

PILOT TRIAL PROTOCOL

The Divert Plus programme

Cordis Bright

Principal investigators: Dr Stephen Boxford, Professor Darrick Jolliffe, Kam Kaur and Caitlin Hogan-Lloyd

Pilot trial protocol template (includes a control group)

Evaluating institution: Cordis Bright

Principal investigator(s): Dr Stephen Boxford, Professor Darrick Jolliffe, Kam Kaur, Caitlin Hogan-Lloyd

Project title¹	The Divert Plus programme
Developer (Institution)	Violence Reduction Unit, Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
Evaluator (Institution)	Cordis Bright
Principal investigator(s)	Dr Stephen Boxford, Professor Darrick Jolliffe, Kam Kaur, Caitlin Hogan-Lloyd
Evaluation plan author(s)	Dr Stephen Boxford, Professor Darrick Jolliffe, Caitlin Hogan-Lloyd
Evaluation setting	Young person's home; police or criminal justice setting (custody suite)
Target group	Young people who have been arrested for violence or associated offences with risk factors for violence such as drug dealing and who are aged 10-17. The programme and evaluation will only include sole offenders (as opposed to those arrested in groups of two or more for the same offence).

¹ Please make sure the title matches that in the header and that it is identified as a randomised trial as per the CONSORT requirements (CONSORT 1a).

Number of participants

Across two custody suites, there will be approximately 100 young people participating in the Pilot Trial RCT, 50 in the treatment and 50 in the control.

Protocol version history

Version	Date	Reason for revision
1.2 [latest]		
1.1		
1.0 [original]		<i>[leave blank for the original version]</i>

Any changes to the design need to be discussed with the YEF Evaluation Manager (EM) and the developer team prior to any change(s) being finalised. Describe in the table above any agreed changes made to the evaluation design, research questions and approach, and the rationale for these.

1. Intervention

The description of the intervention below has been summarised from information provided by the developer of the Divert Plus programme, Nottinghamshire VRU.

1.1 Context, evidence, theoretical and scientific background

Currently, too many young people who have been arrested go on to commit (further) offences including Serious Youth Violence (SYV), crime and anti-social behaviour. Divert Plus seeks to prevent young people in Nottinghamshire from (re)offending by building on and responding to the following emerging evidence:

- The point of arrest, prior to charge and court action, is a key ‘moment’ for young people at risk of perpetrating SYV, representing a window of opportunity in which positive engagement with the young person can impact swiftly on their pathway through the justice system and also potentially to prevent offending in the future. Local evidence for the effectiveness of engaging young people at the ‘moment’ in Nottingham has come from the existing U Turn intervention, which has reduced reoffending through the provision of trained youth workers in custody providing wraparound support through effective coaching and mentoring to get young people aged 16-26 into employment ².
- More than three-quarters of young people arrested have speech & language needs. If not identified and addressed, the risk of the young person going on to commit violent offences or experience exploitation is increased ³⁴⁵. Currently, young people with speech and language needs are not being identified and are not provided with sufficient support to address their needs.
- Programmes that include mentoring approaches may support young people to stay out of crime, but more research is needed in this area⁶.

² In 2019/20 U Turn connected with 133 offenders at custody suites, approximately 80% of which were arrested for violent crimes. There was only the capacity to support 28 of those offenders with intensive mentoring however 100% of these have not re-offended within the 12 months timeframe.

³ Evidence: <https://evidence.nihr.ac.uk/alert/young-offenders-with-undiagnosed-language-problems-are-twice-as-likely-to-reoffend-within-a-year/> Last accessed: 25/02/2022

⁴ See: Hadden, D. & Dominey-Hill, E., 2020. CAMHS and Youth Justice Speech and Language Therapy Service Final Report, Nottingham: NHS Nottinghamshire HealthCare.

⁵ See: Nottingham City Council, 2020. Speech and Language Therapy in Youth Justice Evaluation

⁶ Jolliffe, D. and Farrington, D.P. (2008) ‘The influence of Mentoring on Reoffending’, Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention

- Young people get involved in SYV despite being arrested because:
 - They lack an understanding of the impact of crime on victims⁷.
 - They have difficulties with emotional regulation⁸.
 - They experience delays in the swift administration of justice⁹.
- The propensity for involvement in SYV is also increased by low levels of pro-social skills/values¹⁰, self-esteem¹¹, and a lack of positive relationships¹².

More about the rationale for the trial RCT is outlined in Section 2 below on research questions and objectives.

1.2 The intervention

The Divert Plus programme seeks to build on and respond to the evidence above by reaching young people at the ‘moment’ of arrest in the custody suite and engaging them in a tailored package of support to address common risk factors. The Divert Plus offer to young people will include mentoring, speech and language therapy, and support with out of court disposals where appropriate. Each young person will have a tailored and co-developed personal change plan appropriate to their needs, overseen by a Divert Plus case manager. Divert Plus is not intended to be prescriptive, meaning that no two pathways through the programme will be the same. However, it is intended that all young people will receive core elements of support including the “moment”, the co-developed personal change plan, and the offer of mentoring support. Support may be provided over a period of between 3-12 months, depending on need.

1.3 Theory of Change

In line with the Early Intervention Foundation’s 10 Steps for Evaluation Success this section presents a summary of information from the Divert Plus programme’s Theory of Change (see Appendix A) and Logic Model. These have been co-developed with Divert Plus stakeholders, YEF representatives and Cordis Bright as part of the scoping phase of this

⁷https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232894872_Experiences_of_shame_and_empathy_in_violent_and_non-violent_young_offenders Last accessed: 25/02/2022

⁸ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0093854817695842> Last accessed: 25/02/2022

⁹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243718/evidence-reduce-reoffending.pdf Last accessed: 25/02/2022

¹⁰ See: Boxford, S. (2006) *Schools and the Problem of Crime*. Routledge

¹¹ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01639625.2017.1395667?journalCode=udbh20> Last accessed: 25/02/2022

¹² See: Boxford, S. (2006) *Schools and the Problem of Crime*. Routledge

evaluation. The following sections provide information on: (1) outcomes, (2) activities, and (3) inputs.

