



ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR
CHILDREN

Building Trust: One year on
Progress in improving relationships
between children and the police

Follow on report of the inquiry held by the
All Party Parliamentary Group for Children 2013-2014

About the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGC) is a group of MPs and Peers with an interest in children's issues and securing effective policies for children. The APPGC holds regular meetings on current issues affecting children and young people, and works strategically to raise the profile of children's needs and concerns in Parliament. As well as inviting representatives of child-focused voluntary and statutory organisations and government departments to attend meetings, the APPGC hears directly from children and young people to take their views into consideration.

All Party Parliamentary Group for Children mission statement:

'To raise greater awareness in the Houses of Parliament on aspects of the well-being of the nation's children aged 0-18 years, and our obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; and to work with children, young people, children's organisations, and politicians from all sides to promote first-class government policy for children'.

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Foreword

During 2013-14, the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children held an inquiry which explored children and young people's relationship with the police. We are delighted to share this new report which reflects on progress made towards fulfilling the APPGC's recommendations and identifies remaining challenges for government and the police.

First contact with the police is important in shaping children and young people's attitudes. During the inquiry, the APPGC heard from young people who spoke about the positive impact of developing good relationships with police officers – through community projects, in schools and with Volunteer Police Cadets. However, effective practice was not widespread, and for a significant number of young people their negative experiences of engaging with the police were leading them to distrust the police.

Significant progress has been made towards improving the quality of police practice, ensuring that children are treated first and foremost as children, with their safety and welfare at the forefront of officers' minds. For instance, 17-year-olds will now be treated as children when in police custody, and legislation will soon be introduced so that no child or young person can be held there under the Mental Health Act 1983.

Early intervention is central to the police's role in protecting children and young people. The inquiry sought to ensure that police officers are well-equipped to identify vulnerability and respond to the safeguarding needs of children and young people. We are disappointed that community policing initiatives, such as the Safer Schools Partnership, which can identify vulnerable children who are at risk and refer them to support services, have felt the brunt of policing budget cuts. There is also a need for further reforms to the management of children and young people brought into the police process to reduce the criminalisation of young people and ensure their welfare.

We welcome the new National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People, led by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) which will provide a new vision for child-centred policing and help embed best practice across the country. We have greatly appreciated the commitment of NPCC, government departments and policing bodies in seeking opportunities in taking forward inquiry recommendations. The Ministry of Justice Review into youth justice, led by Charlie Taylor, is also welcome, and we hope that this review, and the new NPCC strategy, together provide the impetus needed for further reform.

On behalf of the Officers of the APPGC, we would once again like to thank all those who contributed to the inquiry – for their generous time, honest contributions, and specialist advice.



Tim Loughton MP
Co-Chair
All Party Parliamentary Group for Children



Baroness Massey of Darwen
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Executive Summary

Since the publication of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Children's final inquiry report – *It's All About Trust: building good relationships between children and the police* – in October 2014, significant progress has been made towards strengthening the policy and legislative framework that governs police forces' work with children and young people. These measures, which are being supported by a new *National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People*¹, are underpinning the development of a more child-centred approach to policing. However, more still needs to be done to ensure that every person under the age of 18 is treated as a child first and foremost during all interactions with the police, and to reduce the unnecessary prosecution of children and young people.

Progress since the APPGC's inquiry report

The new *National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People*, published by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and launched in July 2015, mirrors the key priorities of the APPGC inquiry, focusing on: stop and search; children in care; detention in police custody; and the relationship between children and the police. This will underpin the work of the NPCC to reform policing practice for the benefit of children and young people. The review of the youth justice system², reporting in summer 2016 and led by Charlie Taylor for the Ministry of Justice, should provide an opportunity for further analysis and reform of the work of the police with vulnerable children.

The inquiry sought substantial changes to the legislative framework that governs police practice, to ensure that all children and young people under the age of 18 have their rights promoted and needs met in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Inquiry recommendations that have been implemented include:

- Legislation and guidance have been revised to ensure that 17-year-olds are treated as children when held in police custody, and government has committed to address the remaining anomalies in the treatment of 17-year-olds through the forthcoming Policing and Criminal Justice Bill.
- Statutory guidance on stop and search has been revised to make explicit that police officers must have regard to their duty to promote the welfare and safety of children and young people when conducting stop and search.
- The Home Office has committed to introducing legislation to ensure that children and young people can never be held in police custody under the Mental Health Act 1983³.

Stop and search was a key focus of the APPGC's interim inquiry report '*Initial analysis of police force data*' (July 2014), which identified gaps in the quality of stop and search

¹ National Police Chiefs' Council (2015) *National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People* http://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/edhr/2015/CYP%20Strategy%202015_2017_August%202015.pdf

² Ministry of Justice, 11 September 2015, Announcement of a review into youth justice. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/youth-justice>

³ Home Office & Department of Health (2015) *Review of the Operation of Sections 135 and 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983* https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389202/S135_and_S136_of_the_Mental_Health_Act_-_full_outcome.pdf

data recording in England and Wales.^{4 5} Measures are being put in place by police forces in England and Wales to improve the quality and consistency of data collection and reporting, and data is available on the stop and search of children and young people via local Stop and Search maps. In addition, the College of Policing, Home Office and NPCC is currently developing a common data standard on stop and search which will require police officers to record a visual estimation of age if date of birth is unknown, and much work is underway to strengthen training on carrying out stop and search on children. **The APPGC recommends that statutory guidance on stop and search (PACE Code A) is aligned with the new data standard to ensure that accurate data is available on the number of children and young people who are stopped and searched. The APPGC also recommends that forthcoming revised College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice on stop and search include specific guidelines on children and young people.**

During the inquiry, many organisations presented examples of programmes and interventions that build positive relationships between children and the police, but there was also evidence of a gap in the effective sharing of practice examples across the country and in training for police officers on understanding children's behaviour and identifying vulnerabilities. Policing and criminal justice bodies have now been working to incorporate exemplars into training materials, are reviewing training on issues such as stop and search, care of children and child protection, and are developing a knowledge hub for professionals. **The APPGC recommends that the NPCC, in partnership with the College of Policing, explore the potential for expanding the role of existing 'what works' centres and resource banks to include the evaluation and validation of practice examples. The College of Policing should consult with existing children and young people's advisory groups to ensure that the participation of young people further informs the development of the policing curriculum and professional development.**

