



# **Identifying Disproportionality and the Serious Violence Duty**

**Sally Churchyard  
Head of Young People's Prevention Services**

# Violence Reduction Unit

- 'Hub and spoke' VRU with the Police and Crime Commissioner and 5 Local Authorities
- Focusing mainly on so-called 'street crime'
- Drawing on a public health approach to influence preventative agendas to address serious violence
- Procuring services
- Identifying individuals and contexts

# Why is the Violence Reduction Unit interested in exclusion?

- Correlation between school exclusion and offending - 'school to prison pipeline'
- Children not engaged in education are at increased risk of exploitation
- Exploited children are more likely to be excluded and emerging evidence suggests adult exploiters sometimes encourage behaviour leading to exclusion
- Victims of child criminal exploitation are often still criminalised or blamed for their 'risky' actions rather than safeguarded.

Arnez and Condry, 2021

Exploited and Criminalised, Barnardos 2020

Just for Kids Law, 2020

# VRU work with schools

- Awareness raising re exploitation and knife crime
- Police interventions
- Education Inclusion Project
- Trauma informed schools
- Schools' involvement in information sharing through Partnership for Reducing Exploitation and Serious Violence

# Identifying Disproportionality

- Building on David Lammy's review 2017
- Commissioned by Local Criminal Justice Board and led by community sector organisations with statutory agency participation
- Focus on children
- Launched March 2022 and framework now in place for delivery against 83 recommendations

# Why is Identifying Disproportionality report interested in exclusion?

- The same issues as for all children but disproportionately experienced
- The main pathways and risk factors for young people into the youth justice system all record high levels of ethnic disproportionality: from school exclusions, the care system, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and first contact with the police. (Black Training and Enterprise Group 2016)
- National MoJ data re youth custodial population, and YJB evidence of fewer pre-Court disposals and harsher sentencing for Black children (2021)

# Recommendations

- Consistent data sets (18+1 ethnicity categories) to establish baselines
- Address issues with collection and analysis of school exclusion data
- Strategy and action plan to analyse data and tackle any disproportionality for any minority ethnic groups
- Avon and Somerset Youth Justice Working Group to scrutinise exclusion and entry into the youth justice system data and proactively tackle any ethnic disproportionality

# Serious Violence Duty

- B&NES has been part of a voluntary 'hub and spoke' Violence Reduction Unit since late 2019
- On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023, the Serious Violence Duty was implemented under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.
- The Duty requires specified authorities (Local Authorities, Police, Fire and Rescue, Probation, Youth Offending Teams and Integrated Care Boards) to collaborate to prevent and reduce serious violence
- Relevant authorities (education, prisons and youth custody establishments) must participate with local arrangements as requested.



# Requirements under the Duty

- Share relevant data and information to support a strategic needs assessment – *consult with schools*
- Develop, publish and implement a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence by 31 January 2024 – *consult with schools*
- Work needs to adopt a public health approach
- Strategy needs to be based on a theory of change and include clear lines of accountability
- Partnership likely to be led by Police and Crime Commissioner
- Local governance through B&NES Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership

# Measuring Impact

The three national metrics are:

- ❖ Homicide rates
- ❖ Hospital admissions for knife or sharp object assault
- ❖ Police-recorded knife crime

Local measures are also encouraged:

- ❖ How about adding school exclusion rates, including by ethnicity?