The target cohort is discussed in Section 4.3 below.

Outcomes

Divert Plus aims to transform the moment of arrest into a positive opportunity for constructive engagement with a young person, and then to offer support with the risk factors that may have brought the young person to the custody suite.

As a result, the following medium-term outcomes will be achieved for young people participating in Divert Plus:

- Young person's behaviour improves
- Young person's engagement with employment, training and education (ETE) improves
- Young person engages with more positive role models and has more positive trusted relationships
- Young person has fewer contacts with the police
- Young person demonstrates more pro-social skills and behaviours
- Young person's recognised risk factors reduce

Some of these outcomes will be measured within the Pilot Trial RCT using the Self-Reported Delinquency Scale (SRDS), developed by and used in the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime¹³, and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)¹⁴, as specified by YEF. More detail on how these will be employed is included in Section 4.5 below.

In the long-term, it is anticipated that fewer young people who receive Divert Plus (compared to the control group) will commit/be involved in:

- Violent criminal offences

¹³ For more information, see: <https://res.cloudinary.com/yef/images/v1623145465/cdn/19.-YEF-SRDS-guidance/19.-YEF-SRDS-guidance.pdf> . Last accessed 25/02/2022.

¹⁴ For more information, see: <https://res.cloudinary.com/yef/images/v1623145467/cdn/18.-YEF-SDQ-guidance/18.-YEF-SDQ-guidance.pdf> . Last accessed 25/02/2022.

- Non-violent offending
- Gang involvement
- Weapon carrying
- Bullying perpetration
- Substance use/misuse
- Aggression

Activities

Divert Plus aims to achieve the above outcomes through delivering the following activities:

1. The 'moment'

The 'moment'¹⁵ starts with the offer of a conversation with a member of the Divert Plus team and enables the following to take place:

- Reduce the trauma of the event of arrest and replace it with constructive thought and dialogue;
- Provide information about the process the young person is involved in in a way that they can engage with. This information may also be of benefit to parents/carers;
- Provide information about out of court options where there is an admission of offence(s) and encourage this option.

2. Assessment and personal change plan

In a follow up meeting, a Divert Plus practitioner will conduct a full assessment of the young person, informed by their social care and education records as well as information provided by the young person. An assessment tool has been developed for use across the Divert Plus teams in both Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County custody suites. The assessment will produce both specific scores as well as an overall assessment of the risk of harm or future offending based on professional judgement. This assists the Divert Plus practitioner in tailoring the scheme and determining the scale and dosage of the support offered.

¹⁵ The Moment is expected to be more impactful when delivered in custody suites but where this is not feasible, the Team aims to deliver the intervention in the child's home or other suitable location.

The Divert Plus practitioner will then co-develop a personal change plan with the young person, based on their needs. The plan will detail the support that the young person will receive from Divert Plus and both the young person and the Divert Plus practitioner will sign up to deliver it.

3. Speech and language assessment and therapy

As outlined in the co-developed Divert Plus Theory of Change, more than 75% of children arrested have speech and language needs. If not identified and addressed, there is evidence that the risk of the child going on to commit violent offences or experience exploitation is increased.¹⁶¹⁷¹⁸

As a response to this evidence, the initial Divert Plus assessment will include screening for speech and language difficulty. All cases where there is evidence of an issue can, with consent, be referred to the speech and language therapist (SALT) for a fuller assessment. The SALT will provide a report on the young person's communication needs, meaning both that the Divert Plus team can work with the young person in an appropriate way and also build this knowledge into tailoring the personal plan.

If a young person receives a SALT score of 20+, they will receive speech and language therapy for a minimum of three months. If they receive a score of 16-20, the Divert Plus practitioner will receive relevant advice for how best to support the young person. If the young person receives a score below 16, no speech and language support is required. Speech and language assessments will be shared with education/training providers of the young people assessed.

For young people who need it, speech and language therapy will enhance their ability to benefit from mentoring and to engage more positively with other support services and education, training and employment.

4. Mentoring schemes

Divert Plus includes three mentoring schemes across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County, delivered by two voluntary sector providers (Stronger People and Breaking Barriers

¹⁶ Evidence: <https://evidence.nihr.ac.uk/alert/young-offenders-with-undiagnosed-language-problems-are-twice-as-likely-to-reoffend-within-a-year/> Last accessed: 25/02/2022

¹⁷ See: Hadden, D. & Dominey-Hill, E., 2020. CAMHS and Youth Justice Speech and Language Therapy Service Final Report, Nottingham: NHS Nottinghamshire HealthCare.

¹⁸ See: Nottingham City Council, 2020. Speech and Language Therapy in Youth Justice Evaluation

Building Bridges) and Nottinghamshire County Council's in-house mentoring project. A structured and consistent offer will be provided across all three providers. All three organisations operate to be available when young people need to access them which means meeting with and being contactable at evenings and weekends.

Mentoring builds on the trusted relationship established during the 'moment' and mentors will work on a range of issues with the young person such as emotional regulation.

Dosage will be determined by an ongoing review of need but will range from:

- Minimum: 1 session per week
- Maximum: 3 sessions per week
- Minimum: 3-month period
- Maximum: 9-month period

5. Restorative Justice

Where the young person makes an admission of guilt to the police following arrest, they may be offered restorative justice for less serious offences. This will only occur if the victim has indicated a willingness to be involved. Often young people miss out on this option because they are poorly informed. Divert Plus tackles this by informing young people and parent/carers appropriately of the service and what it means. If accepted this will be managed by VictimCARE, (embedded in the Team but funded by the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)).

6. Out of Court Disposal

Similarly, young people may have the option to accept an out of court disposal, a process managed by the Youth Justice Service (YJS). Again, Divert Plus will inform young people and parents/carers of the service and what it means. This may also include a restorative justice element, in this case overseen by YJS rather than VictimCARE, and this may be more likely to identify 'community victims' where there is not an identifiable individual victim.

The Restorative Justice and Out of Court Disposals are both a mechanism for avoiding young people entering the criminal justice system but are also a learning opportunity that works in tandem with the more directly therapeutic elements.

