Can Secure Colleges Transform Youth Custody?

Transcript from a roundtable discussion on Secure Colleges

April 2013

THE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

CSJ

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About the Centre for Social Justice

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) is an independent think-tank, established to put social justice at the heart of British politics.

Moved by shocking levels of disadvantage across the nation, it studies the root causes of Britain's acute social problems in partnership with its Alliance of over 350 grassroots charities and people affected by poverty. This enables the CSJ to find and promote evidence-based, experience-led solutions to change lives and transform communities.

The CSJ believes that the surest way to reverse social breakdown – and the poverty it creates – is to build resilience within individuals, families and the innovative organisations able to help them.

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The CSJ's Criminal Justice Programme

Social Justice and Criminal Justice go hand in hand. Not only does crime disproportionately affect poorer communities, but also those who have committed crime are far more likely to suffer from the causes of social breakdown such as drug abuse, poor literacy rates and worklessness.

Moreover, criminal sentences – whether prison or its alternatives – provide a unique opportunity to intervene in the often chaotic lives of those involved in criminal activity.

By creating a just society where crime rates are low and the public feel confident about their safety, community cohesion and pride in local neighbourhoods can flourish.

For these reasons, in early 2013 the CSJ launched a Criminal Justice Programme to find public policy solutions to entrenched criminal justice problems. The Programme will build on previous reports on police and prison reform, such as *Locked-up Potential*, *A Force to be Reckoned With*, *Rules of Engagement: Changing the heart of youth justice*, and *Time to Wake Up: Tackling gangs one year after the riots*.

If you want to contribute to the programme and are interested in supporting our work we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact Edward Boyd, the Deputy Policy Director of the CSJ on Edward.boyd@centreforsocialjustice.org.uk.

Roundtable attendees

- **Jeremy Wright MP**, Minister for Prisons and Rehabilitation (Opening speaker), Ministry of Justice
- **Edward Boyd**, Deputy Policy Director (Chair), The Centre for Social Justice
- **Alex Burghart**, Director of Policy, The Centre for Social Justice
- **Dr Jonty Clark**, Executive Head Teacher, Beckmead School
- **Paul Cook,** Managing Director, G4S Children's Services
- **Dr John d'Abbro OBE**, Head Teacher, New Rush Hall Group
- **Lin Hinnigan**, Chief Executive, Youth Justice Board
- **Helen Judge**, Sentencing and Rehabilitation Director, Ministry of Justice
- **Danny Kruger,** Chief Executive, Only Connect
- **Seamus Oates**, Executive Head Teacher, Bridge Academy
- **Fran Pollard,** Executive Director of Business and Growth, Catch 22
- **Fiona William,** Director of Education Operations, G4S Children's Services
- **Trevor Wilson-Smith**, Director, Serco

A comment on Secure Colleges

By Edward Boyd, Deputy Policy Director at the Centre for Social Justice

The case for change is clear. Last year more than 3,500 young offenders were sentenced to custody and more than 70% of them went onto reoffend within a year, despite an average of around £100,000 per annum being spent on their detention.[1]

There is an urgent need to improve the educational attainment of children in custody, reduce the sky-high levels of reoffending, and turn around the lives of these young people for their own sake and for the sake of the communities that are blighted by the crime they commit.

The CSJ has long argued for education to play a central role in the rehabilitation of young offenders.[2] We were delighted to host a roundtable on Secure Colleges with the Minister for Prisons and Rehabilitation, Jeremy Wright MP, and leading voices from the criminal justice and education sectors. Our aim was to bring together key individuals and organisations that can help the Coalition Government make the idea of Secure Colleges a successful reality in the UK.

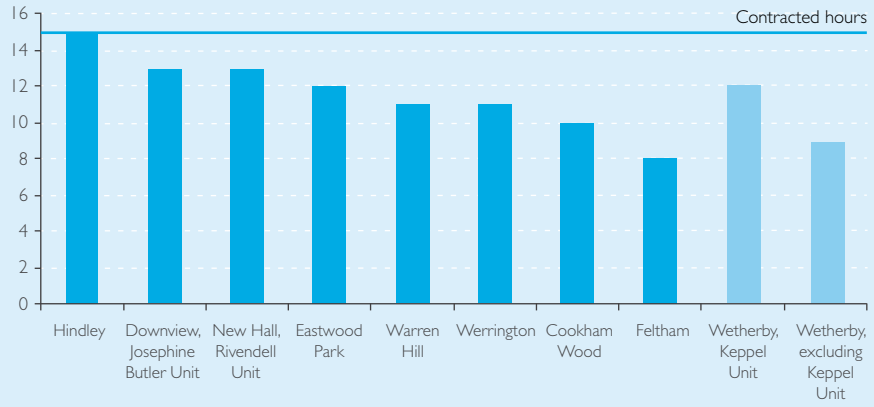
The current state of education in custody

We know that one of the most significant factors associated with reducing reoffending is education.[3] Yet currently there is not a strong enough focus on ensuring young offenders receive adequate education. Young Offenders' Institutes (YOIs), which house the majority of young offenders, are contracted to provide just 15 hours of education a week. Yet new data obtained by the CSJ shows that only one out of nine YOIs, that are managed by HM Prison Service, provided even this last year. The average number of hours of education provided weekly to each young offender was instead just 11.4 hours in 2011–12. Even when you factor

1 "Transforming Youth Custody: Putting education at the heart of detention", Ministry of Justice, 2013
2 "Rules of Engagement: Changing the heart of youth justice," The Centre for Social Justice, 2012
3 For example see Hollin, C and Palmer E, "The Service-Level inventory – Revised Profile of English Prisoners: risk and reconviction analysis", Criminal Justice and Behaviour, 2006; and "Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners," Social Exclusion Unit, Cabinet Office, 2002

out those young offenders who were not 'in learning' in a YOI for reasons such as needing to attend court or because they were on a pre-release programme, only two out of nine YOIs provided the contracted 15 hours of education a week.[4]

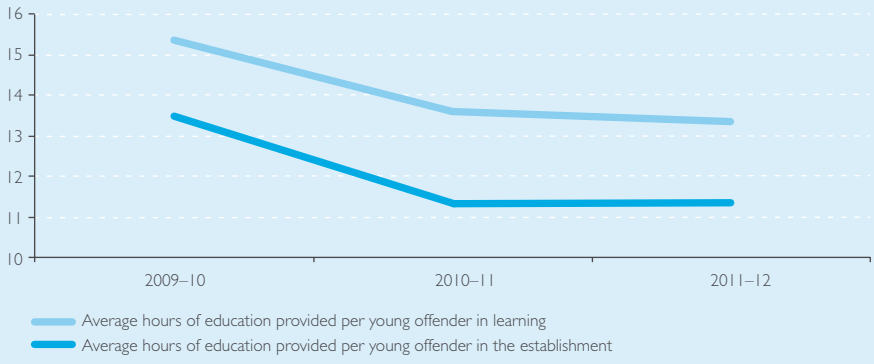
Figure 1: Average number of hours of education provided per week for each young offender in HM Prison Service Young Offenders' Institutions in 2011–12



Source: Centre for Social Justice Freedom of Information request, 2013 [5,6]

Furthermore, the number of hours young offenders spend in education in YOIs has decreased by 15.5% between 2009–10 and 2011–12.[7]

Figure 2: Average number of hours of education provided per week for each young offender in HM Prison Service Young Offenders' Institutions between 2009–10 and 2011–12



Source: Centre for Social Justice Freedom of Information request, 2013

4 Freedom of Information request by the Centre For Social Justice, 2013

5 Please note that the Keppel Unit of Wetherby has been listed separately to the rest of Wetherby as it provides "enhanced support to 15 to 17-year-old young men who for a variety of reason are not engaging – or are unlikely to engage – with the normal regime in a YOI" (for more information see www.justice.gov.uk/youth-justice/custody/specialist-resources/keppel-unit)

6 These figures are based on the total number of young offenders in each establishment, not just those 'in learning'. Please also note that where institutions house inmates other than young offenders under the age of 18, these other inmates are not included in the data

7 When we measure just those young offenders 'in learning' in each establishment then the reduction between 2009-10 and 2011–12 is 13%

Given that half of 15–17 year olds entering public sector YOIs have literacy rates equivalent to that expected of a 7–11 year old, we need to do more.[8]

This isn't to say there isn't much good work already going on in the secure estate, as attendees at the roundtable, such as Fran Pollard, Executive Director of Business and Growth at Catch 22, pointed out.[9] But given the current reoffending rates, and what we know about the importance of education in turning around the lives of young offenders, it is right to ask if we can do more to improve the standard of education for young offenders in custody.

With this in mind, it was encouraging that Jeremy Wright MP, Minister for Prisons and Rehabilitation, was "open to ideas of all kinds,"[10] including being prepared to look at the "legislative framework within which all of this operates."[11]

How should we hold Secure Colleges to account?

As Secure Colleges are developed and – hopefully – implemented it is important to ensure that they are held to account in the most effective way. The CSJ believes that we need to move away from measuring performance by inputs – such as the number of hours of education a child receives each week – and towards holding people to account for outcomes.

At the roundtable there was support from Paul Cook, Managing Director of G4S Children's Services, Trevor Wilson-Smith, Director of Serco, and others for using Payment-by-Results to reward Secure Colleges for successful outcomes. Paul Cook commented: "I welcome payment by results in particular for the elements I am in control of: improving attainment, distance travelled, young people getting early release where it's not presumed against…"[12]

Seamus Oates, Executive Head Teacher of the Bridge Academy, suggested that the current measures used by OFSTED to hold Pupil Referral Units to account could also be used for Secure Colleges.[13]

Yet it is important that we don't simply hold Secure Colleges to account for what happens whilst a child is in custody, as the ultimate outcome is – as Alex Burghart, the Director of Policy at the CSJ, remarked – to make sure that "these young people go on to live stable, happy adult lives in employment independent of the secure system."[14]

8 "Transforming Youth Custody: Putting education at the heart of detention," Ministry of Justice, 2013
9 See page 26
10 See page 16
11 See page 16
12 See page 37
13 See page 38
14 See page 47

Continuity between custody and the community

There was a realisation at the table that whatever outcomes were achieved inside a Secure College, it would mean little if more was not done to bridge the gap between custody and the community.

Lin Hinnigan, Chief Executive of the Youth Justice Board, talked about the moment when a young offender leaves custody as a "cliff edge,"[15] and there was broad agreement that more needed to be done to smooth this transitional period. For example, Trevor Wilson-Smith said: "It's fixing the gap between walking out the front gate at the end of the sentence or mid part of the sentence back into the community that's crucial."[16]

There was also a realisation that it is important to ensure continuity when a child enters custody as well, with Fiona Williams, Director of Educational Operations in G4S Children's Services commenting that: "…it's about the journey pre-custody as well as the point at which they exit custody."[17]

> 'There are number of responsibilities there but they're not necessarily being fulfilled as well as they could be.'
>
> **Lin Hinnigan** [18]

The general view was that this was not so much a problem of there being too few statutory responsibilities, but rather that the responsibilities that various agencies had were not being satisfactorily upheld. Fran Pollard commented:

> *"So what are we doing about putting some pressure and accountability on the people that actually are responsible? There is a responsibility – a statutory responsibility in some cases. And I feel it just drops for those people when they come out."*[19]

In particular, it was noted just how difficult it can be for children who have just left youth custody to get school places, with Seamus Oates commenting that:

> *"In many local authorities at the moment, Year 11s who have come out of the secure estate who are hard to place will come into the hard to place panels and will not be given a placement in school."*[20]

15 See page 22
16 See page 48
17 See page 19
18 See page 22
19 See page 26
20 See page 36

Accommodation was also a key concern for the roundtable, for example Paul Cook remarked that "unless they've got accommodation we can't get them into any kind of employment or school placement."[21]

There were some new ideas put forward by the roundtable to bridge the gap between custody and community and ensure that statutory responsibilities towards young offenders were upheld.