Further action is needed

The inquiry heard that some groups of children and young people are at particular risk of being brought into the youth justice system, with children in care being a prime example. Currently, in many areas, police are often called to deal with incidents in children's homes and these incidents must be formally recorded, as stipulated by the National Crime Recording Standards and Home Office Counting Rules. As a result, formal action can be taken for minor incidents which would ordinarily be dealt with by parents in a family home, leaving children in care with a criminal record unnecessarily. **The APPGC repeats its recommendations that the Home Office endorse the adoption of a national protocol to reduce the prosecution of children in care, and bring National Crime Recording Standards and Home Office Counting Rules for children's homes in line with those for schools. In addition, the review of residential care, led by Sir Martin Narey, should consider the management of incidents in children's homes and make recommendations for improving arrangements so that police are not called unnecessarily.**

⁴ All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (2014) *Initial analysis of police force data* http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/1150494/appgc_police_data_report_july_2014_final.pdf

⁵ For instance, large number of 'age 0' stop and searches were recorded in Hampshire and Sussex when date of birth was recorded as unknown.

Since the publication of the APPGC's inquiry report, further evidence has come to the attention of the Group, which shows that the drive for crime recording integrity is needlessly drawing other children and young people into the criminal justice system, impacting on their long-term welfare and future career opportunities. **The APPGC recommends that the Home Office review Home Office Counting Rules and develop a new outcome, which allows police forces to record low-level crime-related behaviour in a way that would allow for the child's behaviour to be addressed by a welfare agency without forming part of a young person's criminal record or being disclosed within an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.**

The inquiry found that children and young people are not being transferred from police custody to local authority accommodation post-charge if bail had been refused, a legal requirement under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. This means that many young people in police cells overnight with implications for their welfare. The Home Office has now convened a working group to bring together agencies with responsibility for transfer arrangements in order to identify and address the challenges underlying the inability of some police forces and local authorities to fulfil their legal obligations. A concordat agreement setting out key actions for government and partner agencies is expected to be published in early 2016. **The APPGC urges the Home Office to ensure that the concordat is published as soon as possible and to review its impact on numbers of children held in police custody overnight, after one year. In addition, the APPGC recommends that the Home Office require all police forces to provide regular data returns on children held in custody and transferred, and extend the duty to transfer to children charged for breach of bail.**

Witnesses to the APPGC inquiry identified the long-term benefits for children and young people of developing positive relationships with the police in the local community. The APPGC has been disappointed to see that police forces are cutting back on school-based police officers due to reduced budgets and a lack of clear policy steer from the Home Office on the Safer Schools Partnership. Police engagement within the school can provide a supportive environment within which to tackle serious issues facing vulnerable children and young people, such as maltreatment, abuse and child sexual exploitation – all of which are high on the government's agenda. **The APPGC recommends that the Home Office and NPCC should work together to develop a sustainable Safer Schools Partnership programme, which recognises the value of this work in building positive relationships between children and the police.**

The Ministry of Justice review of the youth justice system, led by Charlie Taylor, will place a welcome focus on a number of the issues highlighted in this report. **The APPGC urges the Ministry of Justice, through this review, to consider in particular the recommendations relating to: reducing the unnecessary criminalisation of young people, and particularly looked after children; investment in the Safer Schools Partnership programme; and preventing children being held in police custody overnight.**

Introduction

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (APPGC) launched an inquiry on 'Children and the Police' in July 2013, which sought to explore the following questions:

- What do children and young people think about the police? What are the experiences of particular vulnerable groups of children who have higher levels of contact with police forces?
- How do police forces currently work and engage with children and young people?
- Does police practice, and the policy and legislative framework underpinning the work of the police, need to be improved to promote children and young people's well-being?

The inquiry heard evidence from children and young people, organisations working with children and young people, and representatives from police forces across the country.

The inquiry found that:

- There was a lack of trust in the police among many children and young people. Some children and young people feared the police, and encounters between the two groups were often characterised by poor and unconstructive communication and a lack of mutual respect.
- Certain groups of children and young people - children in care, children with special educational needs (SEN) or a language or communication difficulty, children who have been trafficked, and children who have experienced abuse – did not always get the support they needed.
- A significant number of children's first encounters with the police were negative experiences.
- Children and young people felt they were stopped and searched too often and for insufficient reasons, that the process and reason for the stop and search were not explained well enough to them and that they were not treated with respect.
- Some children and young people were positively engaged in police initiatives through their schools and communities, such as Safer School Partnerships or Voluntary Police Cadets, helping to build more positive relationships between them and their local police force.
- Children and young people who had been refused bail were frequently not being transferred to local authority accommodation post charge.
- There were examples of police forces working hard to listen to and engage with children and young people and to treat them, first and foremost, as children in all aspects of the police process. However, these positive approaches were not reflected across the whole country.
- The policy and legislative framework governing the work of the police did not pay sufficient attention to the needs of children and young people or address the specific considerations of working with this age group.

This report revisits this topic one year after the publication of the inquiry's final report "*It's All About Trust*": *Building good relationships between children and the police* published

in October 2014.⁶ Each section of the report outlines the findings of the inquiry and what the recommendations sought to achieve, followed by a summary of progress that has been made and the gaps or challenges that remain. The report focuses on four key areas: reducing the prosecution of children; the detention of young people in police custody; stop and search; and the promotion of good practice.

The report concludes with a summary of the next steps that relevant parties need to take to fully achieve the vision of a more child-centred approach to policing and ensure that all police forces and officers respect children's rights, have regard to their well-being and welfare, and treat children as children first.

⁶ All Party Parliamentary Group for Children (2014) *"It's All About Trust": Building good relationships between children and the police*
http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/1164355/appgc_children_and_police_report_-_final.pdf

Reducing the prosecution of children and young people

Summary

What we recommended

The inquiry heard that vulnerable children and young people are facing the negative consequences of police force compliance with National Crime Recording Standards. Those growing up in children's homes are particularly vulnerable to being criminalised unnecessarily, with Home Office regulations stipulating that police call-outs to residential children's homes must be dealt with and recorded as a crime, even if a similar situation would be treated as a private matter within a school environment or family home.