Inputs

To deliver the above outcomes and activities, Divert Plus needs the following inputs:

1. Funding

The Home Office and YEF funding commitment to the Divert Plus intervention is:

Yr 1 £442,550 (Home Office)

Yr 2 £528,500 (YEF)

Yr 3 £528,500 (YEF)

2. Facilities

Nottingham Custody Centre (Nottinghamshire County) and Mansfield Custody Suite (Nottingham City). The new Mansfield Custody Suite has an autism friendly design.

Whilst the custody suites are the key location for the teachable moment, the Divert Plus team will be working in a range of other locations, including the child's home as well as other appropriate youth, sport and other settings which the team has access to.

3. Personnel

The funding will support the following roles, to include the City and County YJS, voluntary sector youth work providers, Victim Care, SALT provision:

- Specialist Project Manager (PM)/Team Leader
- Qualified Case Worker x 2
- Non-qualified Case Worker x 2¹⁹
- Speech & Language Therapists x 2
- Sessional Youth Workers x 6 (mentors)
- Existing Victim Care provision, funded by Nottinghamshire PCC.

2. Research questions and/or objectives

2.1 Rationale

¹⁹ A Divert Plus stakeholder stated that this model of qualified and non-qualified case workers is in line with the existing employment model used by Youth Justice Services in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire. Generally, the qualified case workers will complete assessments and support some interventions while the non-qualified case workers will focus more on intervention and supporting engagement with referred/sign-posted services. The non-qualified case workers will also be required to conduct follow-ups with young people as part of the evaluation.

The rationale for a Pilot Trial RCT of Divert Plus is strong. In the UK there is limited robust evidence for what works to reduce offending among young people. In particular, the evidence is limited for the long-term effectiveness of interventions that work to reduce offending in young people aged 10-17 at risk of involvement in serious youth violence. There is emerging evidence that programmes that include mentoring approaches may support young people to stay out of crime, but more research is needed in this area²⁰. The Youth Endowment Fund is investing in the Divert Plus programme which involves the offer of mentoring, speech and language therapy, and support with out of court disposals and restorative justice where appropriate, in order to understand the potential of reaching young people at the ‘moment’ of arrest and providing them with support through these activities in reducing further offending. The YEF has commissioned Cordis Bright to conduct a Pilot Trial RCT which may lead to an Efficacy Trial RCT to assess the potential of Divert Plus to impact on the offending behaviour of participants.

2.2 Pilot trial objectives and questions

The overarching research question that a randomised control trial of Divert Plus seeks to answer is:

“Do programmes that engage with young people at the point of arrest, and offer support with mentoring, speech and language, and criminal justice options, reduce the likelihood of participant involvement in serious youth violence and future offending or reoffending in comparison to business as usual”

The Pilot Trial RCT will contribute to knowledge in understanding whether:

1. RCT approaches are feasible for programmes like Divert Plus.
2. A RCT approach is reasonable for addressing the overarching research question.
3. Divert Plus can progress to an Efficacy Trial RCT.
4. There is emerging evidence that Divert Plus has a positive impact on participant outcomes over and above business as usual.

Linked to the above, the Pilot Trial RCT’s objectives will be to test the programme’s evidence of promise for improving young people’s outcomes and assess the feasibility of progressing to a full Efficacy Trial.

²⁰ Jolliffe, D. and Farrington, D.P. (2008) ‘The influence of Mentoring on Reoffending’, Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention

As such, the Pilot Trial RCT will seek to address the following key questions:

1. Have the pilot recruitment, randomisation and retention processes been established and embedded effectively, and do they work in practice?
2. Have data collection processes been established and embedded effectively?
3. Are the evaluation tools used during the Pilot Trial reliable, valid, accurate and practical for the project?
4. What sample size will be required for a future Efficacy Trial, accounting for the utility of data collected during the Pilot Trial?
5. Is it likely that Divert Plus will recruit and retain enough young people to the evaluation to meet the required sample size for an Efficacy Trial?
6. Has the Divert Plus programme been implemented with fidelity to the co-designed Theory of Change, Logic Model and original Divert Plus model?
7. Is Divert Plus showing emerging promise in achieving outcomes for participants over and above business as usual, in line with the Theory of Change and Logic Model?
8. How acceptable is the RCT design to the key Divert Plus programme stakeholders?

2.3 Racial and cultural sensitivity

We work hard to ensure our approach considers and promotes diversity and inclusion. In relation to racial diversity and inclusion we will aim to work with Nottinghamshire VRU, YEF and key Divert Plus programme stakeholders to:

- Ensure all research methods and tools are accessible for the full range of participants.
- Provide clear accessible information so that participants from all communities can participate.
- Use validated scales which have been developed with inclusion and diversity in mind.
- Explore any differences in outcomes between different groups including on race/ethnicity.
- Monitor involvement of participants in the treatment and control groups to assess whether they are representative of similar cohorts in the youth justice system and wider society.
- Deploy staff who have completed cultural competency training as well as undertaken projects on equality and inclusion including over-representation of children from minority ethnic groups in the youth justice system.

3. Success criteria and/or targets

We have co-developed success criteria with Divert Plus, Nottinghamshire VRU and YEF stakeholders. In designing the criteria, we recognise the following:

- Divert Plus is an innovative programme. In our experience, it often takes time for programmes like Divert Plus to be implemented and embedded. It is likely that there will be unforeseen challenges in the first year. Dynamically addressing these will help to ensure a more robust Efficacy Trial in the future.
- The Pilot Trial is designed to support collaborative learning and to support learning for the evaluator, programme and funder to support progression to an Efficacy Trial.

Progression will be linked to the evidence of progress. This will likely require a period of reflection and judgement based on the evidence the evaluation provides before a decision is made about the transition to the Efficacy Trial.