To secure a more effective transition into the community the idea of **each child having a mentor** was broadly supported. People, such as Danny Kruger, Chief Executive of Only Connect, Dr Jonty Clark, Executive Head Teacher of Beckmead School, and others argued for the benefits that stability in relationships bring to these children and their likelihood of reoffending.[22]

There was general agreement that mentor relationships should ideally start in prison, and carry on through-the-gate. There was no clear consensus however, on whether the mentor relationship should be a new role, or one that was taken on by someone already working with each young offender. Trevor Wilson-Smith suggested that "it's about who that person relates to"[23] that should inform the decision over who takes on that responsibility.

In order to facilitate a more effective transition between Secure Colleges and the community, the idea of a **Commissioner** in charge of resettlement was raised, who would be able to ensure that statutory responsibilities were upheld.

John d'Abbro, Head Teacher of the New Rush Hall Group, suggested that a commissioner should be given "the power to effect change"[24] in order to make it "much clearer what's going to happen"[25] when young offenders leave custody.

What would a Secure College look like?

We closed the roundtable by looking at what models could be used set up a Secure College. One idea was to add a secure section to an existing educational facility, however there were some reservations with this from educationalists such as Seamus Oates and John d'Abbro. Seamus Oates commented:

> *"…we have slight reservations around mixing a group of young people who are at risk of offending with a group of young people who already have offended…"*[26]

21 See page 33
22 See page 29–30
23 See page 25
24 See page 48
25 See page 48
26 See page 45

John d'Abbro put forward the idea of using a multi-academy trust, where an academy ran a variety of educational facilities, including both schools in the community and Secure Colleges. He suggested that this would help ensure the link between custody and the community was less fragmented.[27]

Concluding remarks

Overall the roundtable facilitated a valuable discussion around some complex issues that the Coalition Government will need to address if they are going to reduce the stubbornly high reoffending rates of young offenders. We hope that this transcript, and the contributions made by each of the attendees, will be useful in shaping the idea of Secure Colleges. Following on from the roundtable, the CSJ would suggest the Coalition Government consider the following as they look to implement Secure Colleges:

- The introduction of through-the-gate mentors for all young offenders
- The introduction of a Resettlement Commissioner to close the gap between custody and the community, and ensure that statutory responsibilities towards young offenders are upheld
- The use of multi-academy trusts as a model to deliver Secure Colleges
- The use of Payment-by-Results as a means of holding Secure Colleges to account for outcomes

27 See page 48

Transcript of a roundtable discussion on Secure Colleges[1]

With Jeremy Wright, Minister for Prisons and Rehabilitation

Tuesday, 16 April 2013

EDWARD BOYD: Thank you all for coming this lunchtime. We're going to go through introductions and stuff fairly quickly. I know Jeremy – it's great that he can be with us today. I think he's got to head off at 14.35 for another vote. Is that correct?

JEREMY WRIGHT: I'm afraid so.

EDWARD BOYD: But great you could be with us till then. And thank you all for taking the time to come along to talk about Secure Colleges today. Really I feel this session is something where we can openly develop arguments, talk about how they might be set up, and how we might successfully place education at the heart of youth custody. For those of you who don't know, I'm Edward Boyd. I'm the Deputy Policy Director at the Centre for Social Justice. One of the things we want to do as part of this is really help the Ministry of Justice developing what we think is a fantastic idea that has got a lot of potential. So as part of that we're going to be taking a transcript of this conversation to feed into that ongoing consultation on this.

For those of you who don't know the Centre for Social Justice that well, we're an independent thinktank that was set up in 2004 really to put social justice at the heart of British politics. And we work across lots of areas from welfare reform to educational failure to addiction and, of course, criminal justice. You'll see as part of your packs I've included an executive summary of a paper that we did in 2012 on youth justice. And please do have a read, and if you've got any questions about it, let us know. I read over it wishing that the idea of secure colleges was part of it, feeling sad that it wasn't because it was a fantastic idea and I wish we'd thought of it. But really great to be involved and contributing at this stage.

1 Please note that the attendees of the roundtable have been allowed to make minor corrections to their statements in instances such as misquoting figures and facts

I'm aware lots of you in the room will probably know each other, but yet there may be some faces that are new to everyone. So just before we get going and hear a few words from Jeremy I thought we would just go round and if you want to say your name and what organisation you're from and just sort of one line about what your interest in secure colleges is before we get going. If we could go round to my right, I'm Edward Boyd, the Deputy Policy Director at the Centre for Social Justice. And yes, we're really interested in the research side of this and helping flesh out what we think is a good idea and helping to make it reality.

FRAN POLLARD: I'm Fran Pollard, Executive Director for Business and Growth for Catch 22. We're a young people's charity, so this is really important to us to bring in all the different expertise we've got around working with some of the most difficult to reach and engage young people, and the work we're doing around families and how that can be brought in here too.

SEAMUS OATES: I'm Seamus Oates, Executive Head Teacher of the Bridge Alternative Provision Academy and Triborough Alternative Provision which covers all of the alternative provision and pupil referral units across three west London boroughs. I'm particularly interested in this proposal around secure colleges because a lot of the young people we work with have either been in the criminal justice system or are heading towards it. And we're very excited about the concept of putting education at the heart of it in that we can start to deliver good academic outcomes and pathways for the young people.

LIN HINNIGAN: I'm Lin Hinnigan. I will be a new face, I think, to most of you because I'm chief exec of the Youth Justice Board as of two weeks ago, so very new on the patch here. And obviously we've got an interest in whatever comes, the ideas that come out of this consultation because we'll have a key role in delivering that. I guess my background is education. I'm an education psychologist by training and that's where my background is. So I'm interested in the educational component. But as far as youth justice is concerned, there are three key measures. In terms of first time entrants and numbers in custody, those have gone down. The reoffending rate for those who have been in custody, as you all know, hasn't. And that's the stubborn one and one that I certainly hope that during my time there we're going to have some impact. And I think this is a big part of that.

JOHN D'ABBRO: I'm John d'Abbro. I'm Head of the New Rush Hall Group which is a federation of provisions for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties. And I'm here because I believe we can maximise the impacts of the work that we do more effectively if we look at amongst other things what we do well rather than keep working on what doesn't work well.

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: Hi, I'm Trevor Wilson-Smith. I'm from Serco. I take – specifically for working with young people. For 12 years I ran Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in County Durham. And aligned with that we have a small school in Derby which obviously is educationally best for young people that are very difficult and hard to reach, especially in attending school. And I'm passionate about improving outcomes for young people.

JONTY CLARK: I'm Jonty Clark, Head of Beckmead School which is part of a group of schools and PRUs [Pupil Referral Units] in Croydon, working with kids with SEBD [Severe Emotional and Behavioural Disorders]. Over the last 15 years I've worked with a number of young people who have been involved in some quite high profile crimes. I've been involved in a prison employment mentoring system and taking young people out of secure and imprisonment and into apprenticeship schemes.

FIONA WILLIAMS: I'm Fiona Williams. I'm Director of Education for G4S Children's Services. Prior to that I worked as an assistant education officer for Warwickshire with particular interest and emphasis on special needs, and special needs is my particular background within teaching. I worked as the head of education at Oakhills Secure Training Centre. I now manage Education in the three STCs [Secure Training Centre] and provide and co-ordinate the education in the eight G4S children's homes which provide education support in-house.

ALEX BURGHART: I'm Alex Burghart. I'm the Director of Policy at the Centre for Social Justice. I worked for Michael Gove and Tim Laughton in the two years running up to the last general election, and after that I went to work in the DfE on child protection and then to Barnardo's and then to here. So obviously I've met a number of you around the table on that journey, and very much looking forward to seeing what we can do with this agenda.

DANNY KRUGER: I'm Danny Kruger. I run Only Connect which is a crime prevention charity. We work across London in prisons and in schools. And I'm particularly interested in the role of peer networks and how you change young people and ex-offenders through affecting the culture they inhabit. So rather than delivering individualistic services, how to work with a community in mind – that's our focus. And I'm particularly interested in how we can apply those lessons. We've dreamed of running a free school for young offenders.

JONATHAN CHILDS: I'm Jonathan Childs. I work in the youth justice policy team at the Ministry of Justice, and we are leading on the transforming youth custody consultation. So very keen to listen to the conversation here today.

HELEN JUDGE: I'm Helen Judge. I'm a policy director in the Ministry of Justice. And part of my role is to lead the policy on transforming youth custody, working closely with the Youth Justice Board and other colleagues. So my interest here is in working out how we can make what I hope you all think is an exciting vision into a reality.

PAUL COOK: OK. I'm Paul Cook, Managing Director for G4S Children's Services. So we currently run three of the four STCs – Medway, Rainsbrook, and Oakhill – as well as, as Fiona said, a range of children's homes in which we provide care for children from local authorities and some reparational community pay-back schemes for YOTs [Youth Offending Teams]. So I've been doing that for some time. I'm a social worker by background and spent about 20-odd years in local authority running various secure children's provision and open fostering and adoption – those sort of things. So I'm very interested in really how we deal with the most hard to reach children because, as I think Lin said, probably lots of things have improved, as John said, particularly around education in our sector, I think, and other sectors. But we've still got that challenge of how we get children resettled into the community and engaged when they come, most of them, from the hardest to reach families that we haven't, as Lin said, tackled the high reoffending rates.

JEREMY WRIGHT: I'm Jeremy Wright, and I'm the minister of responsibility for youth justice, among other things. If I have to explain why I'm interested in this subject, perhaps the department's communications aren't as good as we thought they were.

[laughter]

JEREMY WRIGHT: But I'll leave everything else for a moment or two.

EDWARD BOYD: Brilliant. Well, thanks everyone. That's great to hear people's experience and expertise in this sector, and I'm looking forward to this discussion. As I was thinking about what we should say as part of this meeting I was struck by how many of these conversations we've had before. And it's very easy to kind of get stuck in the technical detail – which I think we'll need to try and understand and unpick this conversation – but I think it's worth just stopping and remembering why we are looking to do this. I think fundamentally it's about trying to change hundreds if not thousands of young offenders' lives, looking to turn around people who, without intervention, successful intervention, may well destroy the lives of their communities and themselves in the process.

And we know what we have at the moment has had some success. It could be more successful. And we know that education is a really important part of turning round young peoples' lives. And this is fundamentally why the CSJ is extremely keen to push ahead with this agenda to do what we can to make it reality. I really hope that we can have a really open, innovative conversation today that really plays a part in that.

It would be great to hear from Jeremy. In terms of Jeremy's background he's an esteemed lawyer. He's worked as a barrister, and appropriately you specialised in criminal justice before you became an MP. And he's made a fantastic contribution to parliament, be it as part of the justice committee and I think you set up an all-parliamentary group on dementia as well

which is an incredibly interesting and important issue. And we're delighted that you are here to speak with us today, and yes, over to you.

JEREMY WRIGHT: Thanks Ed. Well, thank you to you and thank you to the CSJ for drawing you all together which is extremely helpful to us. Can I apologise at the outset I won't be able to stay with you for too long. As Ed explained, I'm between votes, I'm afraid. Democracy does tend to get in the way. But luckily Helen Judge is here, and Helen and I have an arrangement with these sorts of events. I stay for a brief period of time, roughly up to the point at which people think of difficult questions to ask.

[laughter]

JEREMY WRIGHT: And then I leave and she answers them. So we'll do that again today. I thought what I'd do is just set this briefly into context as far as the department is concerned, and then very much want to hear from you. As Ed has explained, there is a very clear rationale for change here. No government, I think, could be satisfied with a situation where we're paying about £100,000 a place in the youth secure estate, and securing reoffending rates of upwards of 70 per cent. So there is a clear reason to look for something different.

And what we've decided to do is take what is quite an unusual approach, as government consultations go, and rather than predetermine the outcome and then ask you all whether you agree with it, instead say: look, this is something we think clearly requires change. We believe that education should be much more centrally located within the youth secure estate. That isn't to say that there isn't good work being done already. Clearly there is. But it's also clear that we can do better in making education central to what young people do within the secure estate.