Since the publication of the inquiry report, police forces have raised concerns about the management of low-level crime-related behaviour, such as sexting between peers. Forces have said that, if they are to comply with crime recording standards, they have limited options so use out-of-court disposals in such incidents, even if they do not think this is the most appropriate response. This disposal then remains on a young person's record and may be disclosed as part of an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, limiting their future educational and career options.

The inquiry made recommendations which sought to reduce the criminalisation of children in care, including: bringing crime recording procedures for children's homes in line with schools; and developing a national protocol signed by all police forces and local authorities to reduce prosecution rates for children in care.

Progress

- The NPCC is working with police force regions to put in place protocols to reduce the prosecution of children in care, based on the protocol being used in the South East.
- Independent reviews of the youth justice system (Ministry of Justice) and residential care (Department for Education) provide an opportunity to reduce the criminalisation of children and young people, and of those living in children's homes particularly.

Remaining challenges

- Vulnerable children and young people – including children in residential children's homes – continue to face the negative consequences of police force compliance with National Crime Recording Standards, with implications for their future educational and career options.
- Many police forces continue to operate without a protocol to reduce the prosecution of children in care.

Concerns about the impact of National Crime Recording Standards

Police, head teachers and other professionals have raised concerns that children and young people are being issued with out-of-court disposals simply for exhibiting behaviours associated with growing up or 'experimental' behaviour, such as sexting. Such disposals will be placed on the young person's record and may be disclosed as part of an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, therefore criminalising the young person and potentially limiting their future educational and career options. A recent example of this involved a 14-year-old who was added to the local police

database for sexting with a peer⁷. Within current crime recording standards, there is an expectation that every crime will have an outcome, as defined in the Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime⁸. There are concerns that these standards mean that police officers are only able to record the incident as having 'no further action' or to record an outcome that results in the young person having a long-term criminal record or being placed inappropriately on a crime database. What is more, there is no outcome which recognises a police force's decision to refer the young person to another agency for support and intervention.

The APPGC has been informed that one police force is developing a new approach to dealing with sexting. In all cases, the Safeguarding Referral Unit carries out an initial risk assessment and investigation to rule out coercion, blackmail, age difference or adult involvement. Once the force is satisfied the behaviour is 'experimental' and not 'aggravated' (where an adult is involved or where there is intent to harm or images are taken without consent), the case is referred to the Safer Schools Team to provide education and support.

The APPGC recommends that the Home Office review their Counting Rules and develop a new outcome, which allows police forces to record low-level crime-related behaviour in a way that would allow for the child's behaviour to be addressed by a welfare agency but without the incident forming part of a young person's criminal record or being disclosed within an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. This could be a new recording category of 'referral for other agency support and intervention'.

Children in care are up to three times more likely to be cautioned or convicted of an offence than other groups of children, and one in three young people in the youth justice system has been looked after. Children living in residential children's homes are particularly affected by compliance with recording standards. The APPGC inquiry heard that the police are being called to deal with incidents in residential care settings that would ordinarily be managed privately in schools or private homes, and having to deal with these through formal police processes, thereby drawing young people into the youth justice system unnecessarily. For example, the APPGC has learned that, last year, the 47 children's homes in one police force area generated 3,500 calls to the police.

Last year, the APPGC called for the National Crime Recording Standards and Home Office Counting Rules to be revised so that the approach for dealing with incidents in residential children's homes could be brought in line with the approach taken in schools. It was also recommended that, like head teachers, children's homes managers and staff are supported to work to a framework setting out whether or not an incident should be reported to the police depending upon its nature and severity. In response, the Home Office expressed concerns about residential children's homes not having sufficiently consistent and robust procedures in place for appropriately managing incidents involving children and young people residing there.

⁷ Daily Mail, 3 September 2015 <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3220682/Pupil-14-police-database-sending-naked-picture-girl-shared-school.html>

⁸ Home Office (2015) *Home Office Counting Rules for Recording Crime*, effective from April 2015 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/452294/count-general-august-2015.pdf

New quality standards for residential children's homes, published by the Department for Education in March 2015, now provide a framework for strengthening behaviour management and recording procedures. The APPGC believes that the Home Office should therefore revisit this issue, and the review into residential children's homes, to be led by Sir Martin Narey, provides an opportunity for doing so.

The APPGC recommends that the Home Office review National Crime Recording Standards and Home Office Counting Rules in light of new Quality Standards for Residential Children's Homes, and reconsider its position on applying a similar approach to incidents in children's homes as that provided for schools.

The review of residential care, led by Sir Martin Narey, should consider the management of incidents in children's homes and make recommendations for improving arrangements so that children are not criminalised unnecessarily.

Move to establish more regional protocols to reduce the prosecution of children in care, but no national approach

The National Police Chiefs' Council is supporting police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to develop regional protocols in order to reduce the prosecution of children in care. A template, based on the protocol established by police forces and local authorities in the South East, is in development and will be made available to police force leaders by the end of 2015. The APPGC welcomes the support of the NPCC in developing this protocol but remains concerned that the lack of a national protocol will mean that, in some parts of the country, children in care will continue to be drawn into the criminal justice system unnecessarily.

The APPGC recommends that the Home Office endorse the adoption of a national protocol to ensure consistent efforts across the country to reduce the prosecution of children in care.

Review into the youth justice system

In September 2015, the Justice Secretary announced the launch of a review of the youth justice system, led by Charlie Taylor, which will report in summer 2016. The review's terms of reference⁹ specify that there will be a focus on the role of the police in preventing offending by children and young people, the police's response to crime, including the use of out-of-court disposals, and the detention of children in police custody. Lord Laming is also leading an independent review into why a higher proportion of children in care enter the criminal justice system than their peers, which will also report in 2016. The APPGC welcomes the focus this review will place on reducing the criminalisation of children and young people and other issues highlighted in this report.