Based on the above, we propose the following criteria will be used to help guide whether the Pilot Trial RCT should progress to a full Efficacy Trial:

1. Numbers of young people recruited to the trial's treatment and control groups.
2. The percentage of young people completing the Divert Plus programme measured by completed tools at baseline and 9 months. The percentage of young people completing their involvement in the control group measured by completed tools at baseline and 9 months.
3. Completion rate of evaluation tool and monitoring data (i.e. amount of missing data) and quality of data for both the treatment and control groups including (a) impact tools (SRDS and SDQ), and (b) monitoring data concerning activity received and dosage.
4. Fidelity of delivery to the Divert Plus model of delivery. This will be achieved by benchmarking Divert Plus with the co-designed Theory of Change and Logic Model.
5. Realities of randomisation and the extent to which this continues to be acceptable to partners.
6. Capacity within the Divert Plus programme delivery team.
7. Quality of working relationships between the Divert Plus programme, YEF, and Cordis Bright.

Criteria 1, 2 and 3 are included to help understand the extent to which we are on-track to receive high quality data for a sufficient sample size to draw robust conclusions (see Section 4.4 below on sample size). However, we will use the Pilot Trial to assess the pace of recruitment to treatment and control groups.

Criteria 4 is included to help ensure that Divert Plus is being delivered in line with the co-designed Theory of Change and Logic Model and to check that the intervention hasn't iterated to such an extent that the overarching evaluation question is no longer valid.

Criteria 5 is included to ensure that all local partners are still bought-in to the randomised control trial and are happy to continue to proceed on this basis.

Criteria 6 will ensure that the Divert Plus programme delivery team and Nottinghamshire VRU more broadly continues to have capacity and interest to be involved in the evaluation.

Criteria 7 will have a particular focus on whether working relationships are sufficiently developed to support the move to a larger and/or more complex and/or lengthier trial.

Based on the above, the table below suggests some indicative measures to help decision-making in relation to progression.

Criteria	Green (Go)	Amber (Pause and think)	Red (Stop)
1. Numbers of young people recruited to the trial's treatment and control groups.	30 plus in each group (Total 60)	10-29 in each group	Less than 10 in each group
2. The percentage of young people completing the Divert Plus programme measured by completed tools at baseline and 9 months. The percentage of young people completing their involvement in the control group measured by completed tools at baseline and 9 months.	70%	40-70%	Less than 40%
3. Completion rate of evaluation tool and monitoring data (i.e. amount of missing data) and quality of data for both the treatment and control groups including (a) impact tools (SRDS and SDQ), (b) monitoring data concerning activity received and dosage.	70% complete	40-70% complete	Less than 40% complete

4. Methods

4.1 Pilot trial design

This Pilot Trial will be a two-arm, parallel randomised control trial (RCT) conducted across two custody suites (Mansfield/Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County). Young people aged 10-17 who have been arrested and brought into either Nottingham City or Nottinghamshire County custody suite and who consent to be part of the evaluation will be allocated at random to the treatment or control group on a 1:1 basis. All those young people identified as fitting the criteria for Divert Plus will be invited to take part in the intervention.

For the Pilot Trial, outcomes data will be measured at the level of the individual young people through the administration of questionnaires (including the SRDS and SDQ), with measures obtained at:

- **Baseline** - prior to randomisation and before support from Divert Plus begins for those in the treatment group.
- **Nine months**²¹ – for both the treatment and control groups.

All young people randomised into the **treatment group** will receive Divert Plus (see Section 1 for details). All young people randomised into the **control group** will receive signposting to relevant existing services and have any safeguarding needs identified and addressed by a Divert Plus practitioner. They will receive this support again at a 9-month catch up meeting with the Divert Plus practitioner at which time they will complete an outcomes measures questionnaire²². The Divert Plus practitioner will assess need, signpost the young person to existing services, and identify any safeguarding concerns. If any safeguarding needs are identified during these meetings, Divert Plus practitioners will refer on to the relevant authorities.

If filling out the SRDS or SDQ triggers an emotional response for the young person, or their answers indicate that they may have mental health and wellbeing needs, then the NHS Liaison and Diversion team will be involved and appropriate referrals made if necessary. Through involving the Liaison and Diversion Team in this manner Divert Plus further ensures

²¹ If the evaluation progresses to Efficacy Trial, measures will also be taken at 15 months for both the treatment and control groups.

²² There will also be another similar meeting at 15 months should Divert Plus progress to an Efficacy Trial.

that it meets its duty of care for young people participating in the programme and the evaluation.

4.2 Randomisation

The mechanism for generating a random sequence by which to allocate young people to either the treatment or control group is outlined below. We believe this is the simplest and most cost-effective option available, while still ensuring the following:

- **Digital randomisation.** The random sequence is generated using digital methods, rather than manually. Manual options can often become non-random, are more difficult to implement, and do not leave an audit trail²³.
- **Allocation concealment.** The allocation sequence is concealed from Divert Plus practitioners, and cannot be 'gamed' (e.g. by reading through envelopes). This is to limit the risk of practitioners attempting to influence which group a young person is assigned to and threatening the integrity of the randomisation process. For the same reason, we have suggested a process of securely storing envelopes, recording the allocation of young people and maintaining an audit trail, which should limit the opportunity for interference in the process.
- **Aiming to ensure a 1:1 ratio between treatment and control group.** The treatment and control group will be of a similar size (achieving as close to a 1:1 ratio as possible). As we are likely to have relatively small numbers of young people for the Pilot Trial, we are employing the process of 'blocking' to ensure that the treatment and control group remain relatively similar. This means that the random sequence allocating young people to either the treatment/control group will be generated in blocks of 4 young people, in which the numbers of young people allocated to the treatment and control group will be the same. We plan to use randomly varying blocks. We will not inform practitioners that blocks are being used, so they will not attempt to guess the pattern²⁴.

We will facilitate training for Divert Plus practitioners on how to implement this process, as well as on how to communicate the result to the young person and their parents/carers.

No blinding of allocation will be possible in this process. Divert Plus practitioners, who act as data collectors, will need to be aware which group the young person has been allocated to

²³ See Dettori (2010): <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3427961/> Last accessed: 25/02/2022

²⁴ See NESTA guidance: https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/a_guide_to_rcts_-_igl_09aKzWa.pdf Last accessed: 25/02/2022

so that they can administer support accordingly. Young people will need to be informed of what the treatment and control group are to receive so that they can give their informed consent.

