



# Youth Justice Service Communication **One-minute Guide**

This Guide provides information on how the Youth Justice Service communicates with people who use the service, and other organisations who work with us.



## Communicating with children and young people

Working with children and young people in an accessible way is a priority for Tower Hamlets and City of London Youth Justice Service. Using effective communication skills, the Youth Justice Service encourages children and young people to express themselves in whichever way they feel most comfortable. Due to the complex needs of service users, it is important to recognise how best to communicate with them. We aim to build relationships where children and young people can talk openly and honestly about their experiences, in turn, this will enable our workers to work out what pieces of work best suit children and young person's needs.

We have face-to-face meetings with children and young people, both in the community and their homes. Staff use virtual ways of communicating like using messaging apps, e-mail, video calls and telephone to create a safe space for communication.

Making sure children and young people have their voice and ideas heard in the Court setting is also an important part of our role. The formal setting of Courts can be a difficult setting for children and young people and so we communicate with everyone involved to make sure children and young people understand what is going to happen. We are also responsible for writing various reports on behalf of children and young people to Courts and other organisations, making sure that they are easy to understand.

The Youth Justice Service works with Speech and Language Therapists who work with children and young people to help better understand their communication strengths and needs. We work closely together to ensure that our intervention work is delivered in a way that children and young people can understand. There is also a range of leaflets available within Mulberry Place for children, young people, and their families/carers regarding the services we provide, along with leaflets for partnership agencies.



## Communicating with parents/carers

Our interventions with children and young people need the support of parents/carers; so we want to work with Parents/carers. Parents/carers are needed to come to the start of any intervention to make sure they understand why their child/young person is working with the Youth Justice Service. We do visits to the home so that the Youth Justice Service is familiar with the home and any other family members within the household. We have regular contact with children and young people via virtual methods such as messaging apps, phone calls, and video calls. In-person review meetings also occur throughout an intervention.

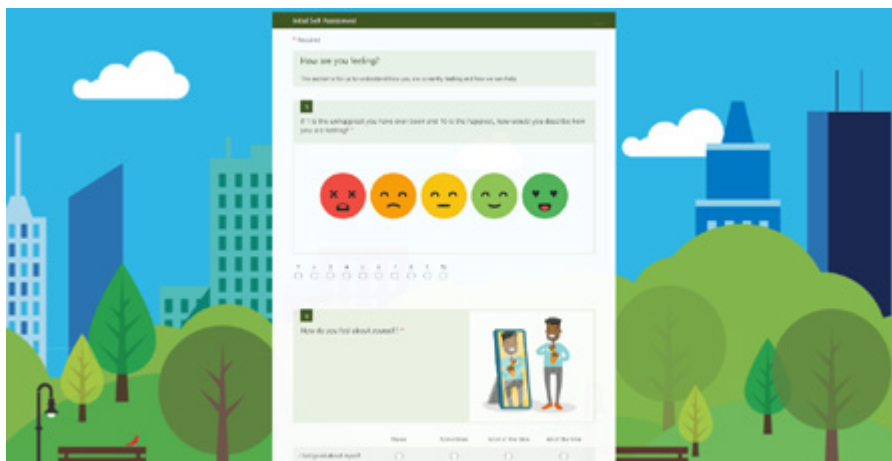
We recognise the diverse community within Tower Hamlets and the City of London, and so we use interpreters whenever necessary to communicate with children, young people, and their parents/carers in different languages.

## Self-assessments

The voices of children and young people are important to us to make sure they get the right intervention or work. Their feedback is used to shape our service and change how we do things.

The Youth Justice Service has designed an online self-assessment (a series of questions about how the child or young person feels) which is completed 3 times; at the beginning of any intervention, at the review stage and at the end of the intervention. This gives children/young people a platform to express their thoughts and feelings and their feedback helps to tailor their intervention and make it useful to them, and what they are going through. Such information also enables the Youth Justice Service to determine what provision/interventions children and young people are responding to, and what part of our work is useful.

Data is shared, in a confidential manner, with the Youth Justice Service Management Board as well as staff within the Youth Justice Service. This helps children and young people to have a voice in how our service is managed. Parents/carers also complete a self-assessment with our workers, so their voices are heard including their recommendations for developing and improving interventions.



## Information governance

Given the sensitive nature of our work, the Youth Justice Service is committed to recording and storing information securely. We record the information gathered and securely store the data on protected council systems. Sometimes we will need to share a child/young person's data with other agencies where necessary or appropriate. We process child/young person's data following the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and if any concerns arise, the Council's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at **DPO@towerhamlets.gov.uk**

The Youth Justice Service will only hold information for as long as is required by law and to provide the public with necessary services. This is likely to be for 10 years after the case is closed and the last contact with the Youth Justice Service.

## Complaints procedure

Tower Hamlets and City of London Youth Justice Service is committed to delivering high-quality, supportive service to children, young people, and families. However, if service users feel unhappy, they might want to make their concerns known in a formal capacity. As such, we provide a formal complaint procedure leaflet within our induction starter packs and the procedure is explained to all children, young people, and their families/carers.

If formal complaints are received, they are dealt with accordingly under the Tower Hamlets' complaints procedure framework (the rules that Tower Hamlets set about working with complaints).