And so we have set out a prospectus in general terms and said: look, bring us your ideas on how we might do that better. Secure colleges is one way to do it. It may not be the only way to do it, and we are genuinely interested in whatever solutions people might want to bring to us that they believe can work in providing a secure environment – because we do need to provide a secure environment for some young people who the courts believe merit custody. But we also have to recognise that we as the state have a responsibility to educate these young people.

And it isn't just a responsibility. It's also obviously in our best interest if we do so. If we provide young people with a good education, then that is more likely to diminish their chances of reoffending. It's going to increase their chances of getting into employment – if we want to be utilitarian about it – and that in itself will reduce their chances of reoffending. So there is an obvious rationale for doing more in education within the secure environment.

And that's what we've set out so far, but we don't want to be prescriptive about it at this stage. We want people to come forward with their ideas and we want to explore how those might work. So on that note, I think, Ed, it's probably best if I stop talking immediately and let people say what they want to say. And I'll listen for as long as I can. And then I know Helen will be here, I think, probably till the end. Is that right?

HELEN JUDGE: Yes.

JEREMY WRIGHT: So we can pick up, I hope, whatever you have to say. Whether you say something today or whether you don't, it will be very helpful to have something from you in terms of a formal submission to the consultation process as well. You've got till the end of the month to do that, and we will want, I'm sure, to have further conversations with anybody who does that and anybody who we think might have something that can be brought into the mix here. So if we stop there –

EDWARD BOYD: Thanks Jeremy. Before – we've got some questions that we laid out as part of the brief. But for a few minutes before we do that, if people have got any questions for Jeremy and what he's just said to kind of feed into that, please do say.

JEREMY WRIGHT: They're all yours then, Helen.

EDWARD BOYD: Looks like you're off the hook now.

[laughter]

ALEX BURGHART: Actually I'll leap in. I'll ask you a question and then I'll explain what I mean by it. Is anything off the table? That is to say, are you prepared to look at things like the length of sentences?

JEREMY WRIGHT: The answer to that is yes, we are prepared to look at that. And we will look at the legislative framework within which all of this operates. If somebody comes to us and says: look, here is a brilliant idea for doing this but I can't do it with the legislative framework that you've currently got, and therefore we would certainly look in those circumstances at whether the legislative framework needed changing.

> 'We will look at the legislative framework within which all of this operates.'
>
> Jeremy Wright

There are certain things that we can't sacrifice, obviously. We can't sacrifice the fact that some young people will need to receive custodial sentences. And we can't sacrifice the fact that we require basic quality control in anything that's brought forward. I don't think anyone would sensibly expect us to do anything other than that. But beyond that, we are open to ideas of all kinds. We are not guaranteeing to take them forward, but we would certainly want to hear from people who have got good ideas.

What I would think we aren't in the market for is people saying "wouldn't it be lovely if we could do more education in schools" and finishing the document with that. We're really interested in people developing these ideas and coming to us not with a fully worked out

proposal necessarily, but at least with an indication of how you might practically make it operate. That's what we're in the market for, but within those constraints I think we're interested in all good ideas.

EDWARD BOYD: Any other follow-up questions?

PAUL COOK: No, I think that's good. I mean some of the challenges are – we were talking about it earlier – that the children who tend to get a very short DTO [Detention Training Order], with the exception of those who perhaps are getting some justice by geography because of where they come from, are those children with a long care history, not in any school at all, who in the end have not complied with any of the preventative strategies. Youth courts get fed up with them. They give them a four-month DTO and we get them for eight weeks. And they're from those troubled families, and they go straight back out there. And they're the ones reoffending immediately.

So the issue is yes, we do quite a lot with them, in eight weeks. Certainly in our sector we do, both in terms of some meaningful qualifications and all those other things. But in reality if you've been – as you know when you came to visit our centre, you meet some of those young people who have not been engaged since they were seven or eight, for us to have them for eight weeks and then to be saying, well, the secure estate has done a pretty poor job of them because re-offending rates are so high– well, it's quite a difficult thing to do, and the current legislative framework doesn't help that really.

JEREMY WRIGHT: No. I think that is all true, Paul, and we do recognise that when you're dealing with an average stay, whether it's DTO or any other mechanism, 77 days I think it is. And inevitably just doing a great job while those people are in custody is not going to be sufficient. And we will have to also look for ideas from those people who are going to come to us, we hope, throughout this consultation for ideas on how you link what you do in custody with what you then do outside. And that applies to those young people who are going to go on into an educational context as much as it applies to those young people who may then go on into the adult secure estate. So we have to think through those links because they are vital.

I do think, though, even though 77 days isn't long enough to do the full job, I think we'd be wrong to underestimate the significance of a period of stability in the lives of the young people that you're describing who, you're quite right, very often come from chaotic backgrounds.

PAUL COOK: Absolutely.

JEREMY WRIGHT: The very thought of knowing where the next meal is coming from and knowing you have a reliable place to sleep is not to be sniffed at for a lot of these young people. And we have to take best advantage of that period of stability in at least laying the foundations for what happens thereafter. And one of the things that we'll be looking for in the ideas that might come forward is not just how do you link up with other services when that young person leaves a secure environment but perhaps also ideas about how you might create an educational context in which you can do some of that education in a

secure environment, and then the rest of it out of the secure environment but in the same educational institution. And that I think would also be something we'd want to look very carefully at if people believed that could work and if they could come forward with proposals to full in some of those blanks.

DANNY KRUGER: That's very interesting. The value described of a secure environment is nothing to do with the education they receive. So there is certainly value, as we all know, from people getting their lives back on track by getting out of the chaos for a bit. There seems to me a big difference between a prison sentence which happens to have some education on the side, whether it's brilliant or not brilliant, and a sentence which is basically being sent to school – being sentenced to school.

JEREMY WRIGHT: Yes.

DANNY KRUGER: And the question for you is whether you would be prepared to let the young offender make that choice between whether they're going to prison, and they might have a bit of education delivered, or whether they can choose to go to probably a much harder regime because it will be more demanding but it involves them getting a really good intensive education.

JEREMY WRIGHT: I think you've answered your own question. I think the problem is that if we offered that choice – and I, as Ed says, I was a criminal barrister. I spent quite a bit of time defending and indeed prosecuting young men or indeed boys who would be taken in by these sorts of proposals. They'd be of the right age. And I think if you asked them what they would really regard as punishment and what they really wouldn't want to do, the answer would come back: I don't want to go back to learning. I really hated that. And so if you offer the choice, they'll choose not to do that. And those who will not take that choice will be the ones we most want to have that remedial extra additional education they haven't had up to that point. So I'm not minded to offer the individual a choice.

Where I think there is an argument to be had is whether, as you say, what we should be doing is sentencing to school rather than sentencing to custody and the custodial environment is necessary because of the particular risks that you may present. And there will be an element of punishment too, but what we are primarily doing is continuing your education or in many cases starting again your education which had stopped short following a series probably of fairly lengthy exclusions from school, starting that education again, as it happens, in the secure environment, but that's why I say because we don't want it just to be 77 days of school and then stopping again, we have to start to think about what happens after that period of custody and the continuation of the education. So while I wouldn't want to offer the choice to the individual offender, I think ideas around sentencing to school, we would certainly want to think about.

DANNY KRUGER: Something around getting engaged, getting their own compliance with their education plan.

JEREMY WRIGHT: There is something around that, and of course once you leave the custodial environment and once the sentence ends, the idea is somebody stays in school.

They're not staying in school, we hope, simply because they're compelled to be in school. But I think we have to recognise that we're dealing with a group of young people who have not stayed in school voluntarily; nor have they stayed in school after the best efforts of various government agencies at local government level up to that point. So they're not likely to stay in school voluntarily at the point at which they're sentenced to a custodial term.

FIONA WILLIAMS: I'm just a bit concerned about the terminology giving children that choice in that respect because surely, I know a colleague here mentioned about legislation. For me what is paramount is that there is already legislation to protect children and their entitlement to receive education. And for me it's about the journey pre-custody as well as the point at which they exit custody. And I think it's quite significant that we use the terminology in the three secure centres that I provide the education oversight for is that – and I've actually had young people saying: well, what's different is we don't go to school. We go to education. It's about the terminology.

It's about the quality of the product and the quality of the product, as we know, in education is the curriculum. If you can't provide an engaging meaningful curriculum which is underpinned with that access, it's like giving somebody a vehicle but they don't know how to drive it. You've got to underpin it with the literacy and the numeracy and the speech and language and the communication skills. You've got to immerse that young person in that total provision of an education setting – is what our boys and girls describe it as – which is actually quite a unique product to them.

And what I've often found, Jeremy, quite worryingly as an educationalist, are those young people who on leaving custody will say: but you told me, Fiona, that I had an entitlement. I had an entitlement to be engaged in learning. I had an entitlement to continue. And yet the barriers and the prejudice that exists is around organisations accepting the young people where the legislation exists for them to have a right to return to.

And in terms of the returning, and I know I've met and spoke with John and the work that he does with his federation, we have young people who have not been in school since primary who are 16, 17 – a young man who John met on his visit to Medway, who at 17 had spent one morning in school because he didn't care for it. One morning in school. So the challenge is about the product. It is about the curriculum. And I think to say that there's going to be the choice for those young people to be able to make that decision, we have to remember that as the adults and as the professionals we're there to actually guide – as we would with our own chldren – guide choices. And for me that's quite fundamental.

JEREMY WRIGHT: I think yes, you heard me say I'm not attracted to the idea of offering a choice in that sense. Where I think you're entirely right is that we have to define education more broadly than simply schoolroom learning because otherwise we'll be transferring a surly teenager who sits at the back of the class with his arms folded outside custody to one who does the same inside. So there needs to be a more imaginative approach than that. And that is to be found. We can see it elsewhere. And we also want to make sure that there is the necessary focus on vocational education where that's appropriate.

What I do think, though, is important is that for a lot of these young people, for exactly the reasons you've described, their engagement with mainstream education has been minimal. And they're unlikely in many cases to have reached the standard of literacy and numeracy which we know are the basic building blocks for success in anything at all beyond education. So I am very happy to see ways in which we can sneak the maths and English into something else without anybody really noticing. But it needs to be there and there needs to be at least an effort made to bring them up to the necessary basic standards in literacy and numeracy. But again, I'm always conscious of the fact that you can't do all of that in 77 days. So we need to think about what the follow-on product is too.

FIONA WILLIAMS: But it is about igniting that desire to actually have an entitlement to be involved in learning.

JEREMY WRIGHT: Yes.

FIONA WILLIAMS: And you're absolutely right. And I think the raising of participation age is fortuitous for us in this time in that it will give us a longer period that we can find more exciting ways. There are the courses and exam boards, although the constraints of the linear GSCE courses which will affect those of us working with children in custody, actually it's exciting that with the 14 to 19 curriculum the exam boards responded by bringing on stream, some of the BTEC [Business, Technology & Education Council] courses with a more vocational element – that are underpinned by the functional skills so that you can deliver the course with functional skills –

EDWARD BOYD: John, what's your view?

JOHN D'ABBRO: I've thought about the legislation I'd like.

JEREMY WRIGHT: Oh right. Take note, Helen.

JOHN D'ABBRO: So we spend lots of money around trying to sort a lot of these youngsters out. But unfortunately the thing still breaks down. So I'd want to see a law or something that says that for every time a child receives a custodial sentence, the local authority or DCS has to review what has gone wrong, why that child has gone into secure accommodation. And it might be that you've done everything you can do and they still go into it. You know, education can't compensate for society. What Bernstein said in the 60's was as true then as it is now.