The process for randomisation and responsibilities for Divert Plus practitioners and Cordis Bright are summarised below.

The process of generating random allocation will be conducted by Cordis Bright in two batches – one for Nottingham City custody suite, and one for Nottinghamshire County custody suite. The random allocation for each suite will be generated as follows:

1. Random sequence generated using software, allocating treatment or control for the maximum possible number of young people (to be worked out in collaboration with Divert Plus practitioners). The sequence will consist of blocks of size 4 in which there are an equal number of treatment and control group allocations, the blocks varying randomly.
2. Prepare first 'allocation paper' (the card which will state which group a young person is assigned to) – writing either 'Divert Plus' (control) or 'Signposting' (treatment), in accordance with the randomly generated sequence, on to a standard sized piece of paper and fold.
3. Prepare envelopes using the sequentially numbered, opaque, sealed envelopes (SNOSE) method – using carbon paper and opaque envelopes.
4. Mark its number on the front of the envelope (1 for the 1st, 2 for the 2nd etc)
5. Repeat steps 2-4 for the entire sequence.
6. Stack envelopes in numerical order, with 1 at the top, and placed in a sealed container.
7. Container couriered to custody suite and stored securely.

The process of allocating a young person to treatment/control group in the custody suite will be conducted by Divert Plus practitioners as follows:

1. Young person enters custody suite
2. Divert Plus worker meets young person and explains evaluation and trial
3. Young person and parent/carer give consent to be involved in trial (in line with process that we are co-developing with Divert Plus stakeholders outlined in Section 4.3 below)
4. Baseline data collection

5. Divert Plus practitioner collects box of envelopes from secure location (e.g. locked cupboard)
6. Divert Plus practitioner selects the next sequentially numbered envelope from the box (the lowest available number) – which will be at the top of the pile
7. Divert Plus practitioner writes name of child, practitioner name date and time on the front of the envelope and signs it (this will transfer to the front of the folded allocation card inside)
8. Divert Plus practitioner opens envelope – ‘Divert Plus’ or ‘Signposting’ will be printed inside the folded allocation card, child’s name etc will be on the front of the folded card.
9. Divert Plus practitioner communicates result to young person and parent/carer
10. Envelope and card are put into a prepaid envelope which is sent back to Cordis Bright.
11. Allocation of the young person (treatment/control) and their envelope/allocation number is inputted into spreadsheet and case management system as soon as possible and communicated to evaluators.
12. ‘Moment’ or signposting takes place with the young person.

When a young person is met in the first instance at home, the process will be similar, but the Divert Plus practitioner will need to bring an envelope with them to the meeting. The envelope and allocation card will then need to be taken back to the custody suite after the meeting and the results recorded as soon as possible.

4.3 Participants

A flow diagram illustrating the journey through the trial for young people in both the treatment and control group is included in Appendix B.

Inclusion criteria

Participants in the evaluation will be young people who have been arrested and brought into either Nottingham City or Nottinghamshire County custody suite and who consent to be part of the evaluation. As such, there will not be a pre-selected cohort of participants, but rather a ‘trickle sample’ that builds up over time as young people are arrested.

The target group for the Divert Plus programme and therefore the Pilot (and potentially) Efficacy Trial is **young people who have been arrested for violence or associated offences with risk factors for violence such as drug dealing and who are aged 10-17**. The

programme and evaluation will only include sole offenders (as opposed to those arrested in groups of two or more for the same offence).

The programme will have a particular focus on those who are in contact with criminal justice services for the first time but will not exclude those arrested previously. Those receiving a 'no further action' from police will be included where the case suggests intervention may be needed.

These eligibility criteria are based on evidence of risk factors for serious youth violence and have been researched and agreed by Nottinghamshire VRU, Cordis Bright and YEF.

Settings and location of intervention delivery and data collection

The initial meeting, obtaining informed consent, administering of the questionnaire including the SRDS and SDQ, and assessment will be conducted by Divert Plus case workers with the young person and occur either within the custody suite (at either Nottinghamshire County custody suite or Nottingham City custody suite) or within 24 hours at the young person's home. Divert Plus practitioners will be with young people throughout the process of completing the SRDS and SDQ to provide support as appropriate.

The SRDS and SDQ will then be administered by the Divert Plus case worker again at the 9-month follow up point on a home visit (and again at 15 months should Divert Plus progress to an Efficacy Trial).

After the initial meeting, intervention delivery will take place in a range of settings, including: school or other educational settings; young person's home; sports club or recreation/leisure facilities; youth centre or other community setting; police or criminal justice setting.

Identification and consent procedures

The process of identifying and obtaining consent from young people and their parents/carers for participation in Divert Plus, when the **young person is met in the first instance in the custody suite**, is as follows:

First meeting in the custody suite

1. When a young person is brought into either Nottingham City or Nottinghamshire County custody suite alone for violence or associated offences with risk factors for violence, the police will inform the Divert Plus case workers.
2. Divert Plus case worker will meet the young person and their parent/carer in the custody suite and provide a verbal explanation of the evaluation and what it will involve, using a script and supported by training provided by Cordis Bright.

Parents/carers will be contacted via telephone in the first instance if they are not present in the custody suite. The Divert Plus practitioner will explain:

- a. The evaluation
 - b. What an RCT is and why it is important – explaining that, should they consent, young people will be randomly allocated to one of two groups
 - c. What the two groups will receive - explaining that one will receive a new programme we are trialling to see if it works (Divert Plus), and that one will receive signposting to other services that they might need as well as ensuring any safeguarding issues can be identified and addressed.
 - d. That their participation in the programme and evaluation is entirely voluntary.
 - e. That they can only participate in Divert Plus if they and their parents/carers also consent to the young person's involvement in the evaluation.
 - f. What the young people in both groups will be asked to do – to complete the SRDS and SDQ immediately prior to randomisation, then at 9 months (and 15 months if the evaluation progresses to Efficacy) – explaining that this will be used to see whether the support they get has an impact on their emotions and behaviours.
 - g. That these measures will then be linked to police data on offending and also their background data to see what impact the programme has had on offending and whether it works better for different groups of young people.
 - h. That any information they provide to the research team will not be shared with anyone else, with the exception of data archiving (see Section 9)
 - i. That after the evaluation this data will then be stored in the YEF data archive in pseudonymised form (so they can't be identified) and linked to education and offending data to track the long-term impacts of the programme for people. See Section 9 below for more information.
 - j. That they can withdraw their consent to be a part of the evaluation any time.
 - k. That withdrawal from the evaluation will not affect any services they receive and that if they are in the treatment arm, withdrawal from the evaluation will not affect receipt of Divert Plus once the intervention has begun.
3. Young people and parents/carers will also be provided with a flow diagram to illustrate what will happen to their data and will be talked through this.
 4. Young people and parents/carers will be told that they will have more information provided to them at a later date on information sharing and will have the opportunity to provide confirmatory written consent, or to withdraw their consent, at this stage.
 5. Verbal consent will then be sought by the young person and parents/carers and this will be recorded by the Divert Plus practitioner on a simple consent form, along with the time and date, and planned date for a follow up visit. The young person will sign this form, as will the parent/carer if present.
 6. If consent is received then the young person will be randomised into either the treatment or control group using the sequentially numbered, opaque, sealed envelope method.
 7. Divert Plus case worker will communicate the result to the young person and their parent/carer, supported by training from Cordis Bright

If parents/carers are not contactable in the custody suite or home visit, then the Divert Plus case worker may continue with the young person's assent (with administering baseline outcome measures and randomisation) and seek parental consent in the arranged follow up meeting.

Three attempts will be made by Divert Plus case workers to reach the parent/carer via home visits. If they cannot be contacted or their consent is then not given, the young person's data will be deleted and they will not participate in the programme/evaluation. The young person's support will not commence until consent from the parent/carer has been gained.

Follow up meeting

A follow up meeting will be conducted at the time appointed with the young person and parent/carer, within 28 days, to obtain written consent. The process of obtaining confirmatory, written consent, is as follows:

1. Young people and parents/carers will be given a participant information sheet and privacy notice containing full information on what will happen to the young person's data. The information sharing flow diagram will also be provided again. The case worker will clarify any issues that are not clear and read out the information if required.
2. Young people and parents/carers will then be given a consent form to read and sign and the practitioner will read out the consent form if required.
3. If written consent is received then the young person will proceed with support.
4. Those in the treatment group will undergo a full assessment process with the Divert Plus practitioner including SALT screening and will co-develop a personal change plan. Those in the control group will be informed that they will receive a further follow up meeting (or two if the evaluation progresses to Efficacy) to check in on how they are doing and repeat the questionnaire.

When young people cannot be met in the custody suite, a home visit will be conducted within 24 hours. The full information sheet will then be given, alongside the simplified flow diagram, and written consent sought in the first instance from the young person and parent/carer, before proceeding to baseline data collection, randomisation and the moment. The screening and personal change plan can then take place in the same visit or in a follow up visit.

This consent procedure is based on the standard process that Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City Youth Justice Services use for the delivery of their statutory services.

4.4 Sample size

The Divert Plus programme intends to accept as many of the young people fitting the target criteria as it can. It is anticipated that the programme will have the capacity to accept all

young people fitting the above criteria and there will be no limit on the number of participants who can participate in the evaluation.

On this basis, we anticipate that around 100 young people will participate in the Pilot Trial RCT – approximately 50 in the treatment and 50 in the control group. This means for the Pilot Trial RCT it is unlikely that we will be able to detect a statistically significant effect in offending behaviours between the control and treatment groups. However, effect sizes will be used to identify potential differences between the Divert Plus participants and the control group on key outcomes.

We have conducted several power analyses to inform the design of the Pilot Trial and potential Efficacy Trial RCTs. We have conducted power analysis calculations to determine what overall sample size would be needed to identify a statistically significant result with a Power=0.80 (two-tailed $p<.05$) with a 15% reduction in reoffending. In this instance the required sample size would be 338 (169 per group). If we assume a 20% reduction in reoffending the required sample size would be 186 (93 in each group). Our modelling suggests that Divert Plus will work with around 400 young people (200 in the treatment group and 200 in the control group) that could be included in the evaluation over the two-year period (the evaluation focuses on Year 2 and 3 of funding). This sample would be enough to detect a 14% relative reduction in reoffending (Power=0.80, $p<.05$, two-tailed).

However, we will use the Pilot Trial RCT to assess the pace of recruitment to treatment and control groups.

4.5 Methods and data collection

Quantitative data collection methods

In terms of collecting quantitative data, we plan to embed this in the everyday practice of Divert Plus staff. This will ensure timely data collection to reflect individual participant pathways for both those in treatment and control groups. It is also more efficient. We plan to provide support for Divert Plus programme staff, through training and guidance, to help ensure high quality evaluation data.

Baseline data records for each participating young person will be compiled from two sources.

First, and prior to randomisation, each young person who has consented to take part in the evaluation in both control and treatment groups will be asked to complete a baseline questionnaire. Administration of the questionnaire will be overseen and supported by a Divert Plus case worker. The questionnaire will be administered online and include the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the Self-Report Delinquency Scale

(SRDS). To ensure linkage between the surveys and other records the baseline questionnaire will collect the young person's full names and date of birth.

Second, for each individual for whom consent is received we will ask Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Youth Justice Services to provide the following information from their data systems:

- Personal identifiable data: for example, address, name of young person, gender, date of birth, ethnicity.
- Socioeconomic information: for example, whether in full time education or employment, long term physical or mental health condition.
- Data on care status: for example, whether Child Looked After, Child in Need or Child Protected status
- Data on offending (and potentially victimisation) histories

We will collect and analyse data on the last two bullets as part of an Efficacy Trial if the programme progresses to that phase.

Using a procedure similar to those described above, young people in both the treatment and control group will be surveyed again 9 months post randomisation²⁵. The follow-up questionnaire will include the follow-up version of the SDQ as well as a repeated version of the SRDS.

In addition to these data sources, Divert Plus practitioners will collect data on dosage, intensity and duration of the intervention for those in the treatment group. This will include:

- Activities/interventions received (mentoring/SALT/RJ/OOCD)
- Duration of support (dates started, ended and points in between)
- Quantity of support (quantitative record of each supportive interaction)
- Completion/non-completion of activities young people were offered/supposed to receive.