The APPGC urges the Ministry of Justice, through this review, to consider the recommendations in this report relating to: reducing the unnecessary criminalisation of young people, and particularly looked after children; investment in the Safer Schools Partnership programme; and preventing children being held in police custody.

⁹ Ministry of Justice (2015) *Review of the Youth Justice System: Terms of Reference*. [http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2015-0736/2015-09-10 -
Final TORs for youth justice review.pdf](http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2015-0736/2015-09-10-_Final_TORs_for_youth_justice_review.pdf)

Detention of young people in police custody

Summary

What we recommended

The inquiry heard that custody is not an appropriate place for children and young people to be detained: facilities are noisy, scary and intimidating, and children are often not sufficiently well supported or represented. At the time of the inquiry, 17-year-olds were being treated as adults in police custody and did not therefore have the same rights and entitlements as younger children, with regard to, for instance, access to an appropriate adult during interviewing. The inquiry also heard that children and young people were frequently being held overnight in police custody post-charge, therefore not being transferred to local authority accommodation as required by law. The closure of child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) had led to police forces' increasingly holding children and young people in detention for child protection reasons.

The inquiry report included a group of recommendations to ensure that custody practices were aligned with the promotion of children's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and for children and young people to not be detained in custody any longer than necessary. This included: treating 17-year-olds in police custody as children; improving the process for transferring children to local authority accommodation post-charge; and ensuring all newly built police custody facilities had a separate custody area for children and young people.

Progress

- The Home Office is developing an improved framework for new custody facilities which will emphasise requirements for children and young people to be held separately from adults.
- The definition of juvenile has been amended in law to include 17-years-olds, affording them most of the same rights when in custody as younger children, and there is a commitment from government to address the remaining anomalies in the forthcoming Policing and Criminal Justice Bill.
- Government has committed to developing a national concordat which will provide a 'key principles' agreement between all agencies who are involved in the transfer of children and young people from police custody to local authority accommodation.
- Government has committed to end the detention of children and young people under the Mental Health Act 1983.

Remaining challenges

- Data on the number of children held in custody overnight and the numbers transferred to local authority accommodation is not systematically gathered and analysed by government, and arrangements for monitoring the impact of the concordat when it is published have not been clarified.
- The duty to transfer children from police custody to local authority accommodation does not apply to children charged with breach of bail.

Improved framework for the development of custody facilities for children and young people

The APPGC called for revisions to new-build custody guidance so that it better promotes children's well-being during their time in police custody. The Home Office has confirmed that it is revising new-build custody guidance, which will emphasise requirements for children and young people to be held separately from adults. The new guidance will be ready for consultation before the end of the year. In July 2015, the College of Policing published new Authorised Police Practice on Police Custody, which referred explicitly to the inquiry's recommendation saying that it is best practice for all newly built police custody facilities to include a separate custody area for children and young people.

Transfer of children and young people to local authority accommodation post-charge

Police forces and local authorities have a statutory duty under section 38(6) of Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) to ensure that where a child or young person is to be detained post charge, they are transferred to local authority accommodation. However, evidence from the inquiry suggested that the majority of children and young people who could be transferred post-charge were not. Reasons given for transfers not taking place included: a lack of local authority accommodation in the local area; confusion about whether a secure bed was necessary or not; poor communication between the police force and local authority; and the duty not applying to 17-year-olds in custody before October 2015. In March 2015, the Criminal Justice and Courts Act (section 42) amended the definition of juvenile to include 17-year-olds. As a result, since October 2015, police forces have been required to transfer 17-year-olds to local authority accommodation.

A joint letter¹⁰ from the Home Secretary and Education Secretary was sent to Directors of Children's Services reminding them of their existing and extended duties. In addition, the Home Office set up a strategy group to map and address barriers in transferring children and young people to local authority accommodation and extending provision to 17-year-olds. A key outcome of this work will be the development of a national concordat, due for publication in early 2016, similar in format to the Department of Health's Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat¹¹. It will provide a national 'key principles' agreement between all agencies who are involved in the transfer of children and young people from police custody to local authority accommodation. In addition, measures will be taken to ensure that police forces can recover reasonable expenses under section 21 of the Children Act 1989 in instances where transfers to local authority accommodation do not take place, as an incentive for improving arrangements.

There continues to be no requirement for all forces to provide the Home Office with data on the number of children held in custody overnight and the number transferred to local authority accommodation, making it difficult to monitor accurately – locally or nationally – the degree to which legal obligations are being met.

¹⁰ Home Office and Department of Education (2015) *Letter on the transfer of children from police custody to local authority accommodation under section 38(6) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401178/Joint_letter_from_the_Home_Secretary_the_Education_Secretary.pdf

¹¹ HM Government (2014) *Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat: improving outcomes for people experiencing mental health crisis* http://www.crisiscareconcordat.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/36353_Mental_Health_Crisis_accessible.pdf

The APPGC recommends that:

- **the Home Office publish the concordat to improve the implementation of section 38(6) of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act as soon as possible and promotes it widely among all relevant stakeholders. The Home Office should review the impact of the concordat on numbers of children held in police custody after one year.**
- **the NPCC and College of Policing provide guidance for custody officers on making greater use of bail conditions post-charge in order to reduce the number of children and young people being held in custody or needing to be transferred to local authority accommodation.**
- **the Home Office require all police forces and local authorities to provide regular data returns specifying the number of children and young people under the age of 18 who are detained post-charge that are not transferred to the care of the local authority. In addition, it should clarify local and national arrangements for monitoring the implementation of this duty.**

Neither PACE, nor the Bail Act 1976, make provisions for the transfer to local authority accommodation of children and young people who have been arrested for breaching bail conditions. As a result, PACE Code C – statutory guidance for police custody officers – does not set out procedures for transferring children and young people who have breached bail to local authority accommodation. The APPGC has been advised that if a custody officer makes the decision to transfer a child who has breached bail to local authority accommodation, they will be operating outside the legislative framework and therefore culpable if a child absconds from the local authority accommodation.

The APPGC recommends that the duty to transfer children who are to be detained overnight into local authority accommodation be extended to children charged for breach of bail.