> 'Education can't compensate for society.'
>
> John d'Abbro

But more importantly – and this is the bit I think is missing – is what we can do to ensure that when youngsters come out of custody the framework is in place to support them. In my experience I think lots of secure accommodation does a good job. But what we don't do well is say: well, this child is coming back to our PRU. Where are the open release notes? Where is a record of what they've done? And I think we should have a law – you know, in broad brush terms – we should have something that says the local authority as a corporate parent, therefore the child receives a custodial sentence. Great. What's gone wrong? Well, what are we going to do to ensure that the return back into the community is as helpful as it could be?

EDWARD BOYD: Have you noticed a similar thing, Jonty?

JONTY CLARK: I was going to ask Jeremy really if that is when the mindset comes up with YOT and maybe educators. And YOT is very process driven and target driven and very formulaic. And young people often pick up good habits inside and they hang on to education as something more than learning a skill in carpentry, something that fires their imagination. There's something there. And they pick up these good bits of education. And then – I don't know if that's a question, but I think it is – is do you think there is a mindset issue there between the support services, transition services and the educators?

JEREMY WRIGHT: Lin might want to say something about the YJB [Youth Justice Board] more generally, but I think that there is no organisational barrier here to looking again at how we make education more central to what we do. I think, as you say, that there are good examples of young people who have been through the custodial environment who have been taught very well and who have been encouraged very successfully to think about education, just as Fiona was saying, in a different way and become more enthused about it. There's no question about that.

As I said, it's always difficult in government when you propose what is potentially quite a fundamental reform that everyone assumes that what you mean by that is that there is no good work being done at the moment. We have to knock it all down and start from the ground up. That isn't the case. But I do think that there is willingness within the YJB and elsewhere to say: look, actually we do need to do more about education.

But what there isn't is a fixed view as to how to do that at this point. And that's why we have the opportunity to have what is actually in my experience quite an unusual and exciting conversation in government where we say to everybody else: look, actually we don't have a fixed predetermined view as to how to do this. Tell us what you think will work. It usually means people say: ah, yes, but you obviously do, really, but you just don't want to tell us. And nobody believes you. But actually this is genuinely an open question. But Lin, I think you probably would want to add to that. But I don't detect an organisational barrier in that sense.

LIN HINNIGAN: I don't think there is an organisational barrier. One of the things I've been really struck by as I've gone round as part of my induction visiting secure accommodation is that there is this effect as kids leave. So you give them the structure. You give them the consistent rewards. You engage them, as Fiona has described, and then there's this cliff edge. And I think the key task as far as I'm concerned is how do we smooth that transition.

And there are already statutory responsibilities on – particularly when a lot of these children are looked after children so there are responsibilities on local authorities to pick them up for accommodation, for education. There are number of responsibilities there but they're not necessarily being fulfilled as well as they could be. But even that is only a first block because even if you've got the place and somewhere to live and a school or a college or a training place to go to, actually the bigger bit around it is all that behaviour management which has enabled that child and young person to behave differently in one environment.

Everything I know in psychology says if you change all the environment, they're going to go back to their old behaviour. So we've got to manage that transition much better. And I think that is about trying to build those partnerships locally because you have got partners locally who have got statutory responsibilities, but also they can't do it on their own. There are many reasons why they can't.

> 'Everything I know in psychology says if you change all the environment, they're going to go back to their old behaviour.'
>
> Lin Hinnigan

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: On a very practical viewpoint, though, I completely agree with you, but what young people want and need is consistency. We've heard round the table that young people don't go to school before they come. The one thing they do do when they're in a secure accommodation is go to school.

And what happens when they go to school? Yes, they learn, but what they do is they build up relationships with adults who they then begin to trust. And they see those people as the people they listen to because in many ways the first thing I used to say to a young person when they came to Hassockfield is: you go to school? No, I don't. And it's the fight or flight

thing. Either run away or a fight. But at the end of the day they go. And the key issue, it's about the significant other within the establishment.

And I think Lin is right. There are organisations out there, but it's about having the young person having the trust in an individual for the first time maybe in a very, very long time in that safe adult to actually make that transition with them. And I think everybody – there's loads of stuff out there, but it's actually getting that young person to feel comfortable and safe enough to make that first step with somebody who they trust. And that's got to be, in my view, if we're going to make a real impact in putting education at the heart of things and actually stopping young people reoffending, that's the nirvana.

That's the bit that we've got to strive for because for the first time ever in young people they start to trust an adult other than maybe some of the people around them that don't give the best advice. And it's how do you hold on to that, because I see it time after time. You open the gate and they walk out and they actually leave places with people they don't even know who they are. And if we're going to make an impact, that's the type, the very practical things that we've got to start to look at to change.

PAUL COOK: What partly attracted me to go into the STC was the contract – although there are issues with contracts – one of the things that attracted me to go into the STCs was education being at least 25 hours National Curriculum education, 52 weeks of the year ensuring that children had a high dose of education. And all the other services around the young people like psychologists and all that happens outside of the school day and at weekends. And unless we actually – and this is why I notice when I go round the YOIs [Youth Offender Institutions] is the education day gets shortened because lots of things get in the way. Now it annoys me already – I'm sure it annoys Trevor – that you never get a YOT worker or a lawyer or anybody else visiting after school!–

JEREMY WRIGHT: I'm not one of them anymore.

[laughter]

PAUL COOK: OK. There's enough time gets interrupted just by their reviews and other bits that happen. But the success I think we've had is that education is central and all the other services – our psychologists and all those things – work at weekends and evenings because unless we tackle those other issues around them, most of these kids have got all these other complex issues around them. And education is one component which, with a high dose of education you may have great success. But you've got to do all those other things around them and give them high input into those other factors. Otherwise you're not going to move them forward.

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: I totally agree with you, Paul, but as I say, you can wrap all these things, but actually we're dealing with individuals who have got major issues – broad brush stroke, I know – about trust, about who they listen to. And what we do I think really well in custody is actually – because they have no option, really, have they? They can't go anywhere. They're with you all the time. And that's one of the by-products of it, that they build up

relationships and trust. Not everybody, but the vast majority do. And yes, you've got all this stuff around but you're dealing with specific individuals that are in a group. And it's how you deal with those. It's the good of the collective against the good of the individual. How do you deal with that individual young person?

> 'Some of these young people I know could get a GSCE or two if not an A-level within 77 days depending upon the stage that they're at.'
>
> Seamus Oates

PAUL COOK: We do know, with the type of children we look after, unless we manage them effectively they won't go to school anyway because I've been to loads of secure establishments where you've got a captive audience and it's chaotic.

SEAMUS OATES: Can I – sorry – can I just say we absolutely cannot underestimate the importance of building positive relationships and role models within these organisations, certainly within alternative provision. And PRU is where our success is usually predicated on getting a positive relationship with a young person built up, and then hopefully they're not going on into a secure environment.

The other key thing within alternative provision and PRUs that we absolutely focus on – and within the best practice within a secure estate as well – is in ensuring that we've got the highest quality of teaching and learning going on. So when we talk about putting education into the heart, yes, we need to ensure basic skills are met. Yes, we need to have alternative curricula using BTECs, vocational etc. But we also need to be conscious that quite a lot of the young people we get – and some of the ones certainly that we've not been successful with –are actually capable of achieving really well and really getting high accreditation.

77 days average stay. Some of these young people I know could get a GSCE or two if not an A-level within 77 days depending upon the stage that they're at. So I think within alternative provision and PRUs, where it's successful we bring in the highest quality of teaching, the highest quality learning environment etc. That's really important that we don't lose sight of that. Where does that exist at the moment? It exists within mainstream schools – outstanding mainstream schools. So the challenge I have is how can we bring that practice into this conversation, because at the moment we are on the alternative. We're outside. We're running alternative provision.

EDWARD BOYD: Stepping back for one second, I realise there are so many areas. We've covered a few areas here in the last 15 minutes. If we go through them fairly systematically – I'm sure we'll get messed up, but at least if we start that way – the first question we want to address is just what you were talking about there. It's about integrating what happens within

a secure college with an individual with what happens both before and afterwards. And if we just focus on afterwards, Trevor, you mentioned something and you mentioned it as well, how actually it's quite important that there is some level of relationship continuity inside and outside. And if I were to push and say who would that individual be, would it be the teacher? Would it be a mentor? Would it be somebody else? If you were going to construct a business plan now about who that would be, what would you include in that?

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: It could be – this isn't a get out of jail answer, honestly – it could be anybody really. It's about who that person relates to. It might well be a teacher. It might well be a care officer. It could be one of the psychologists or social workers. And I think the intimacy that we have within the LASHs [Local Authority Secure Homes] and the STCs where you've got smaller numbers and higher staff to young people ratio, it's about fitting those in with the individual learning plans, for instance, about who is the key influencer in this young person's life.

Now in many ways it could be – if you are looking at the continuing education journey, it might well be a teacher because the role of the teacher within the secure establishments is a safe role. They know exactly what they're doing. But it's about – I think in the STCs and the LASHs it's an easier job to do than when you've got bigger numbers: say, for instance, in Wetherby where you've got 400 plus young people on very short sentences and the numbers of the staff are not as great. But it could be anybody. And I think because of the way the STCs work and the LASHs work you can actually give the people, the staff, the qualifications and the qualities you need to follow young people out.

HELEN JUDGE: And one of the things that I've been struck by is how many people some of these young people have in their lives. And I'm wondering how important it is to have one person who is sort of the co-ordinator. And you might say that's the YOT worker. For various reasons you hear very different stories about how good a young person and their staff think the YOT worker is. So some people will say: I never see them. There may be reasons for that, and sometimes it's perception more than it's reality.

But there is something for me about is it really important to have a caseworker that as far as possible provides that continuity between custody and community. And/or is it important to have someone who is a bit more like the sort of mentoring relationship that we've been talking about in the adult rehabilitation world – the sort of "through the gate" mentor. That could be the same person. That could be the YOT worker. But I just wonder what you think about that.

FRAN POLLARD: I find it's a mix because I think the work that we've been doing in the adult estate is really applicable here because the work that we're doing in Doncaster is all based on the one relationship manager – the person who has the relationship with the offender and there is the relational continuity through the custodial sentence into the community. And I actually think that is really important for this group of young people. They do need somebody that they trust And can engage with.

I think we also just need to recognise that in a lot of STCs it's already happening. There is some really good stuff happening there. I think it's critical, the relational continuity piece has got to be very important to secure colleges. The one case worker – it could be whoever is right for that one person based on their need and the risk assessment that you do with that young person.

I think the mentor bit is needed as well. I don't think it's an either/or, to be honest because I think when they come out the critical thing – and we've touched on it a little bit here – is there is excellent work already going on in the secure estate – lots of really good work. But it all falls down when they come out of the gate. And we talked about there already being people that are responsible for this group of young people ie statutory services. So what are we doing about putting some pressure on the people that actually are responsible? There is a responsibility – a statutory responsibility. And I feel it just drops for those people when they come out. And it's how we make that link.

> 'So what are we doing about putting some pressure on the people that actually are responsible? There is a responsibility – a statutory responsibility.'
>
> **Fran Pollard**

PAUL COOK: I think there are some challenges. The good thing is that the numbers in the secure estate are small. But that does make it very difficult to make it cost effective for one of my team who has got a good relationship with the kid to do any work in the community if they live miles away. In surrounding areas to my STCs, those YOTs have got hardly any kids in custody. I've not had a Milton Keynes kid for years. But you're quite right. If we can attach – and I do think that there is a difference between the relationship that a YOT worker might have with a young person to what might be required in the community.

It's a bit like me saying to one of my custody staff you've got to do everything for that child. You've got to be somebody who disciplines them and might occasionally restrain them, and then do the therapeutic input with them. The things don't work. And I do think that somebody who can build a relationship with a young person that can move that into the community to do the softer side of that, as Trevor talked about, is pretty critical really.

EDWARD BOYD: Just tying it in one second with something, John, you said earlier about information sharing between people coming out of custody, with the education being provided for people. We're talking about making sure there is a relationship with somebody inside on the way outside. Do you think it's important that that person is tied into the education establishment that they will be going to on release? Or do you think that's not important?