This when combined with the above measurement tools will enable us to ascertain for the treatment group what types, how much and for whom the activities delivered as part of

²⁵ Young people will also be surveyed again at 15-month follow up if Divert Plus progresses to an Efficacy Trial.

Divert Plus have the potential to work most effectively. It is likely this analysis will be more meaningful if the evaluation progresses to an Efficacy Trial RCT.

Qualitative data collection methods

To qualitatively evaluate the implementation of the pilot as part of the implementation and process evaluation (IPE), a series of semi-structured interviews will be undertaken with Divert Plus staff (n=10), and wider stakeholders associated with the project (n=10).

Divert Plus staff will include Divert Plus case workers, mentors, and speech and language therapists. Wider stakeholders may include representatives from partners working with the young people in Divert Plus, including the police, youth justice, liaison and diversion, and children’s social care. Wider stakeholders and Divert Plus staff will be nominated for interview by Divert Plus project leads based on their level of involvement with Divert Plus.

Once nominated for interview, the Cordis Bright research team will contact the stakeholders giving them more information about the purpose of the research and interview and what it will involve. They will ask for their consent to be involved in the interview and then organise a time to speak with them.

Wider stakeholders and project staff will be interviewed by a member of the Cordis Bright team via telephone or Microsoft Teams.

For each stakeholder group, we will design an interview topic guide that explores the key Pilot Trial research questions. We will agree this with the project team and, if required, YEF colleagues.

Methods overview

Figure 1 below maps each research method to be employed within the Pilot Trial RCT against the research questions that they will address. Please see Section 2 for a full list of Pilot Trial research questions. The research question numbers in the table below cross-reference those in Section 2.

Figure 1: Pilot Trial research methods

Research methods	Data collection methods	Participants/ data sources (type, number)	Data analysis methods	Research questions addressed
Quantitative questionnaire data	The Divert Plus team will support young people in both the treatment	For the Pilot Trial, approximately 100 participants who consent to be	Simple descriptive statistics (e.g. univariate statistics,	RQ 2, 3, 4,5,7

Research methods	Data collection methods	Participants/ data sources (type, number)	Data analysis methods	Research questions addressed
– using the SRDS and the SDQ	<p>and control groups to fill in an outcomes measure questionnaire at the following times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline (prior to randomisation) – in the custody suite/at the young person’s home. • 9-month follow up – at the young person’s home 	<p>involved in the trial:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 in the treatment group • 50 in the control group 	<p>frequencies, means, percentages etc) and comparisons (e.g. measures of association, effect sizes, statistical significance) between treatment and control groups.</p>	
Quantitative Divert Plus monitoring data	<p>To be collected by Divert Plus practitioners from the young person, as well as their social care and education records, and recorded in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County YJS case management systems, as well as a joint spreadsheet.</p> <p>To be exported and transferred securely to Cordis Bright by Nottingham City YJS and Nottinghamshire</p>	<p>Background information for all young people participating in the Divert Plus Pilot Trial (100 in total – 50 in treatment and control group) including: Name, Address, Gender, Date of Birth, Ethnicity, Care status, education engagement status, offending/victimisation history etc.</p> <p>Activity data for all young people participating in Divert Plus treatment group (50 young people) including: Activities/intervent</p>	<p>Simple descriptive statistics (e.g. univariate statistics, frequencies, means, percentages etc) and comparisons (e.g. measures of association and effect sizes, statistical significance) between treatment and control groups.</p> <p>Pre-specified bi-variate and multi-variate analysis exploring relationships between activity and dosage if emerging differential</p>	RQ 1, 2, 4,5,6,7

Research methods	Data collection methods	Participants/ data sources (type, number)	Data analysis methods	Research questions addressed
	County YJS from their data systems.	ions received (mentoring/SALT/RJ/OOCD); Duration of support; Quantity of support; Completion/non-completion of the support offered. Activity data for all those in the control group (n=50 young people) in relation to business as usual services they have received – to be captured at the 9-month meeting.	outcome associations are found between treatment and control groups.	
In-depth interviews with project staff (IPE study)	The Cordis Bright team will conduct interviews with Divert Plus project staff online/via telephone.	Project staff, e.g. staff from mentoring organisations, Divert Plus case workers, speech and language therapists. N=10	Thematic analysis	RQ 1,2,3,5,6,7,8
In-depth interviews with wider stakeholders (IPE study)	The Cordis Bright team will conduct interviews with wider stakeholders associated with Divert Plus online/via telephone.	Stakeholders from e.g. the police, youth justice, liaison and diversion, and children’s social care N=10	Thematic analysis	RQ 1,2,4,5,6,8

5. Data analysis

5.1 Quantitative analysis

The quantitative data analysis will involve examining the prevalence of:

- The total number of young people recruited to the trial as a proportion of the number of young people eligible for the trial.
- The total number of young people recruited to the trial for whom full baseline data was available as a proportion of all those who commenced the trial.
- The total number of young people who withdrew from Divert Plus before completion as a proportion of all those allocated to Divert Plus.
- The total number of young people who withdrew from the trial in total.
- The total number of young people receiving Divert Plus who have data indicating that they have received the expected dose.
- The total number of young people in both the intervention and control condition who completed questionnaires at follow-up.

The above will provide a picture of the number of young people who have successfully 'completed' Divert Plus and therefore provide the basis for refreshing and updating the power analyses to inform potential sample sizes for the Efficacy Trial.

To evaluate whether Divert Plus is having a promising impact on the key outcomes of offending and violence the results of the post-test results of the SRDS and SDQ scales will be compared using Hedges' G and an intention to treat approach (i.e., comparing the results for all those in the treatment group, regardless of whether they completed, to all in the control group). A regression model will be considered, but balancing the importance of the co-variate (e.g., differences in the level of self-reported offending at baseline) with the serious caution against such practice²⁶.