Treatment of 17-year-olds in custody

As stated above, the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 amended the definition of juvenile, and changes were made to PACE Code of Practice C¹², affording 17-year-olds most of the same rights as younger children when being held in police custody. In addition, in the most recent Queen's Speech¹³, the government committed to using the forthcoming Policing and Criminal Justice Bill to address the remaining anomalies. This will ensure that for 17-year-olds: an appropriate adult is present for drug sample taking; appropriate consent is granted by both the child and parent/legal guardian for a range of interventions, including intimate searches; and the police can impose conditional bail to ensure the welfare and interests of the child.

¹² Home Office (2014) *Revised Code of Practice for the Detention, Treatment and Questioning of Persons by Police Officers*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364707/PaceCodeC2014.pdf

¹³ Cabinet Office/Prime Minister's Office (2015) *Policy paper: Queen's Speech 2015: what it means for you* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/queens-speech-2015-what-it-means-for-you/queens-speech-2015-what-it-means-for-you#policing-and-criminal-justice-bill>

The Home Office has revised legislation (Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984) and guidance (PACE Code of Practice C¹⁴) to ensure that 17-year-olds are treated as children when held in police custody

Ending the detention of children and young people under the Mental Health Act

Whilst some forces, for instance the Metropolitan Police, no longer use police custody as a place of safety for children and young people experiencing mental health crises, others continue to use this provision as a last resort, due to a shortage of acute adolescent mental health services and accommodation for young people in the local area. Home Office statistics show that, between January and December 2014, 145 children and young people under the age of 18 were detained by the police under the Mental Health Act 1983; this represents a 40% decrease from the previous year.¹⁵

This autumn, the government will introduce legislation in the Policing and Criminal Justice Bill to prevent children and young people from being held in police custody under the Mental Health Act. The Department of Health is working with the Home Office to determine alternative places of safety and better access to mental health provision. Whilst the APPGC welcomes this progress, it is critical for the focus to now be placed on extending access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and on the provision of support to young people *before* they reach crisis point. Under the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat, and following the publication of *Future in Mind*, welcome action has begun.^{16 17} The Home Office has committed to providing more places of safety for children detained under the Mental Health Act and clinical commissioning groups are considering whether additional or new services should be put in place to avoid the use of the Act for children, as part of their local mental health and well-being transformation plans.

Improved access to age-appropriate liaison and diversion in police custody

In 2008, a national pilot programme of liaison and diversion schemes was launched to identify the mental health, learning and communication needs of children and young people at the point of entry to the youth justice system, and to provide them with access to high quality and consistent support services. This process frequently took place in police custody following arrest. In 2014, the Department of Health announced that all-age liaison and diversion schemes would supersede this programme. The Youth Justice Board has undertaken a review of 10 pilot sites to measure the quality and nature of the engagement of youth justice services with liaison and diversion services, and to help quantify and mitigate any risks that might arise as a result of including children and young people within an all-age model. NHS England will shortly publish a resource for

¹⁴ Home Office (2014) *Revised Code of Practice for the Detention, Treatment and Questioning of Persons by Police Officers*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364707/PaceCodeC2014.pdf

¹⁵ House of Lords written question (HL2033), 16 September 2015

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2015-09-07/HL2033>

¹⁶ HM Government (2014) *Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat: improving outcomes for people experiencing mental health crisis* http://www.crisiscareconcordat.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/36353_Mental_Health_Crisis_accessible.pdf

¹⁷ Department of Health (2015) *Promoting, Protecting and Improving our Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing*

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414024/Childrens_Mental_Health.pdf

existing and future liaison and diversion providers to improve their practice and ensure that effective children and young people's services are delivered.

Training and practice of custody officers, solicitors and legal practitioners

As children under the age of 13 are the least likely to request a solicitor, the APPGC concluded that more needed to be done to ensure that children and young people are aware of the consequences of declining legal representation. As this responsibility sits primarily with the custody officer, the APPGC recommended that training for such officers should cover legal representation for children and young people. This recommendation has been taken forward by the College of Policing, which has introduced new Authorised Professional Practice (APP) on police custody. This APP states that the training of custody officers should cover ensuring that children and young people and their appropriate adult fully comprehend the possible benefits and importance of seeking legal advice. Focus must now be turned to seeking ways of ensuring that this APP is covered in training days, given its status as a reference source, rather than required reading, for police officers.

Similarly, the inquiry heard that children and young people were frequently experiencing difficulties in acquiring legal representation from solicitors who had been trained to work with their age group, as there is no requirement for solicitors and other legal practitioners to have undertaken specialist training to work within the youth justice system. As a result, the APPGC called for the development of an accredited training course in youth communication and practice for solicitors and legal practitioners in order to improve children's entitlement to high quality and appropriate legal representation in police custody.

In November, the Bar Standards Board and CILEx Regulation published the findings of a review of advocacy in youth proceedings, which was produced by the Institute for Criminal Policy Research at Birkbeck, University of London. The review, which considered the quality of advocacy in youth proceedings and the core components of effective advocacy concluded that the work of advocates in youth proceedings cannot be viewed in isolation from its wider legal, institutional and cultural context. The report set a range of recommendations to promote more effective advocacy, including: introducing specialist training and accreditation for advocates working in youth proceedings; improving systems and structures of youth proceedings to support better advocacy; and providing court-based facilitators of advocacy.

The APPGC recommends that the Ministry of Justice's review into the youth justice system, led by Charlie Taylor, identify and address the challenges facing children and young people in accessing age appropriate support, facilities and representation in custody.

Stop and search

Summary

What we recommended

An APPGC Freedom of Information request to police forces in June 2014 found that between 2009 and 2013, across 26 police forces, over one million stop and searches were carried out on children and young people. The proportion of all stop and searches that were carried out on under-18-year-olds ranged from 13 to 28 percent, however, in 19 forces, either a quarter or one in five stops were on children.

The inquiry heard that stop and search is often the first time that children and young people have direct contact with the police, and can therefore shape their future relationship with the police. When children and young people find a stop and search encounter distressing, it can lead to them developing a long-term distrust of the police, as reported by some young people presenting to the inquiry. Children and young people were frequently being treated as 'mini adults' during the stop and search process, as no separate procedures were in place for searching under-18s. Moreover, gaps in police force data recording systems were hindering opportunities to monitor and address the disproportionate use of stop and search on children and young people, and particularly those from black and minority ethnic communities.