FIONA WILLIAMS: I think picking up from Helen's point I would like to come in there in terms of who might that be. And I'm not saying it's the perfect answer, but certainly in terms of the years that I've been overseeing the STC education – and very much we have moved towards a model of keeping education at the heart – is the role of what I guess in mainstream would be an education welfare officer. I think it's absolutely paramount to enable the person who is acting as the advocate for the young person with education at the heart to fully understand education legislation, the law, the entitlement, the Apprenticeships, Skills, and Learning Act.

If you can school and enable a member under that EWO [Education and Welfare Officer] umbrella to act for that young person, they can do exactly as Paul has just described in that they can work for that young person on their behalf bridging custody to community. But it is about being able to appropriately challenge, because particularly around special needs and code of practice I know that the heads of education and the EWOs who have been out to schools, who have been to annual reviews, when we've hosted the annual reviews and have actually been able to challenge poor practice – downright illegal practice – by saying: you're not actually putting in place the code of practice that's there to enable that child to have access to education. So I think something like an education welfare officer role might well be the next step.

SEAMUS OATES: Can I say within that context the transition there is a key period of time, and it needs to be short and snappy and we need to get people in quickly. The reality is I sit on three different fair access panels which do look at people coming out of custody. The battle we have to get schools to take them – or even the PRUs which are working to capacity – it's really difficult. And so that key period of time must be a golden period of time – is always lost – often lost, actually, which you will have found I think for a lot of young people coming out.

So I think the ideal scenario is going to be for a kind of seamless transition both before custody and after custody in terms of the educational offer that young people are receiving. And how can we do that? Perhaps we can't do it through having a single secure college which is taking young people in before and after. But there are certainly within some of the technical systems we're using at the moment the ability to offer a curriculum and a method of delivery which works.

And we know what works for these young people, both within the secure environment and within alternative provision because we're constantly trying to re-engage them with learning. And all of us are searching for that thing that's going to re-engage a young person, coupling it with the positive role model. So if we can tie all of that together into this seamless kind of route, which secure colleges obviously should be sitting at the centre of, then we will achieve the outcomes that we want which is a massive reduction in the 70 per cent reoffending figure that we have which will mainly be related to the fact that young people are not able to complete their education, get the accreditation that they need to then go on into the world of work etc.

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: That window is crucial because if you don't have somebody that the young person will listen to as they walk out of the front door – and that's why I made the point. Young people leave sometimes – I'm sure Paul sees it every day – with people who they don't know. And they'll say to that person: well, what am I doing now then? And they'll say: now you've got to go here, here and here. Who are you? I'm not going to listen to you. I don't know who you are. I don't know where you're from. What I am going to do is get out of the car and go and do what I want to do. And you're right. That window is crucial because they need to be listening to somebody who they'll listen to.

SEAMUS OATES: I think what we have now doesn't work. So even legislation won't change it. We have the legislation, as you say. They're all sitting there. The YOTs are there. The panels are there. They're all sitting there. And these young people will be at the bottom of their list. You'll have SC [?] and etc, etc, and that's wrong.

JOHN D'ABBRO: See the legislation is there, but it's got no teeth. And that's the problem, and that's why one of my recommendations would be, particularly in the context of what you're doing is to have a fixed term champion or a fixed term commissioner along the lines of the model that worked with Tim Brighouse and the London Challenge model which basically said there is someone who is going to make this happen because if we've got all of these systems there but they're not working, then somebody has got to say look, that window, we know that window is going to be there the minute a child is sentenced. So why isn't it at the point where the child receives their sentence somebody is saying right, in a month's time, 77 days' time, that child is going to come out. What are we doing now so that he or she knows what's going to happen to them at the point where they come out?

> 'The legislation is there, but it's got no teeth.'
>
> John d'Abbro

JONTY CLARK: But weren't we there with ISSP (Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme) who used to do a fantastic job of mentoring kids on the way in, building connections when they come out, visiting them when they came out, coming to the school, coming to reviews, planning things? And what was even better about ISSP – which has now presumably been tendered out in most London boroughs for tuppence ha'penny and nobody

has taken it up because there isn't any market in it – is that they had a network as well where in terms of a window there's no point in a Tooting kid coming out from inside and going to South Thames college. And what they had was a network so the Tooting kid comes out and then goes to Carshalton College with support. And all those kids talk about so often a new start, a new start, a new start, and you see them just going through the quicksand because everything goes into that same old context. And that ISSP was a great network. That was, in my view, very successful.

HELEN JUDGE: And if I can just sort of say what I'm taking from this is there might be two sets of roles, and they may or may not be performed by the same person but I think they're different people. So one is the relationship with the young person themselves. And as far as possible that has continuity between custody and community. But the other thing I am hearing is the sort of co-ordinator and/or commissioner, the way you're describing it, but it's the person who can make people fulfil their duties.

But at the same time they need to have enough influence over the different agencies involved to be able to get them to do what they need to do. So I don't know whether that means that there is a sort of advocate type of person plus a more senior, for want of a better word, co-ordinator. But those are the sets of things that are going through my mind that there are some different elements to this kind of set of co-ordination continuity thing.

FRAN POLLARD: It's always there is somebody that needs to do the work with family. It's not just the educational needs for these young people, is it. They'll have substance misuse issues. They'll have complex needs– they've got chaotic lives, complex family backgrounds. That all needs to be taken into account as well because to enable them to engage with education, keep engaged with education, all those other aspects have to be dealt with and supported at the same time. So it's quite a role for this person. It's a lot of things they need to do and be responsible for.

LIN HINNIGAN: We do have a model of that around the resettlement programme.

FRAN POLLARD: Exactly, yes. The broker.

LIN HINNIGAN: It's early days for those,– and the new one just being set up in Wales as well – but that is precisely what their job is. There are all these bodies who have all have responsibilities – some of them statutory. They need to be brought together. They need to be helped to operate to get together the complete package – including the family support from children and family services etc. So the resettlement broker is there to bring them together. The initial evaluations are showing it's too early to say about reoffending. But in terms of proxies, in terms of kids having accommodation, education places etc, a lot of those are helping. So there is a model there on which we could build.

EDWARD BOYD: One quick question I've got, and it's a really practical one: we've talked about the sort of window of opportunity. How long do we think it is, this kind of window of this is the point at which you really have to wrap around the individual, provide the support

and get them connected within what they need outside of custody such as education? Roughly how long are we talking about when we talk about that window?

FIONA WILLIAMS: I think the problem is it has to happen while they're already in custody. Picking up the point you raised about gifted and talented – and for any of us that run a school provision it's the 10% of your cohort identified. We have no problem in identifying 10 per cent of young people with gifted and talented needs, particularly – and Lin will be familiar with children who are high functioning on the autistic spectrum, and I guess it's linked to sentencing because children who are high functioning autistic will have real problems in the police station and real problems in court in terms of being able to present themselves appropriately.

And I particularly can think of one young man we had at Rainsbrook who did his triple science GCSEs, dropped just half a mark. And I personally approached Cambridge, his local authority, to get him on to the Cambridge Easter and summer schools for gifted and talented. That was exactly what that boy needed. His local YOT worker was trying to find him five hours a week on a motorbike project. No disrespect, please, but what the boy said was: I'll do that in my spare time. I want to learn – physics is my passion. And it was through leaving custody that he got a place on to the gifted and talented programme with Cambridge regional authority and is doing well as a result.

You're absolutely right to say there are all the life issues: his mother couldn't cope with him at home with his strange behaviours and why he was in custody and all the issues around medication and going back on to medication. But actually for that boy, that gifted and talented young man, what he needed was that academic rigour with all the other opportunities to enable him to go home to his mum.

EDWARD BOYD: Danny, did you want to come in on this?

DANNY KRUGER: For me, we can and should obviously design as seamless as possible a route for the young people, and the conversation about whether it should be a team around the young person or a team around the worker is an important one. And you can – I think generally we agree there should be – a single relationship is more stable for the young person. However, we need to be aware that, to generalise, they bust up their relationships in order to test them. And it's a bit like blind dating one-to-one workers. And rather like mentoring, it can be just another blind date arrangement which doesn't work.

So our model is about what we think of as the entourage which – and my point here would be, going back to my original remarks, I think the sense of agency that the young person himself has is the critical factor in all of this. And we can design a perfect process, but they've got to commit to it because all you can do in custody is you can lead the horse to water. That's what custody involves. It doesn't mean they're going to drink. So involving their agency somehow – which is why I do believe that there has got to be an element of choice and commitment to the programme if we're talking about a serious education programme.

And then on the way out, coming out, we talk about entourage and the need for community. And our idea is that young people need to join a positive culture, not just an excellent service which is why again, going back to the point about choice, I think their tendency to bust up relationships in order to test them, one institution on its own is not enough. And young people need to belong to a variety of institutions that they can sort of bounce between in their lives like we all do, which is why although I think some of these great school chains are brilliant because they're delivering great work, there is a bit of a tendency to what I think of as total school, the idea that if the child just had come for breakfast and stayed for the after school bit, and while we're at it, why doesn't the school also take care of their family issues as well because it's the only island of security in their chaotic lives. That won't work either, tempting as it is, because they'll bust it up and they want to test things.

> 'Young people need to join a positive culture, not just an excellent service.'
>
> Danny Kruger

So there has got to be – and sorry, I'm introducing the notion of chaos into what I know is an attempt to bring order – but an element of deliberate flexibility in the system and in the pathways that we imagine these young people to be taking is important. And so just to conclude, my point is about the value particularly of youth clubs, of alternative places where these young people are going. So it's not all about the single institution which might be brilliant but won't be enough.

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: I agree with that, I think. But the issue with the young people that we're talking about – which is a very small number – is the fact that, you know, I've been a social worker for a very long time and I'll start this by saying they know enough of these young people. They're not known. In the communities I worked in the middle of Leeds, and I knew the problem families in the estate. I knew of them, but I only really ever got to know them when I found myself in Weetwood police station at 2.00 in the morning doing a PACE interview because they were there. And when I knocked on the front door, they'd run out the back.

The only thing – that's why I'm passionate about it – within the secure setting, for the young people we're talking about, we've had that bust-up because we've had them for four months, five months. They've lived with us. There is a relationship built up, and that for me is the key. If you're looking for any positive in custody at all – and there's lots. Both Paul and I – education provision is outstanding – forget that. We actually get to know these young people. And nobody else does. And I'm not saying we stay with them forever. And I think you're right. It is about introducing them to those communities.

But it is a single person in that young person's life for a given period of time that can say no. I know what you're doing. I've seen this behaviour before and this isn't what we're doing

because these are the outcomes. If we do this, that's what's going to happen. And it is about working with you guys. It is about supporting – maybe even sitting in the class for some of the time with that young person. Maybe even dropping them off at the alternative provision for a period of time. Obviously it can't go on forever because there is a resource to it. But there is one key aspect to it: we know them. And not many people do.

EDWARD BOYD: We've talked a lot here about some of the behavioural needs alongside education, how you provide for that, about how we try and manage relationally the transition from custody back into community. Is there anything else you'd add in terms of – skipping back to the beginning of it – how you manage someone going from community into custody? Do people think it's equally important to have that relational continuity when someone goes into custody? Is that the same person ideally that is actually staying with them as they leave custody? Or do we think that's not practical? What are people's thoughts on that equally difficult space?

JONTY CLARK: I go back to the ISSP, Ed, and also think that some of the organisations we're talking about are full of young people who, if you train them properly and qualify them in issues like conflict resolution, restorative justice and mentoring would be able to step forward into those roles because they understand. And a lot of these youngsters, their window involves – if you run an organisation with different ages of kids wanting to pass on positive messages to the younger kids. And to enable that is really critical.

But I've seen this successfully. The lack of parenting can be filled in by peripatetic parenting, and these are the guys who will work with the person up to sentencing. It should be the same person who accompanies the young person to court and visits them in prison and then can broker what happens outside including critical issues like housing and being involved in a multi-agency which does take some training to be competent and linked in with those organisations. That one-person continuity can and does work, in my experience.

