



HM Prison &
Probation Service



His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
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Official

Andy Slaughter MP
Chair of Justice Select Committee

By email only

14 May 2026

Dear Chair,

**21 April 2026 Oral Hearing - Children and Young Adults in the
Secure Estate Inquiry**

Further to the oral evidence provided by Mark Scott, Governor of HMYOI Wetherby, Phil Wragg Director of Oakhill Secure Training Centre (STC) and Rachel Ashurst, Service Manager, Barton Moss Secure Children's Home (SCH) on 21 April 2026, I set out below details of further information the Committee requested.

Contact with family and friends

As noted by the Committee, the Prisons Inspectorate publish survey data on the percentage of children who do not receive at least one physical visit nor video contact within a week. At this stage, data for 2025-26 is not yet available and is expected to be published in the autumn.

Secure Children Homes placements

In the last 12 months since April 2025, YCS placement figures show SCHs and when open Oasis Restore Secure School (ORSS), declined the placement in 3% of all placements i.e. 26 children. Of these 12% went to a YOI, 50% to the STC and 38% to a different SCH. Overall SCHs accounted for 14% of all placements. These figures show that of the children initially declined placement in the first SCH/ORSS, the vast majority were then placed in a non-YOI setting.

Violence

In the session, whilst reference was made to the *number of incidents* at each site, I have provided graphs (see below Annex 1) that show the latest published figures for the *rate of incidents* of assaults and self-harm per 100 children January 2025 - December 2026. This is to provide context around the number of children cared for at each site which fluctuates rather than providing a simple figure of the number/volume of incidents.

The next update of the Safety in the Children and Young People Secure Estate publication for January - March 2026 will be later this summer. We will ensure a copy is sent to you when published.

Use of force by protected characteristics

Please see links [Safety in the Children and Young People Secure Estate: Update to December 2025 - GOV.UK](#) and [Safety in the Children and Young People Secure Estate Separation and Use of Force Tables: Update to March 2025](#) for the latest published data to March 2025. More recent data to March 2026 will be published in early autumn which again we will provide to you.

PAVA

The Committee will be aware that the use of PAVA is subject to a ministerial review later in the year.

Minimising and Managing Physical Restraint (MMPR) training

For March 2026, (the latest internal reporting figures available), the percentage of staff in date with MMPR training for Wetherby YOI is 84% and Oakhill STC is 86% (the shortfall is largely staff not currently at work for example due to annual leave or sickness). As noted at the hearing Barton Moss SCH does not follow the MMPR syllabus.

Outcome metrics

From the Youth Justice Statistics: 2024 to 2025, published 29 January 2026 for custody sentences for the year ending March 2024 the reoffending rate is 61.7%, a fall of 4.4 percentage points from the previous year.

Further clarification

Additionally, I hope it would assist to clarify a few other points noted at the hearing.

STCs first came into operation in 1998, not 1988 as mentioned, apologies for any confusion.

Release on temporary licence (ROTL) eligibility now includes those serving long sentences except for lifers. This is a recent change in policy to extend eligibility and provide for an individual risk assessment process that balances the benefits of ROTL with safety and safeguarding.

Based on our assurance processes I can confirm Oakhill STC consistently delivers 25 hours of education every week and that this is as required by the STC Rules.

Children placed in the children's secure estate are overrepresented in terms of mental health and neurodiversity needs compared with the wider cohort of children in England. Reference was made to children exhibiting signs of early onset schizophrenia and personality disorder, however serious mental illness of this nature is rare in children. Over the last two years, 3 children were transferred from custody to a hospital under the Mental Health Act 1983. Children with histories of chronic adversity and disrupted attachment are often conceptualised primarily through diagnoses or behavioural presentations. However, many of the difficulties observed are better understood as the developmental impact of chronic stress, unsafe relationships, and missed relational experiences, rather than discrete mental disorders. YCS works closely with the specialist healthcare co-commissioner NHS England and their commissioned providers.

The Independent Restraint Review Panel was established to provide an independent review of pain-inducing techniques in the youth secure estate. The panel consists of members who are independent of the YCS: the Chair, a senior independent medical advisor, a local authority children's services representative and those who work directly for the organisation. It is not made up of solely YCS employees.

I hope you and the Committee find this additional information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



ALISON CLARKE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, YOUTH CUSTODY SERVICE

Annex 1: Rates of assault incidents and self-harm incidents

