

CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSONS POLICING CHARTER 2025



YOUR TRUST



YOUR VOICE



YOUR FUTURE





Children & Young Persons Policing Charter 2025

The National Police Chiefs' Council - Children & Young Persons (CYP) portfolio is committed to improving how policing serves children and young persons. This Charter provides a structured set of nine pledges to help police forces deliver consistent, high-quality policing for children and young persons.

We understand that stages in life have different needs and distinguish Children as under 18 and Young Persons as between 18-24 years old.

Child Centred Policing is activity that treats Children as Children and is seen as legitimate¹ as it is lawful, effective and fairly applied in line with our values, the Code of Ethics² and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child³.

Every force will have the opportunity to complete a self-assessment to measure their delivery against the charter pledges to identify how to improve, identify good practice and deliver Child Centred Policing.

The NPCC CYP strategy⁴ sets a clear direction to fully embrace Child Centred Policing through three pillars of activity.



YOUR TRUST

Delivering excellent Child Centred Policing that protects and reduces harm to build trust and confidence.



YOUR VOICE

Ensuring the voices of children and young persons are heard throughout all of Policing.



YOUR FUTURE

Ensuring children and young persons fulfil their potential in life by preventing victimisation, diverting offenders and supporting careers.

YOUR TRUST

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PLEDGE 1

We will embed Child Centred Policing in our Force

Suggested considerations:

- Publish and promote the Child Centred Policing definition across all departments and digital spaces.
- Create a dedicated CYP SharePoint or intranet site for access to tools, guidance and case studies.
- Nominate a CYP single point of contact in each force and register them with the NPCC CYP Portfolio.
- Appoint a Children and Young Persons Officer (CYPO) to provide expertise to operational teams.
- Ensure relevant staff receive trauma-informed training which includes child development, communication, and rights.

PLEDGE 2

We will Improve training and practice with CYP victims and witnesses

Suggested considerations:

- Encourage professional curiosity through your force training and processes when dealing with CYP.
- Deliver training / guidance on capturing the 'Voice of the Child' in safeguarding referrals.
- Monitor the quality and consistency of referrals, consider asking partner agencies for feedback on referral quality.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the risk of making decisions based upon assumed levels of maturity and adultification bias.
- Review your achieving best evidence / video recorded interview suites and facilities to make them safe, comfortable, and accessible for CYP.

PLEDGE 3

We will deliver a Child Centred Custody experience

Suggested considerations:

- Consider introducing a mandatory legal advice scheme for all children, including voluntary interviews.
- Implement multi-agency child custody scrutiny panels to review the performance of all agencies and all aspects of a child's detention.
- Notify Children's Services whenever a looked-after child is detained.
- Use a best practice CYP custody checklist. This may include providing accessible rights documents, appropriate adult contact, assigning a named officer during their detention, etc.
- Provide appropriate distraction materials (e.g. books, art materials, tablets with educational apps) during detention in custody.
- Work with health partners to establish a pathway for accessing support for mental ill-health and neurodiversity for children in custody.

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PLEDGE 4

We will hear the voice of Children & Young Persons

Suggested considerations:

- Establish a representative CYP Independent Advisory Group and ensure it has input into strategy and practice.
- Involve young persons and, where appropriate, children in scrutiny panels.
- Conduct child focused surveys across mainstream, specialist and alternative provision settings (for reference YourPolice has a surveying functionality which forces can access to see what the local issues are which concern CYP).
- Use the communication platforms preferred by CYP (e.g., Snapchat, TikTok) to engage authentically.

PLEDGE 5

We will deliver meaningful CYP engagement

Suggested considerations:

- Partner with credible community programmes delivering positive activities to children and young persons such as sport, art and music (e.g. Premier League Kicks⁵ etc).
- Consider co-locating your dedicated Youth Justice Police Officer within local youth justice services.
- Consider the use of targeted interventions in high-need areas, co-designed with young persons.

PLEDGE 6

We will work with our partners to offer bespoke safety guidance for CYP with additional needs

Suggested considerations:

- YourPolice have an extensive content library which forces can access.
- Consider working with specialist SEND schools and colleges to provide tailored inputs and topics such as cyber and physical safety advice in the community.

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PLEDGE 7

We will provide meaningful opportunities for CYP to participate in making their communities safer

Suggested considerations:

- Consider Mini Police, Police Cadets, and Young Ambassadors programmes.
- Consider volunteer schemes and activities are open to under 18's.

PLEDGE 8

We will promote the use of diversionary activity

Suggested considerations:

- Ensure an accessible, visual referral process (e.g., flowcharts on internal sites and relevant physical spaces) and a clear eligibility criteria for your local diversion scheme.
- Review your Out of Court Resolution (OoCR) offering and if not in place, consider the use of Outcome 22 and a Deferred Prosecution Scheme.
- Develop a robust decision-making process and use the Child Gravity Matrix to inform all decision-making.
- Implement a Child First⁶ approach and be cautious about using approaches which are not proven to be effective⁷, such as knife crime education programmes and interventions using scare tactics.

PLEDGE 9

We will refer children and young persons to bespoke and effective support provision

Suggested considerations:

- YourPolice provides specific educational material and out-of-hours support / reporting services.
- Work with Youth Justice Services and other partners to connect children to evidence-based support, such as mentoring programmes, restorative justice and cognitive behavioural therapy.
- Consult the College of Policing's [Crime Reduction Toolkit](#) and the [Youth Endowment Fund's Toolkit](#) for evidence-based approaches to supporting CYP.

Final Note

The 2025 CYP Charter sets out a clear, practical approach to deliver Child Centred Policing with our partners by working with children and young persons in a way that's fair, lawful and effective.

By putting these pledges into everyday practice and showing how they make a real difference, we can build trust, keep young people safe and help them thrive.

For support, resources, and updates, visit the NPCC CYP Portfolio Hub or contact your regional SPOC.



Endnotes

- 1 Bottoms, A., & Tankebe, J. (2012). Beyond procedural justice: A dialogic approach to legitimacy in criminal justice. *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 102, 119-170. 9
- 2 https://assets.college.police.uk/s3fs-public/2021-02/code_of_ethics.pdf
- 3 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>
- 4 <https://www.npcc.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/publications/disclosure-logs/local-policing-coordination-committee/2024/children-and-young-persons-policing-strategy-2024.pdf>
- 5 <https://www.premierleague.com/en/footballandcommunity/morethanagame/community/premier-league-kicks>
- 6 [What is Child First? - Youth Justice Resource Hub](#)
- 7 [Youth Endowment Fund \(2025\) Diversion Practice Guidance](#)

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