The inquiry made a number of recommendations which sought to ensure that the stop and search process respected children's rights, and recognised their needs as distinct from those of adults. This included recommending that police training and guidance be improved, the Best Use Stop and Search Scheme be extended to improve the recording of data on the age of subjects of stop and search, and stop and search only be carried out on children under the age of 10 in exceptional circumstances.

Progress

- Statutory guidelines for stop and search – PACE Code A – have been revised to explicitly refer to police forces' duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- The College of Policing is piloting new stop and search training, drawing on the participation of young people.
- Action is being, and has been taken, to improve the collection and publication of data on the number of stop and searches carried out on under-18-year-olds.
- Police forces are introducing stop and search scrutiny panels to examine the use of stop and search, including on children and young people

Remaining challenges

- PACE Code A has not been amended to require police officers to record Date of Birth or visual estimation of age
- There continues to be no specific guidance for police officers on carrying out stop and search on children and young people.

Revised police training and guidance

In response to the APPGC's recommendation, and as part of a general review of the guidance, the Home Office has revised PACE Code of Practice A¹⁸ – statutory guidance

¹⁸ Home Office (2015) *Code A: Revised Code of Practice for the exercise by: Police Officers of Statutory Powers of stop and search, Police Officers and Police Staff of requirements to record public encounters* https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414195/2015_Code_A_web-19-03-15.pdf

on stop and search – so that it explicitly refers to police forces' duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004. The revised Code came into effect in March 2015.

The College of Policing and the National Police Chiefs' Council published a new definition of a 'fair and effective use of stop and search' in June 2015, which informs the development of new stop and search learning standards and Authorised Professional Practice due to be published at the end of March 2016.¹⁹ Newly designed stop and search training is being piloted in six forces (Cleveland Police, Metropolitan Police, Sussex Police, Thames Valley Police, Greater Manchester Police and British Transport Police) as part of a randomised control trial to ascertain the cause and effect relationship between training and police practice. The development of the training, and the learning standards that underpin it, have been subject to consultation. Following evaluation, a set of products will be available for national roll-out and will include content from the Youth Justice Board relating to engaging with young people. Y-Stop has supported young people to develop films which will inform classroom-based training on communicating and engaging with children and young people during stop and search encounters. Other elements of the training include: improving data recording (see below), identifying vulnerable young people as potential victims during stop and search, and the effect of unconscious bias on decision making.

The APPGC recommends that the College of Policing's revised Authorised Professional Practice on stop and search, due to be published in March 2016, include guidance on the use of stop and search on children and young people.

Improved data recording and new stop and search maps

Following the APPGC's analysis of police force data on stop and search, which raised anomalies in data recording – for instance unknown age being recorded as 'age 0' – police forces have taken action to improve central stop and search recording systems. It is important that stop and search data is accurate and consistent in presentation in order to identify the proportion of stop and searches that are carried out on under-18-year-olds, and to address disproportionate use.

Since August 2015, stop and search maps for individual police forces have been published on the Home Office-led website www.police.uk, and the data can be downloaded for each police force.²⁰ These maps pinpoint stop and searches by location and give the gender and age range of the person stopped and the reason for the encounter. Currently, data for children and young people is divided into age bands 'under-10' and '10-17 years', however the College of Police plans to divide the latter into two new categories (for example, 10-14 and 15-17 years).

The College of Policing, Home Office and NPCC are developing a new common data standard on stop and search, which will be published shortly. Under the new standard, police officers will be trained to ensure that if a person does not give their date or birth, then a visual estimation of age should be made. This standard will allow for better

¹⁹ College of Policing and National Police Chiefs' Council (2015) *Definition of a fair and effective stop and search encounter* http://www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Documents/College%20of%20Policing%20-%20Fair%20%20Effective%20stop%20search%20definition%20v1_3%20Final%2022%2006%2015%20NG.pdf

²⁰ Stop and search map example: <https://www.police.uk/west-midlands/BWAC/stop-and-search/map/>

comparison of data across police forces. Alongside this, progress is being made to improve recording systems (including Niche and Athena) as part of the data recording element of the Best Use Stop and Search Scheme. Forces are working together to identify solutions that will be able to operate across a number of forces where common technology exists.

The APPGC recommends that PACE Code of Practice A be amended to require police officers to record a visual estimation of age, if date of birth is unknown, in line with requirements set out in the College of Policing's new common data standard on stop and search. However, this requirement should not undermine the right of members of the public not to give their age or other personal details.

The Best Use Stop and Search Scheme has not been extended

The Home Office and the College of Policing jointly introduced the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme in 2014 in order to improve police practice in relation to stop and search. All police forces in England and Wales have now signed up to the scheme. The APPGC recommended that the scheme be extended in order to improve: data recording, police liaison with child protection teams; young people's involvement in public scrutiny; and complaint mechanisms for under-18s. Whilst the Scheme has not yet been extended, police forces have been asked by the NPCC to identify progress in relation to a range of report recommendations on stop and search, including those of the inquiry; this will feed into further consideration of the development of this scheme by the Home Office and College of Policing.

A third of police forces have introduced stop and search scrutiny panels

The APPGC recommended that all police forces should have in place independent stop and search scrutiny panels, which should examine the use of stop and search on children and young people as part of the Best Use Stop and Search scheme. A third of police forces have recently introduced scrutiny panels, and the NPCC is developing a good practice guide to support remaining police forces to establish their own panels. PACE Code A has been revised to ensure that '*the groups that are consulted with [during the scrutiny of stop and search] should always include children and young people*'.²¹

However, it has not become widespread practice for children and young people to participate due to the formal nature of these meetings. More must therefore be done to ensure young people have the opportunity to inform the scrutiny process in more meaningful ways (for example, online or through youth groups). The College of Policing will shortly circulate examples of practice in relation to stop and search scrutiny panels, however these have not been evaluated.

