's Plan should subsequently be updated; both the minutes and the Young Person's Plan should then be shared with SPS.

The community-based social worker or Lead Professional should maintain contact with the young person throughout the period of detention, at a frequency based on the young person's needs. Outwith reviews, communication and the sharing of information and plans between the Lead Professional and Personal Officer should be ongoing.

For further info/support contact CYCJ

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