FIONA WILLIAMS: I don't know how many people remember the Black Country project that covered the areas across Wolverhampton and the Midlands, but certainly in terms of the support for the young people who were part of that project had exactly what you've just described. A member of the Black Country project team would come to meet the young person at their initial planning meeting and they would come every month. They would come as a professional visitor. They would come to the young person's review. And I can think of a particular young woman who went back to Wolverhampton and wanted to go back into her mainstream school, sorted out all her options, as it was at the time at the end of Year 9, and that Black Country project worker actually picked her up from her home and took her to school and went into school with her. And I went to visit her as part of the community review. And there she was engaged in her choice –

JONTY CLARK: That's right. Without that prescriptive framework and us, a school, can ring up and say I need some help here.

FIONA WILLIAMS: Absolutely. That person was with that young woman throughout her time in custody every month. A valued visitor.

PAUL COOK: There is certainly no doubt some of the challenges around some of our hardest to reach children is the issue of accommodation. And that's the real challenge because unless they've got accommodation we can't get them into any kind of employment or school placement. And they're the hardest to reach children. So classically what happens is that if they've been looked after in a children's home, then either they've committed offences within that home so somebody has got to find them another children's home they don't want to go to and people won't have them.

Or if it's a good placement it's filled by another child so they can't go back there anyway because – I mean I run children's homes. Nobody has a contract. It's all spot purchase. So if a child of mine who has done really well with me because they've come to me on remand and then gets custody, the placement is closed. They say: can you have me back? It's luck as to whether I happen to have a space when he or she comes out. So there are some of the challenges.

And then of course some children have no accommodation. And what tends to happen often with many of these kids – I'm sure Trevor finds it the same – is that because, as Jeremy said, it offers that window of stability, and our staff are very good at re-engaging parents, the YOTs link on to the fact let's get him back home then, because it's an easy option. You haven't got to try and find them accommodation and everything else. Mum feels guilty. Generally it's mum. She then says: oh, well he's done a lot better. He wants to go back home. No work is done. And then of course it breaks down again because the accommodation is a big issue for many of these kids.

And to be fair to the YOTs, there's no money out there. So it's a B&B or something unsuitable, or go back home. And they are some of the challenges, but of course the issue being that if we're trying in these times of austerity to reduce costs, actually to try and get someone to say, well, let's do some real work with mum and family and make that really work and follow that up in the community, it has a cost to it.

JONTY CLARK: But the only cost – and Alex knows several of the ex-prisoners that I've employed at various different levels of offence all the way through, try and do exactly the same for each one of them – men, 40-plus. The ones who are successful – and ladies 40-plus as well – the ones who are successful are the ones who have stable housing. I do exactly the same for all of those prisoners and put all the resources I can towards supporting them. If the housing isn't stable, it's gone. So spending, at this stage might stop spending at a later stage.

EDWARD BOYD: Alex, do you want to come in there?

ALEX BURGHART: Yes. A very interesting point that Paul has just made. And this is an issue – this is an area that wants for resource particularly at the moment. But the troubled families programme, for example, which has made a lot of money available and put a great emphasis on a singular point of contact with families that are in difficulty may be something that we could use and exploit in this area. I don't know how but I think it's an option that should be on the table.

Going back to what Jonty was saying, I'd be really interested to hear from the heads around the table about how things have worked for you when you've had kids at your school go into the secure estate and come out. Have they come back to you? Has that transition been easy? Have you been able to retain contact with them whilst they've been in the secure estate? It would be really good to hear what your experiences are and how that's working or not working.

JOHN D'ABBRO: I'd like to give you a real live example because he's coming out tomorrow. It's a nightmare story but can I just echo what Jonty said. It is expensive doing that but it's cheaper in the long run if we do it. And it's a bit like people saying to me well, New Rush Hall, it's more expensive than Eton. I say yes it is. But for every kid we stop going to prison, for every child we stop having a mental breakdown, in the long term it's cheaper. And we've got to find a way of saying – we are spending a lot of money. How can we re-profile the way that we spend that kind of money effectively so that we can build on the things that work, but also recognise it's worth the investment while children are young because if we can get them before they get more entrenched, it's actually easier and makes more inroads into having a life around it.

FRAN POLLARD: The numbers are reducing, aren't they.

JOHN D'ABBRO: Yes.

FRAN POLLARD: I mean that's the other thing we need to recognise here. If you look at the trend it's going down. We're talking about a relatively small group of complex young people and it's going to only go down more as legislation has an effect on that. You're not talking about huge numbers of young people.

PAUL COOK: And they are very complex. I mean the issue is, unfortunately, whether we like it or not, supervised children are safe children, and that costs money in reality.

EDWARD BOYD: Going back, how would you answer those questions. It sounds a good story.

JOHN D'ABBRO: It is a good story. And this is partly what I was saying earlier

we had a young man who went into the secure estate and came out on appeal and then he was intensively fostered Interesting thing is, because I'd worked in the PRU that term I had developed quite a good relationship with him. So when he was in the secure estate I rang him with a view to visiting him. In between me doing a visit he got accommodated somewhere else.

But when I rang up the YOT worker and said: where has he been – where is he, because I'll go and visit him or I'll give him a ring, I said. "Well, hang on a minute." It took 15 minutes for me holding on the phone for them to find out where he was. And I'm thinking blimey this is our own YOT service and we can't find him.

Two weeks ago I found out he was being released. So I said to the PRU: look, der-der-der is coming out in a few weeks time. I think we should drop him a letter, send him a little video

or something, let all the kids know he's coming back in so he knows what he's coming back to so he's being held in mind, so he knows that we're all looking out for him.

I rang up his YOT worker and I said: I know all things being equal I know it can get changed on the day. But all things being equal he's coming out on this day. Can we arrange to pick him up? She said: oh, I don't know that he's been released yet. I said he is. I got an email from her yesterday saying: I can confirm… Can he start next Tuesday? And I'm thinking: what's going on here? How do I know? Only because I've kept in contact with him that he's coming out. And his YOT worker doesn't. So although – and I'm not trying to dish the dirt. I'm just saying we've got these processes in place, but they're not working.

SEAMUS OATES: I'll echo that, John, because what you'll find in many cases is that young person will be in Year 11 at this time of year who will turn up at your door next Tuesday without you knowing and without anyone expecting and be expecting to sit exams which he may not have been prepared for. So that's a really key issue that we have: many, many young people being released with no thought to the educational system that we have in place, particularly now with the introduction of the linear exam system. There is no thought around when they're coming out because suddenly they could be put back into a school environment.

What I will say is when young people come out of the secure estate we now get really good information from the education system within the secure estate. Good data comes out with them – probably a lot better than goes in with them, which I should think is a significant issue. So that works well. For us particularly within alternative provision within our area where we don't have post-16 alternative provision and many of the young people are released post 16 who come out and they then are in limbo. They tend to come to us informally for contact.

They will usually have a plan which will have been drawn up by the YOT. Often it involves doing another CV and going to play some more football, which again is not what they're going to need. So that's something that we are very keen to sort of get in place if we can look at

ways of delivering post-16 alternative provision, which is often going to be more appropriate with the young people, and certainly with the 16 to 19 raising the age of participation coming along.

So issues certainly for us around when young people are going to be released, how easy is it for them to pick up and continue with their education and the curriculum that's been delivered, and the old – as we were talking about at the beginning – have they actually got anywhere to go to because at the moment they haven't. And we'll spend a lot of time trying to get them something.

> 'What I will say is when young people come out of the secure estate we now get really good information from the education system within the secure estate.'
>
> Fiona Williams

FIONA WILLIAMS: That's right. We have an issue in the past three years at all three of the centres when we have young people who are leaving who are Year 11 and there is nowhere for them to go because we've enrolled them on the GCSE courses. What we're now doing – and it includes the children in the children's homes – is that we're providing the exam centre base back at the STCs, and it's actually quite emotional to see young people who have been released from custody being back at home, wherever they've been living. It's not good for them, but they travel back to the centres to sit their exams – you meet them in reception, wish them good luck, and they go out and sit their GCSE papers. For me, I mean that's appalling that nobody will take that transfer candidate. We will work with provisions to do the transfer status when they come into custody. We want that just to be replicated as an expectation that somebody and somewhere in the local authority a centre will be set up.

SEAMUS OATES: In many local authorities at the moment Year 11s who have not come out of the secure estate who are hard to place will come into the hard to place panels and will not be given a placement in school. And that again is against the law, is illegal, but that's what is happening. It's the reality. So many people are coming out with innovative solutions for those Year 11s who through no fault of their own have arrived in their authority. Secure estate leavers, similar story needs to take place there.

EDWARD BOYD: We only have about 20 minutes or so left of this conversation. I'm keen to carry on afterwards. It would be good to move, the cranking gear change, on to the secure colleges themselves. We've kind of talked about the link afterwards and the link before. I think that is really important to inform what we actually want secure colleges to be. And the essay question it would be great to answer, it's almost what outcomes should secure colleges be held accountable for. And amongst this, for those averages of 77 days, what is that we think the person who is heading up – be that the head teacher or however you frame the person who is heading that secure college – what is it that you think we should be asking of them,

holding them accountable for? Should PBR [Payment By Results] be any part of this or should we keep that as far away as possible? What are people's general thoughts for what we should be asking these secure colleges to be held accountable for?

JOHN D'ABBRO: I think they've got to be able to demonstrate that children are making progress in whatever progress means, and that they can demonstrate the distance travelled that children have made during their accommodation –

PAUL COOK: To be quite honest I wouldn't mind PBR around them.

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: I'd take PBR now. In all honesty, if you were to say –

EDWARD BOYD: Why?

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: Because we do that. I can say we've reduced risk against the ASSET score. We can show how people have moved up academically from this to that to the other. The big thing about holding people responsible is again – we just looked at each other and nodded and said the same thing. I'd take it today because I know what we can do within inside the walls. The issue is if there is any responsibility to follow the child out because at the moment quite clearly with PBR and the like, once that person leaves my front door, I'm reliant on a YOT worker to actually do the second half of the sentence. Now if they don't do it, is it right and fair that Paul and I should be held accountable for that failure when we can show by any KPI [Key Performance Indicator], by all of the KPIs and some of the KPIs we give ourselves, that we actually achieve for the vast majority of children – not everyone, I hasten to add – but for the vast majority of children you can see a progression up.

> 'I'd take [PBR] today because I know what we can do within inside the walls.'
>
> Trevor Wilson-Smith

PAUL COOK: I mean there's no doubt that if you look – having inherited establishments that weren't working, I welcome payment by results in particular for the elements I am in control of: improving attainment, distance travelled, young people getting early release where it's not presumed against – because if you've got a failing establishment, children aren't going to get early release because they're not getting their offending behaviour programme and all of it. So I'd be perfectly to be judged on saying this is the baseline outcome, and if you achieve above that for every child – I have no problem with that at all.

EDWARD BOYD: If you split them into kind of – you've got some outcomes. You can achieve intermediate ones inside such as educational improvement whilst you're inside and you've got ones linking potentially with people on the outside after they've left, just focusing for now on the kind of internal ones, so if there was, say, a PBR model set up for this, what

are those indicators that you think might be applicable for this kind of model to be judged on?

PAUL COOK: If you are talking about education, I think you're quite right. I mean if a child comes to Trevor's or my establishment tonight, they'll be in school by lunchtime tomorrow, and they'll be having – apart from the times when they've got to go to reviews, legal visits or court. So I think we can absolutely demonstrate distance travelled and high levels of dosage of education and intervention with a meaningful qualification at the end.

SEAMUS OATES: Within education there is a really clear set of measurements and quality indicators that can be used to measure the success of education. And they would be absolutely exactly the same as the ones that are currently used within pupil referral units and alternative provision. So Ofsted will go and inspect alternative provision or PRU and make a whole set of judgements around the quality of outcomes. Learners will be going into those kinds of schools from anything from one day for a short-term placement to six years for a longer term type of provision – so very similar in terms of learners coming for short periods of time.