²¹ Home Office (2015) *Code A: Revised Code of Practice for the exercise by: Police Officers of Statutory Powers of stop and search, Police Officers and Police Staff of requirements to record public encounters*. Page 23
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414195/2015_Code_A_web-19-03-15.pdf

Promoting good practice

Summary

What we recommended

Throughout the inquiry, the APPGC was presented with a wide range of good practice examples that showcased the commitment of police leaders and officers to engage positively with children and young people. Such initiatives enabled children and young people to build good relationships with the police and supported their personal development and well-being, and have diverted children at risk of getting involved in crime away from the youth justice system. However, the inquiry found that the most effective approaches were not being replicated elsewhere in the local area, nor were they being used as a model of standard practice nationally. Too many successful projects were the result of the commitment and enthusiasm of individuals, and ended when the respective staff member moved onto a new role. The inquiry heard that cuts to neighbourhood policing budgets were restricting the delivery of community initiatives including the Safer Schools Partnership, with a growing gap reported between police aspirations and their need to focus on enforcement and protection.

The APPGC identified gaps in police training and professional development, which were affecting the quality of engagement. For instance, young people told the inquiry about encounters where they felt police officers had not engaged with them in an age-appropriate manner, and experts referred to a lack of knowledge about child development and poor communication skills among police officers. Involving young people in the delivery of police training, for instance in relation to stop and search, was seen as crucial for raising police officers' confidence in working with children and young people and increasing positive interactions.

The inquiry made a number of recommendations which sought to improve the quality of police training and to establish effective mechanisms for identifying, sharing and monitoring good practice in relation to police engagement with children and young people. This included: reviewing police training so that officers develop an understanding of child development to support them to identify vulnerable children and communicate with this age group; identifying and sharing examples where police forces are developing good relationships with children; and designating a senior police officer with responsibility for child-related procedures and practice.

Progress

- The NPCC has published a new National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People, and every police force in England, Wales and Northern Ireland has a senior designated officer with responsibility for policies and practice relating to children and young people
- Children and young people have been consulted on the development of mental health and stop and search training, and police training that relates to the safeguarding of children and young people is being reviewed.
- The College of Policing and Youth Justice Board will launch a new 'resource hub' on youth justice and the policing of children and young people in early 2016
- Police inspections conducted by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary now assess the quality of engagement between children and the police.

Remaining challenges

- There is no clear mechanism for evaluating and validating good practice in police work with children and young people

- Fewer police officers are now working in school-based roles and government has not committed to conducting a review of the Safer Schools Partnership programme.

Launch of a National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People

In July 2015, the National Police Chiefs' Council published its new 'National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People', setting out key principles for the development of a more child-centred approach to policing²². These included: treating those under the age of 18 first and foremost as children; responding to children's vulnerabilities in order to protect them from harm; ensuring children's views and opinions are heard and respected; and ensuring that interactions with the police are positive experiences for children. The strategy identifies four priorities for 2015-18 which mirror those of the inquiry: stop and search; children in care; detention in police custody; and relationships between children and the police. A children and young people's version of the strategy is currently being developed.

The NPCC has appointed chief ranking officers from each region to sit on its national children and young people's strategy group. These officers are working with the national police lead for children and young people to take forward the national strategy and its associated action plan. All police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland now have a senior officer who is responsible for procedures and practice relating to children and young people.

Police training and sources of support

The APPGC recommended that a comprehensive review of police training take place to ensure that officers have a solid understanding of the specific needs of children and young people, can communicate effectively with this age group, can identify where there may be specific vulnerabilities, and understand the impact of trauma on children's development and behaviour. In particular, the inquiry heard that police officers frequently lack competency in communicating with children and young people who have Special Educational Needs or mental health needs and in identifying the vulnerabilities of children and young people who come to the attention of the police as a perpetrator rather than victim.

"I'm not confident our workforce understands when a young person has trauma how that manifests in their behaviour...They don't need to be experts, but do need to have a good working knowledge." (DCC Olivia Pinkney, Sussex Police, and National Police Chiefs' Council lead officer for children and young people, Children and Young People Now, 27 October 2015)²³

The APPGC therefore welcomes the range of activity taking place to improve training for police officers on working with children and young people. The College of Policing plans to develop a vulnerability training programme which will provide specialist staff in each police force with the key competencies to work with and support vulnerable children and adults in a range of situations. Several areas of the national policing

²² National Police Chiefs' Council (2015) *National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People*

http://www.npcc.police.uk/documents/edhr/2015/CYP%20Strategy%202015_2017_August%202015.pdf

²³ Children and Young People Now, 25 October 2015

<http://www.cypnow.co.uk/cyp/feature/1154456/police-reformer-olivia-pinkney-national-lead-for-children-and-young-peoples-policing>

curriculum that relate to the safeguarding of children and young people are currently being reviewed by the College, including: detention and custody; care and treatment of children and young people; child protection across a range of contexts including domestic abuse, child abuse, child sexual exploitation and human trafficking; and mental health. Children and young people have been consulted on the development of mental health and stop and search training in particular. In addition, the College is exploring options for encouraging more police officers to participate in mentoring schemes for young people.

The Home Office has supported the establishment of regional child sexual exploitation coordinators to support the identification and sharing of emerging good practice across the country. The College of Policing and the Early Intervention Foundation have published a guide to help frontline police officers identify children, young people or families requiring support and to respond effectively to their needs²⁴, and the Early Intervention Academy for Police Leaders will enable senior officers to share ideas about early intervention and develop local plans. In 2016, the College of Policing and the Youth Justice Board will be launching a new online 'resource hub' which will provide both professionals and the public with information on youth justice, including the policing of children and young people.

The APPGC recommends that the College of Policing consult with existing children and young people's advisory groups to ensure that the participation of young people further informs the development of the policing curriculum and professional development.

Police inspections assess engagement between children and the police

Strengthening the inspection framework was seen by the APPGC as a key mechanism for improving how police forces engage with children and young people, particularly those who are at risk of criminalisation. Since the inquiry, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC's) framework for inspecting police forces – the Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) assessment – has been revised and now covers the quality of police engagement with children and young people, addressed from both the perspective of victims and perpetrators. The new PEEL assessment cycle is currently taking place and will report in February 2016.²⁵ HMIC has also commissioned work from specialist organisations to enable the views and experiences of vulnerable detainees, including children, to inform PEEL assessment findings. A similar project is being commissioned to inform HMIC's national child protection programme and the forthcoming all police force inspection of missing and absent children.

