



Sandwell Youth Justice Plan 2025/2026

A guide for children & young people



Introduction

Over the past year, Sandwell Youth Justice Service and partners have worked hard to help children who are in trouble or might be heading that way. This plan shows what we've done and what we'll do next.

We made this plan with help from young people and their families. We want to spot problems early and give support before things get worse.

We're also focusing on helping people who've been hurt by crime.

We keep checking how we're doing and always try to get better. We want every child to feel safe, included, and proud of where they live.

About Sandwell

Sandwell has over 340,000 people. Around 46,000 are aged 10 to 19.

People in Sandwell come from many different backgrounds. Nearly half are from Black, Asian, or other ethnic communities.

Some people in Sandwell haven't had the chance to get qualifications, but we're working to change that.



Our Vision

We want every child to feel safe, supported, and proud of where they live.

We work with the police and other teams to help young people stay out of trouble and have a bright future.



Who helps run the Youth Justice Service?

The Youth Justice Partnership Board is a special team of leaders who check on how the Youth Justice service helps young people in Sandwell.

- They make sure everything is working well and that children are safe.
- The Youth Justice Service is part of Sandwell Children's Trust.
- Their job is to help children stay out of trouble and do well in life.
- They always put children first in everything they do.

Working Together to Help Young People

Children's Services

Help from social workers and family teams.

Health Teams

Nurses, mental health workers, and speech therapists support young people.

DECCA Team

Helps with drug and alcohol problems.

Health Check Meetings

Every two weeks to make sure young people get the right help.

Schools & Education

Help kids stay in school or find work.

Police

Work with us to keep young people safe and out of trouble.

Probation

Support for young people moving to adult services.

Community Safety

Stop serious violence and protect young people.

Charities

Support victims and help young people feel heard.



Key priorities last year

Prevention and Diversion

We helped stop 127 children from getting into more trouble - only 3 reoffended!

Serious Youth Violence and Exploitation

We created new ways to spot danger early and help young people stay safe from harm.

Over Representation

We worked with the police and community to make sure all children are treated fairly, no matter their background.

Education, Training and Employment (ETE)

More young people aged 16+ are now in school, training, or work - we doubled the number from 25% to 50%!

What We Learned Last Year

We helped more children

308 interventions were given to 202 young people, which is more than last year.

More kids needed help again

Some children needed support more than once, showing we need to keep helping early.

Knife crime and violence are rising

Most young people came to us because of fighting or carrying weapons.

More decisions made outside of court

We used more out-of-court solutions to help children avoid going to court.

Fairness matters

We noticed more Black and Mixed heritage children in the system, so we're working to make things fairer for everyone.



Creative Ways We Help Young People

Music Projects

Young people write songs, record music, and share their stories through rap and video.

Work with Real Artists

They learn from rappers, filmmakers, and sound engineers who show them how to succeed.

Mentors and Support

Trusted adults help young people stay on track and feel proud of what they achieve.

Help in Hospitals

Special workers in hospitals and police stations support young people at risk of violence.

Family Therapy

Some young people and their families get special support to help them work through problems together.

Restorative Justice

We help young people understand how their actions affect others and how to make things right.

Virtual Reality (VR)

VR headsets help young people see the dangers of knife crime and gangs in a safe way.



How we help young people

Out of Court Resolutions

- Most young people who got help this way didn't get into trouble again (98% success).
- We're planning better ways to support and track young people after they finish.

Court

- We've made court easier to understand and more supportive for young people.
- We're working on better ways to help before and during court, especially for those with extra needs.

In the Community

We use something called the **ST*R** approach when we work with you and your family.

ST*R means we:

- **Look at your strengths** – the things you're good at and proud of.
- **Understand feelings and experiences** – especially if something tough has happened.
- **Build good relationships** – so you feel listened to and supported.



Secure Setting (Custody)

- Fewer young people were sent away this year, and we now have special support for girls.
- We're making sure custody is only used when absolutely necessary.

Transitions

- Only a few young people came out of custody, and they got support to settle back into the community
- We're ensuring that families will meet before release to make a plan that helps the child feel safe and supported



Priorities for next year

Prevention & Diversion

Why?

Helping children early before they get into serious trouble - keeps them safe, happy, and on the right path. It means giving support before things get worse, so they don't end up in the youth justice system.

Key Actions

Prevention Panels

Groups of adults work together to spot and help children who might be at risk of getting into trouble.

Support in Schools

A special worker is placed in a school for children who need extra help, to keep them safe and supported.

Tailored Help

Children and families get support that fits their needs—like help with school, family problems, or mental health.

Clear Pathways

Everyone knows what to do and who to go to when a child needs help.

Family Help Model

Services work together with families to solve problems early, before they grow.



Priorities for next year

Over Representation

Why?

Some children - especially Black and mixed heritage children are treated unfairly and end up in more trouble, even when others might not. That's not fair, and we're working hard to change it.

Key Actions

Better Training

Adults who work with children are learning how to understand racism and support all children fairly.

Using Data to Make Things Fairer

We're looking at the numbers to see where things are unfair and fixing them.

Listening to Young People

A new group is being set up so children can share their experiences and help make services better for everyone.



Priorities for next year

Serious Youth Violence & Exploitation

Why?

Some children are being hurt, used, or tricked into doing dangerous things like carrying weapons or drugs. We want to keep all children safe and stop this from happening.

Key Actions

Knife Crime and Violence Plans

Adults are working together to stop knife crime and make communities safer.

Helping Missing Children

A new system helps find and protect children who go missing and might be in danger.

Listening and Acting Early

We're spotting problems sooner—like bullying, gangs, or online threats—and stepping in to help.

Training for Adults

Staff are learning how to support children who've been through scary or harmful experiences.

Monthly Safety Meetings

Experts meet regularly to help children involved in violence get the right support and stay safe.



Priorities for next year

Education, Training & Employment

Why?

When young people are learning or working, they feel proud, stay busy, and are less likely to get into trouble. It helps them build a better future.

Key Actions

Helping Young People Find Jobs or Training

A special worker supports young people with job searches, interviews, and training.

Making Sure Everyone Gets Their Education Time

Schools are supported to give every child the right amount of learning each week.

Stopping School Exclusions

Adults work with schools to help children stay in school and feel safe.

Knife Crime Awareness in Schools

A programme teaches children about the dangers of knife crime and how to stay safe.

Mentoring for At-Risk Children

A trusted adult works in schools to support children who might be at risk of violence or exploitation.



Priorities for next year

Victims

Why?

When someone is hurt by a crime, they deserve to be listened to, helped, and treated with kindness. It also helps the person who caused harm to understand how their actions affected others.

Key Actions

Restorative Justice

A way for young people who've caused harm to learn from their mistakes and make things right.

Listening to Victims

Victims are asked how they feel and what support they need, so services can do better.

Working Together

Different organisations meet to make sure victims get help quickly and fairly.

Training for Staff

Adults are learning how to support victims in a kind and respectful way.

Final thoughts

We've done a lot this year to help children and families in Sandwell. By working together, listening to young people, and making smart changes, we're building a safer and fairer place for everyone. There's still more to do - but with your voice and our teamwork, we can keep making things better.



Get in touch

Your Voice Matters!

Use the QR code below to share your thoughts and help shape what happens next.



SCAN ME

sandwellhub.co.uk/contact