What those things look like, as John has said, are measurements of progress against a very clear baseline starting point so you can measure academic progress against national curriculum levels. You can measure other measurements such as social and emotional behaviour against a whole range of measurements which we take as baselines. And I think one of the fundamental principles that we hold dear within alternative provision is that every young person at certainly secondary level has an entitlement to a curriculum that will enable them to achieve at least five GCSEs. They may not all get five GCSEs, but they have the entitlement to access that if they are. And I think it's really important that we have that in place for them.

EDWARD BOYD: Would you add anything in terms of targets and outcomes internally beyond education as well?

JOHN D'ABBRO: Can I – it builds on a point I think Danny was saying earlier on about seeing education as broader than just being a school. And I would like to see, if we're doing some systemic work with children, is using more releasing on temporary licenses because that's a way I can see if I'm doing it, for want of a better word, a PSHE [Personal Social and Health Education] curriculum or a citizenship curriculum, and I want to see whether this child has done some reparation within the community, I can do it within the community of my school or my secure accommodation. I want to see if he can or she can do it within the community.

And I think if I've got a youngster for 77 days and as part of that programme I'm saying I want to help you access the cognitive behaviour therapy that's going to make you understand other people etc, etc, I want to test bed that and see whether there's a fighting chance when I get released I've actually got a chance of taking my place up with the community. That seems to me because you have got these youngsters for 77 days, you have got the opportunity to do that. So it's a broader understanding of education.

PAUL COOK: The reality is unless we're doing all the other things well in our facilities, that the care staff, the psychology and the YOT team are doing all those things well, Fiona's team

might have a fighting chance of getting those kids educated. So although the education might be an easy measure, as you say, because you can benchmark it, failing facilities don't ever get the child to the school because these children aren't emotionally engaged with school. So in some ways you are judging the whole centre because unless they are engaged by rewards, incentives, all the other things you're doing – your community payback –To get 80 – or whatever Trevor has got – kids to get up in the morning and go to school, walk to school as if they're going to school normally when they've not been to school last week is a great achievement. And that doesn't happen by chance.

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: But we're aware, as I said – I wasn't being flippant and I know Paul wasn't – I would take PBRs today. All of the things that you said we achieve and we strive. The fact that the PRU – didn't we get a full two-week Ofsted now once a year and how many education inspectors come, Paul? At least four, if not a bit more.

PAUL COOK: I had 11 the other week.

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: He always has to be one better.

[laughter]

PAUL COOK: No, no, I'm just saying!

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: In a way, you see, from my point of view it is about – and somebody said earlier on there's some great stuff happening. And there is. It's tangible. It's touchable. But the thing is actually how I get my kid functioning, as it is, inside the wall to function in the same way in the community. And at the moment, you see, I would say to you – there might be a phone call saying you're coming out hopefully and blah-blah-blah. But once they've gone, I turn round and look at the next child then and the one that's gone to you. And that's where I think the gap is. Unless I can stay with that kid for a bit to make sure the transition to you works a bit to work with you and your staff and then I can go back and do something else, that's where the gap, that's where the thing –

JONTY CLARK: This is the mindset challenge as well. And it's the challenge of inspection in schools. I'm quite happy, end of Year 11, there you go, 100 per cent. And the fact that by 12 October of them three-quarters of them might have come back saying: you know what? You're right. It's tough out there. It's useless. Then me challenging education staff and saying: what is the point of this? Is the point of this getting a grade one or whatever it is in Ofsted and we become a glorified social interruption, and the second they go out of that gate they're absolutely swamped. And that sustainability and how you put that in is the whole point of this.

EDWARD BOYD: If I was going to put up a straw man from what the last two conversations have led to it would be this: we could have an arrangement – possibly using a PBR model – whereby inside a secure college you were judged maybe purely on education. This would be based on the assumption that actually if they're successful in reaching above a certain benchmark in education, that actually reflects success in other areas because these other successes are necessary in order to get the educational success. There is a second part

of whether they're still in education or still in employment or training. This second part is important, I think, because it bridges effectively into what head teachers are doing in the community. What are people's thoughts on that straw man?

JONTY CLARK: I think it exists in clean money. And the Year 11s that we've had success with and older kids we've had success with that have been released, they need the continuing support, whether it's a key person or whether it's the school or what have you. But the make or break for them is maybe getting them on a school-based apprenticeship programme where you can still influence, monitor, mentor and look after that young person.

They've still got a base to go to when it goes right and when it goes wrong. But £4,500 of clean money in their pocket, I've got kids who can earn a lot more than that, and they will value that £4,500 like it's five times that amount. And if you can have a scheme that takes the children in that window from inside and maybe something supported where they can earn some decent money, that's when you keep hold of them for two or three years and that delayed maturation then begins to come in and then they start looking in the mirror and say I like this, I'm bored of the rubbish

FIONA WILLIAMS: It's that sense of worth that they have as well.

JONTY CLARK: Yes, absolutely.

FIONA WILLIAMS: It's that sense of worth.

JONTY CLARK: Yes, and it's not much money to hang on to some very troubled kids.

FIONA WILLIAMS: I think in terms of that sense of worth – and I am going to say about the reoffending rates for the years that I've been involved with education in custody now, again I'm a teacher and it's heartbreaking for me when a young man doesn't have to do much to reoffend. In other words, he just breaches. All he has to do is miss an appointment, and believe me that's by choice on many occasions because they know by breaching they'll come back in custody. And what we have to do is look them in the eye and say: you mustn't count on coming back because we don't know whether it will be. And I work with Hassockfield, with the head of education there. We don't know which school you'll go back to.

But I tell you, they'll take their chance because it's better to risk that breach and come back into custody, particularly with the Year 11s – finish a qualification, finish off a course that they were doing, particularly with the NVQs [National Vocational Qualifications] because there's no chance of getting into a college if you don't come out in September. So they will risk it to come back in, and with the commonality of curriculum across the three STCs, and I was saying to Trevor I met with his head of education and we had a good education focused meeting about what are you offering at Hassockfield because you're a different organisation because we're all about enabling these young people to have the same chances with exams. And that's soul destroying for them to choose to come back in.

EDWARD BOYD: John.

JOHN D'ABBRO: It's about curriculum – I was talking about this elsewhere last week – about the curriculum on offer because I think we need a two-pronged strategy here and I think it goes something like this that of course we want to build on the 30 per cent. And that's down the road.

EDWARD BOYD: 30 per cent that aren't reoffending?

JOHN D'ABBRO: Yes, and we want to build on that and make that – although that is significant given the starting point of those youngsters in their lives, but we want to build on that. But actually why don't we have a model that says – there is and there may be, so if I've got this wrong, bear with me – there is a curriculum that is bespoke specifically for the secure estate so that where you get a youngster where he or she may go from one provision to another provision, at least they can pick up what they were doing in the same way as we have a quasi national curriculum that works within PRUs slightly differently than what you have in mainstream but it builds on the basis of it so that at least if a youngster comes from our PRU and then goes to Seamus' PRU – we've had them do it – they can say: oh, actually I did that sort of learning at his place. He does decomposition so I can do decomposition in your place. And at least long term you might be affecting some youngsters who are going back in and coming out so that long term you can erode or rather you can build on the success so there is less chance of them coming back in because they're not always going back to base one again. They're building on their prior learning and saying, well –

SEAMUS OATES: Likewise the assessment goes with them so they don't keep being assessed, keep doing this again and again.

HELEN JUDGE: Can I pick on – something that you were just saying there, Fiona, prompted me to – it reminded me of what you were saying at the beginning about the incentives. So there is something here about incentives, carrots and sticks, and personal responsibility. And you do meet lots of young people in secure accommodation who don't really want to leave and who are scared about leaving and who –

FIONA WILLIAMS: Well, they don't always take early release, do they, Helen? They turn it down.

HELEN JUDGE: No. And who end up coming back. There are also quite a few people thinking about your thing of they get the education offer or they get something more prison-like, there are quite a few people who might argue that already exists to some extent in the distinction between STCs or SCHs [Secure Detention Home) and YOIs. No criticism of YOIs intended. It's just a different environment and there are some different characteristics sometimes of the kids who go there.

But I suppose I think that there is something here in thinking through what does the – how do you get the balance right in a way that encourages people to take personal responsibility in a way that means they choose to engage with the support. And I don't know what the answer to that set of stuff is, but somehow I think there is something in it to think about.

FIONA WILLIAMS: I don't know about the nice. I think they're totally aware that they're sacrificing their relationships with their families and people on the outside. But they've already – going back to your point – they've started to make choices about I could go back to this to gain what am I going to get that I need to take me forward against what I'm going to lose in terms of relationships outside.

PAUL COOK: I probably don't necessarily agree with that, really, because when I meet kids, in some ways some the best things you can do is engage with kids and some of the worst things you could do is engage with kids. So sometimes kids have some marvellous ideas, but sometimes where these kids come from they have some very draconian ideas. So if you say to them – I used to meet kids who were physically abused and I'd say: what do you think should happen? And they would be very punitive.

HELEN JUDGE: In a way that's it, though. That's part of the problem. I agree with you that you do hear kids say that. You hear them say it all the time. It's not challenging enough.

PAUL COOK: Yes, but that's because of where they've come from. And actually I say to them it's much more difficult for you with me because you have to make a choice. You've got to think for yourself. I'm not ordering you about and marching you about and doing all those things for you. You're not just going to get a good kicking. You've got to think through your behaviour and the impact of it and everything else. That's much more difficult – like you were saying – and that's the danger. When you look at how some of these kids have been socialised, if you're not careful we'll just repeat the same mistakes

DANNY KRUGER: What's it you're disputing there?

PAUL COOK: No, I'm just saying if it's harsher – nothing else. Part of it is trying to prepare these children to be better parents themselves, to be able to do things better, to be able to manage their own behaviour more, is not necessarily letting them take the easy options. What some people see as being soft, I see as preparing a child to take their place in society. There have got to be strong boundaries. But equally, they've got to take some level of responsibility

for their own behaviour, learn about the impact of their offending on the people they offend against. And sometimes actually it's not just about their victim. It's about the impact of their behaviour.

HELEN JUDGE: I think we are in agreement. And I'm not myself at all suggesting it should be harsher and certainly not in any way risk being brutalising. I just think there might be some questions to explore about the incentives and the choices and the personal responsibility and when you go round institutions you will meet some young people who say they don't get challenged enough.

DANNY KRUGER: They mean its unsafe for them?

HELEN JUDGE: No, no. Some of them will say it's unsafe. But some of them will also say it is just not challenging enough.

EDWARD BOYD: What do you think they mean by that? How would you characterise that?

HELEN JUDGE: It's just not really challenging enough for them.

JOHN D'ABBRO: Again, as outsider looking in. It seems to me – some of the youngsters I work with who get incarcerated or whatever the word you use is, they actually do need a bloody pull-up. They need a sharp, short shock in the old whatever that word meant, whereas some need a much more therapeutic long-term programme. The problem is it's a one size fits all. We don't have a bespoke package that says what you need is this and what you need is that. We say: well, we're going to have to treat you all the same.

And actually I don't know how you can do it but it's almost like some youngsters, you put them away or whatever the term is for two or three weeks, actually you're not going to make huge inroads into the trauma and the chaos of their life. But what they might actually need is something that says that's sharp enough to make sure that you don't want to come back again, which is a lot different from a youngster who says: actually it's safe in here. I get fed in here and I feel OK. And guess what? I want to come back in. I think that's a different –

EDWARD BOYD: From your psychology background, what are your reflections on that?

LIN HINNIGAN: I think one of the things – and we're actually doing a bit of work at the moment – to be done is looking at the different nature of the young people we've got in custody. Now it's shrunk down enormously so we do have a more complex and challenging group. But actually there are – it's a bit crude to say two groups but there are those who have got much more complex emotional needs, have been abused etc, etc and who need a more therapeutic environment, if you like.