Lack of clear mechanisms for evaluating good practice

A wide range of practice examples have been shared by the Home Office, Youth Justice Board and the College of Policing, which identify the positive benefits of fostering positive relationships between children and the police. There are now established routes for sharing practice, for instance through the College of Policing's What Works Centre for Crime Reduction²⁶, the incorporation of good practice within skills and performance

²⁴ Early Intervention Foundation & College of Policing (2015) *Early Intervention: a guide for front-line police officers and PCSOs* <http://www.eif.org.uk/early-intervention-a-guide-for-frontline-police-officers-and-pcsos-3/>

²⁵ Police Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy Assessment questions 2015 <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/peel-assessments/peel-2015-questions/>

²⁶ <http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

development materials by the College of Policing and Youth Justice Board, and Home Office workshops for health and criminal justice partners to share good and promising practice on gang and youth violence, mental health, early intervention and sexual violence. However, currently there is no evaluation process in place to identify the key components of effective practice, or to validate the examples of practice that are now being shared more widely. An agreed validation process would help to ensure that only practice of the highest quality is used as a basis for peer learning and informs the development of new initiatives.

The APPGC recommends that the NPCC and the College of Policing consider expanding the role of the College's What Works Centre and resource banks to include the evaluation and validation of practice examples. In addition, practice examples should be more widely disseminated to frontline police officers.

There are no plans to review the Safer Schools Partnerships programme

The inquiry heard that the Safer Schools Partnership programme had been highly effective in supporting the well-being of vulnerable children and young people, and engaging those at risk of criminalisation. The number of schools running a Safer Schools Partnership or providing school-based interventions has, however, steadily decreased in recent years due to cuts to police force budgets. At the same time, the number of school-based crimes has been increasing: over 30,000 were reported to the police in 2014 – equivalent to 140 a day – with theft and violent crime the most common type of offences being reported.²⁷

"If we can get an intervention right at the start, then you're cutting out demand for years to come. That does not mean (police) being pseudo teachers, but it does mean having a really good relationship with schools, so that police officers know where the worries and vulnerabilities are for children and families" (DCC Olivia Pinkney, Sussex Police, and National Police Chiefs' Council lead officer for children and young people, Children and Young People Now, 27 October 2015)

The APPGC recommended that the Home Office examine how all police forces could deliver the Safer Schools Partnership, in recognition of its impact on reducing criminal and anti-social behaviour within the school and community, supporting vulnerable children and young people at times of transition, and identifying those at risk of becoming a victim or offender.²⁸ The Home Office has said that it is for schools to decide, in cooperation with the local police force, how best to deliver the programme. The APPGC remains resolute that the government has a key role to play in monitoring and resourcing the Safer Schools Partnership, given that early intervention is central to the protection of children, and that schools are able to provide a supportive environment for fostering positive relationships between children and the police.

The APPGC recommends that the Home Office and NPCC work together to develop a sustainable Safer Schools Partnership programme, which recognises the value of this work in building positive relationships between children and the police.

²⁷ BBC News, 24 September 2015 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-34268942>

²⁸ The Youth Justice Board carried out an evaluation of the Safer Schools Partnership. Youth Justice Board for England and Wales (2004) *Safer School Partnerships: National evaluation of the Safer School Partnerships programme* <http://yjbpublications.justice.gov.uk/en-gb/Resources/Downloads/SSP%20Summary.pdf>

Conclusion

Children's first encounters with the police can have a lasting effect on how they view the police force and engage with the police as adults. It is vital, therefore, that coming into contact with the police, even in the most challenging of situations, should always be a positive experience for a child or young person. Getting relationships between the police and children right from the start can help to reduce the criminalisation of children and young people, thereby reducing further costly offending as a young person grows up and moves into adulthood.

Much progress has been made towards strengthening the policy and legislative framework that governs police forces' work with children and young people since the publication of the APPGC inquiry report. The government has made substantial changes to the legislative framework to ensure that all children and young people under the age of 18 have their rights promoted and needs met in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and a National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People developed by the NPCC was launched in July 2015. This has the potential to transform policing practice for the benefit of children and young people and wider society. These, and other improvements highlighted in this report, go a long way towards ensuring that every person under the age of 18 is treated as a child first and foremost in all interactions with the police, and that all police forces and officers respect children's rights and have regard to children's well-being and welfare when carrying out their duties.

However, more still needs to be achieved. In this report, the APPGC has identified some priority areas for action. In particular:

- The drive for crime recording integrity should not needlessly draw vulnerable children and young people into the criminal justice system, impacting on their long-term welfare and future career opportunities.
The APPGC is recommending the introduction of a new crime recording category which allows police forces to record low-level crime-related behaviour in a way that prevents children having a long-term criminal record and ensures they are referred to a welfare agency. In addition, the APPGC continues to call for an amendment to the Home Office Counting Rules to bring crime recording standards for children's homes in line with those for schools.
- Young people should not be held in police cells overnight as a result of local agencies failing to fulfil their duty to ensure children are transferred to local authority accommodation.
The APPGC urges the Home Office to publish the concordat agreement on transfers to local authority accommodation as soon as is practicable, and to monitor the impact of that concordat. In addition, the APPGC recommends that the duty to transfer children to local authority accommodation be extended to children charged for breach of bail.
- The government has a key role to play in monitoring and resourcing the Safer Schools Partnership programme, which has been effective in building positive

relationships between children and the police and reducing criminal and anti-social behaviour.

The APPGC therefore recommends that the Home Office and NPCC work together to develop a sustainable Safer Schools Partnership programme.

We welcome the commitment of the government, National Police Chiefs' Council, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, College of Policing, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, and Youth Justice Board in working cooperatively to create a foundation for policing that promotes the well-being and best interests of all children and young people. We ask that this final set of recommendations ensures that the momentum for change and improvement, witnessed over the last year, continues.