There are some whose behaviour is challenging but who are actually less damaged and usually they've learned inappropriate behaviours because their socialisation has been inappropriate, but they are a different nature from those who've got really emotionally damaged – no, I wouldn't say it as clear as that, but there are those who haven't learned

appropriate behaviours because their socialisation hasn't been appropriate. They've been in families where criminal behaviour is expected or whatever. And they are a slightly different group.

And one of the things we're looking at is which are the particularly damaged children who do need a much more therapeutic type of environment. I mean you need to do some things the same. You still need to set boundaries etc. But I think there are different groups and we ought to be better at differentiating the regime. To some extent we do that by the different types of provision we've got.

> 'You're never going to force children to change. They've got to change because they want to change.'
>
> Trevor Wilson-Smith

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: Sure. I mean I would say – I don't disagree inherently with what anybody has said, but you're never going to force children to change. They've got to change because they want to change. And Willie Whitelaw tried it, didn't he, with the short, sharp shock. Well, that's where it came from, getting up at 6.00 and marching around and wearing uniforms and having your head shaved. And that quite patently didn't work.

The way that I know that – although Paul and I work for different organisations but we come at it in the very same way – it's about giving young people a choice. And they might choose your choice when they walk out of the front door. Or they might choose the choice that they had when they walked in through the door and that is to be antisocial, criminogenic, and not a nice person to live next door to. But that's fundamentally what the issues are about. No matter how you dress it up, it's about young people making a choice to change or seeing that there is another way to go. And if you do that well enough, it might plant that seed.

DANNY KRUGER: Yes, we do think that the system can help them with that. I always think there needs to be two stages to every sentence. The problem we've got with adult prisons and YOIs is that nobody knows what they're there for. Are they there to be punished, or are they there to be changed? And the prison officers are confused. The public is confused.

And I don't know if it's affordable, but there needs to be a punishment phase which suits the crime which is irrelevant about your social needs, your background and everything, but you did a certain crime and that attaches a certain – quite short, I hope – punishment phase to your sentence. And then there is a kind of re-socialisation phase which is about you the individual and your needs and which might be again if you're – if you just killed your wife you need a long punishment phase, and then there's not much rehabilitation necessary because you're not going to do it again.

[laughter]

DANNY KRUGER: But if you're a prolific shoplifter –

JOHN D'ABBRO: You might remarry.

DANNY KRUGER: You could, you could. But if you're a prolific shoplifter you have a short punishment phase and then probably a long re-entry phase.

JOHN D'ABBRO: And that's an individual solution.

DANNY KRUGER: Yes.

JOHN D'ABBRO: But I'm quite confident if you asked Jonty, me and Seamus we'd all say that the nature of the complexity of the children that we're getting now is far more extreme. 10 years ago I was just working with naughty kids who sometimes went to prison. Now I'm working with children with foetal alcohol syndrome, with different issues in vitro and all this sort of stuff, and I'm thinking actually one size doesn't fit all anymore. We've got to find different solutions.

EDWARD BOYD: We've only got few minutes left. There's one kind of practical question I'd love people to put their thoughts to. We've talked about connections with the community and the relation, how important that is. There is a practical thing, the last question about what would a secure college actually look like. For example you could have an existing establishment, like an academy or school and you attach some placements to the side of that that are secure? Is it that you set up a new establishment like a free school or something else? Is it something completely different? What are people's practical thoughts about if this is going to happen, what would the model look like? What would that look like in reality?

> 'We have slight reservations around mixing a group of young people who are at risk of offending with a group of young people who already have offended who are in a secure environment with some who are not.'
>
> Seamus Oates

SEAMUS OATES: Continuity of curriculum data, relationships would lend itself towards the concept of building upon very good alternative provision, very good PRUs, very good academies. Having thought about that and having discussed it with colleagues, we have slight reservations around mixing a group of young people who are at risk of offending with a group of young people who already have offended who are in a secure environment with some who are not. It would need a lot of thinking about. But there are some very positive arguments.

EDWARD BOYD: What other?

JOHN D'ABBRO: I've got multi-academy trust. I think it's the way to do it. And within that multi-academy trust you have colleges that would offer access courses. You would have some of these guys working out in the community. You have some of our people working out in the secure estate. And you broaden it by making it a multi-academy trust. But whatever you do, I really think you've got to have one model. I think if you keep fragmenting it, you'll end up having what we've always had, which is a fragmented system.

EDWARD BOYD: Jonty. You were nodding when John was talking there. Do you agree?

JONTY CLARK: I think those placements are absolutely critical, and reverse inclusion as well, getting people with different needs and different strengths that will help young people build on their existing strengths.

FIONA WILLIAMS: I think in terms of staffing as well it's incredibly important that the staff from the schools and the academies and alternative provisions have the opportunity to come in and work together. All the teachers are the same. They're all teachers. They're qualified teachers working with children providing a curriculum and examples. There is so much benefit that would be in the staff from outside in the schools coming in to work within the centres.

If you say what's the specialism, I guess, of all the STCs – and I mean all four, Trevor – I would say it's around our knowledge and expertise about supporting children with special needs, and about managing children with challenging behaviour, emotional, social behavioural difficulties. If I was asked to say on a member of my staff's CV when they move on to promotion in the next interview – what do you think enabled you? Well, I was able to convince the new head at the school, the academy or wherever of the skill set I've developed in working in secure estate. And I think there is a huge advantage for people to come in and work with those delivering Education in Secure settings.

And I think the link schools that we have – and he's not here today, but Mark Bennison who is the head teacher at the Hazeley Academy – it was in phase two, I think, when I was head at Milton Keynes. It's an academy school. We've got links in Kent at Greenacre – again at an academy. I think where there have been genuine partnerships. That's an all boys school where a young NQT [Newly Qualified Teacher] teacher came in because she said I've never experienced teaching girls. I was able to offer her that opportunity

EDWARD BOYD: We're going to draw to a close. This may be an impossible exercise but I'm going to attempt it nonetheless. In the next two minutes – I know some of you might have burning thoughts and ideas that this has provoked in you. Can we go around and literally in one, maybe two sentences at most say what is – if there is one burning thing – it might be nothing – that this conversation has provoked within you, what would it be? I'll start. I think for me this has impressed me with the importance of linking secure colleges as people exit with educational provision and making sure those places are available – seems to be the really key thing from this.

JOHN D'ABBRO: Can you go round that way?

EDWARD BOYD: Yes.

[laughter]

PAUL COOK: I think that's right. But I think what we've got to do is we've got to convince people that we have made a significant change to these young people's behaviour for them to be able to cope back into the mainstream school setting because the behaviour, unless we get a grip of that behaviour first, it doesn't matter what else we do. And these children are very difficult when we first have them because they've been so out of control. And if we don't get that right and get them in that state to learn, we won't make any progress to get them back successfully into the community.

EDWARD BOYD: Makes good sense. Helen, how about yourself?

HELEN JUDGE: From what I've heard I think there really is the makings of a model here from what people have been describing, and particularly I think in the links between secure provision and academies or some sort of academy type of thing. I don't want to be over prescriptive. So I would love it if people would help us to develop a little bit more in their responses to the consultation.

EDWARD BOYD: Fantastic.

JONATHAN CHILDS: I think the most interesting thing for me is this idea about the continuity of relationships and how you achieve that, and whether that's done through education in the community reaching into custody and then keeping in contact with those people when they leave or the custodial establishment reaching out. Or whether it's a combination of those two. But it will be interesting to see how people do that.

EDWARD BOYD: Danny, how about yourself?

DANNY KRUGER: Just incentivising the engagement by the young people themselves.

ALEX BURGHART: Continuity of relationships, as you said, John. And also keeping our eyes on what we're really hoping to achieve which is making sure that these young people go on to live stable, happy adult lives in employment independent of the secure system but being able to stand on their own two feet.

EDWARD BOYD: Fiona, how about yourself?

FIONA WILLIAMS: For me I think it's focusing on the young people, on the children themselves. And for me it's about the education provision before they come it – or the lack of it – the opportunities within custody, but most certainly working more closely with the pupil referral units, the alternative provisions, because usually that's where they go to. And I think that we could work more closely together to enable better opportunities for young people. They're the same young people and they get one chance of being a child in school.

EDWARD BOYD: Jonty?

JONTY CLARK: I think all the secure colleges' management boards and governing bodies should have a local head teacher or a college principal sitting upon them.

EDWARD BOYD: Trevor?

TREVOR WILSON-SMITH: It's fixing the gap between walking out the front gate at the end of the sentence or mid part of the sentence back into the community that's crucial.

> 'It's fixing the gap between walking out the front gate at the end of the sentence or mid part of the sentence back into the community that's crucial.'
>
> Trevor Wilson-Smith

EDWARD BOYD: John?

JOHN D'ABBRO: I think we're at a unique time, and I think it's about having someone – you'd build on the London Challenge model – someone who is – you've got a commissioner or champion and say all the things we've discussed, make it happen, and give that person the power to effect change, particularly around that window and say that when children do come out of custody, it's much clearer what's going to happen and it's not as nebulous as it is. And it's coherent and it happens rather than things we have at the moment.

EDWARD BOYD: Lin.

LIN HINNIGAN: I think for me it highlights – which I said at the beginning – that need, managing that transition and that co-ordination. Two additional things. One, it has to start before the child goes into custody so actually that continuity goes from before, through, and out of custody. And second, the role of YOTs in that because one of the things I've picked up here – and I know I've been in some good YOTs and I've seen some really good practice. What I'm seeing here – and I know you're largely London and some of our weaker YOTs are in London – perhaps there is more for us to look at in terms of the performance of YOTs in helping that transition.

SEAMUS OATES: I think for me the focus on the young person and ensuring that we personalise whatever it is we do for them. That's something that within education we've always attempted to do, trying to find a personalised offer. I think we need to move as far along the road as we can towards a personalised package of support around the young people that are coming in during and out of the secure environment.

EDWARD BOYD: And last but not least.

FRAN POLLARD: I've got three things.

EDWARD BOYD: In one sentence. That's impressive.

FRAN POLLARD: Yes. I'll try to do it in one sentence. I don't think we should throw baby out with the bathwater, need to recognise that there is brilliant educational work already going on in the secure estate. Two, whatever we do has got to be locally driven. Those young people are part of the communities in which they live, so we need to be doing things in their local communities. And the user driven bit, you mentioned it but we shouldn't just provide a service that's nine to five that suits the workers. We need to do what is needed for those young people based on a comprehensive assessment of their risk and need needs are.

EDWARD BOYD: Brilliant. I don't know about you but I found this a really useful conversation, a really interesting one. I feel like we could get some wine and be here for many hours and still have material to go through.

[laughter]

EDWARD BOYD: Which is not on the cards, but maybe next time. Maybe next time. Just to really – first point, just to really thank you for giving up some of your time for this. We all bought into this, it's such an important area, but it's still fantastic that you invested this time in contributing to this. As I mentioned at the beginning, to make sure that this doesn't just stay in this room as an interesting conversation that really hopefully affects this policy and hopefully helps the Ministry of Justice to develop this, we're going to develop this as a transcript and make sure that we put it in for the consultation response for the end of the month.

As a result of that, whilst we're getting it transcribed – which we'll have by Monday – the consultation finishes at the end of the month. Admittedly in a very short timescale if there are thoughts that you misspoke or there is something that you'd like to add, I will send it round on Monday morning but I will need it back or I will need your thoughts by the latest on close of play Wednesday. I realise this is a really tight turnaround, but to get this in for the consultation to be useful, just what we're working to.

And if you've got any further questions or feedback, I know Jeremy said he'd love for everyone to contribute their own thoughts. Equally if you've got further follow-up thoughts to this I'll be writing up a précis and putting some of our own Centre for Social Justice perspective on this conversation. We'd love you to feed into this, love it to be a collaborative effort that really moves this policy.

So once again, thank you for coming. And if you want to hang around and have a coffee and one of a multitude of sandwiches that seem to be left, please do so. But thank you for coming.

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