5.2 Qualitative analysis

²⁶ de Boer, M. R., Waterlander, W. E., Kuijper, L. D., Steenhuis, I. H., & Twisk, J. W. (2015). Testing for baseline differences in randomized controlled trials: an unhealthy research behavior that is hard to eradicate. *The international journal of behavioral nutrition and physical activity*, 12, 4. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12966-015-0162-z>
Last accessed: 25/02/2022

The qualitative evidence we capture through interviews with project staff and wider stakeholders in the Pilot Trial and IPE study will involve examining:

- How the pilot recruitment, randomisation and retention processes have been established and embedded, and how they work in practice.
- Whether data collection processes have been established and embedded effectively.
- The perceived recruitment and retention rates of Divert Plus, and how this reflects the acceptability of and demand for the intervention in the local area.
- How the Divert Plus model has been implemented, and whether it has maintained fidelity with the co-designed Theory of Change and Logic Model.
- Any emerging outcomes for young people receiving Divert Plus over and above business and usual.
- The acceptability of the RCT design to the key Divert Plus programme stakeholders.

Evidence will be recorded in a matrix, which maps responses against the key research questions. Our approach involves deploying a mixture of a priori codes and open coding to categorise and identify recurring themes and issues. This is an iterative process, using initial data collected to establish themes, and using these themes to continue to code further data. This allows for constant comparison of the themes and ensures that any theories or judgements are closely linked to the data that they developed from. This mirrors a thematic approach to analysing qualitative data.

We will triangulate this qualitative data with the quantitative data outlined above. We will map both quantitative and qualitative data against the research questions outlined above to understand how well both the Pilot Trial and the Divert Plus programme have been implemented and to understand the strength of emerging evidence of positive outcomes for young people. Together, this information will inform the decision about whether progression to an Efficacy Trial will be practicable and useful.

6. Outputs

As part of the Pilot Trial RCT we will produce the following outputs:

- A revised theory of change and logic model for Divert Plus if this is deemed necessary.

- A report which will set out the findings in answer to the research questions posed by the Pilot Trial – see Section 2.
- An assessment of the feasibility of undertaking an Efficacy Trial based on the success criteria outlined in Section 3. If an Efficacy Trial is deemed feasible, the report will include recommendations for the design of an Efficacy Trial based on the findings from the Pilot Trial.

7. Cost data reporting and collecting

Our approach to cost data collection, analysis and reporting will be informed by YEF guidance on Cost Reporting which can be viewed here:

<https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/21.-YEF-Cost-reporting-guidance.pdf> .

Our approach will be rooted in the following key YEF cost reporting principles:

- Estimates are the costs of delivery only
- Cost estimates will be derived using a ‘bottom-up’ approach
- Cost estimates will be informed from the perspectives of all organisations involved in delivering the intervention
- Estimates will capture the nature of resource used, the quantity and monetary value in delivering the intervention.

In line with YEF guidance, our approach will focus on capturing the following main categories of costs: staff, programme procurement, buildings and facilities, materials and incentives for taking part. Our cost estimates will not include the cost of evaluation or programme development. More about our approach to developing our approach to cost reporting during the Pilot to inform the Efficacy evaluation is outlined in 7.2 below. The approach will be developed collaboratively as part of the Implementation and Process Evaluation during the Pilot and then implemented as part of the Efficacy evaluation.

7.2 Pilot Trial Cost Reporting Activity

As stated above, we will deliver cost reporting in line with YEF guidance and through a collaborative approach with Divert Plus stakeholders. During the Pilot Trial we will conduct qualitative consultation with 10 key staff and 10 key stakeholders as part of the Implementation and Process Evaluation (IPE). As part of these interviews, we will ask staff and stakeholders questions to inform and develop our understanding of:

- Key partners involved in delivering Divert Plus. This will help us further understand where costs may be incurred in the successful implementation and delivery of Divert Plus.
- The resources required to implement and deliver Divert Plus and how these costs can be monetised using “bottom-up” principles.
- The most effective approach to capture information about estimating costs. For example, depending on our findings this could be through: (a) a survey of key partners, (b) requests for information from key partners, (c) time budget approaches, and/or (d) interviews.

We will discuss with staff and stakeholders from the Divert Plus programme the best approaches to ascertaining the cost of delivering Divert Plus and the most effective approaches to capturing this information.

Based on the above, we will develop and map out a framework to estimate the cost of delivering the Divert Plus programme which we will implement during the Efficacy Trial. We anticipate that this will be based on cost information primarily derived from Divert Plus staff and stakeholders but that it will also consider the costs incurred by the wider system, for example, the time for other stakeholders to attend meetings, providing information to the programme etc.

8. Ethics and registration

The University of Greenwich Research Ethics Committee has approved this evaluation under reference: UREC/21.3.7.5. This involved the submission of a lengthy and detailed application which was subject to review and scrutiny from YEF and Divert Plus colleagues.

9. Data protection

9.1 Evaluation data during the study

We are in the process of working with Nottinghamshire VRU, Nottingham City YJS and Nottinghamshire County YJS on Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) and Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs) for the evaluation. We will require a separate DPIA and DSA between Cordis Bright and Nottingham City YJS, and between Cordis Bright and Nottinghamshire County YJS.

These will cover flows of data between Cordis Bright, Nottingham City and County, and YEF during the Pilot Trial. During the Pilot Trial period we will also work with Nottinghamshire VRU and Nottinghamshire Police to set up DPIAs and DSAs so that we can access police data to inform the Efficacy Trial, should the evaluation progress to this stage.

Cordis Bright (the evaluator), Nottingham City YJS and Nottinghamshire County YJS will be data controllers of personal data throughout the evaluation, as specified in YEF data guidance (available here: <https://res.cloudinary.com/yef/images/v1625734275/cdn/YEF-Data-Guidance-Projects-and-Evaluators/YEF-Data-Guidance-Projects-and-Evaluators.pdf>). We will follow our full Data Protection and Information Governance Framework (available here: <https://www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/information-governance-and-data-protection>) when storing and handling personal data for the evaluation. We are also registered under the Data Protection Act, have Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation and are registered under the NHS Data Security and Protection Toolkit.

For this evaluation, we have:

- A clear legal reason for Nottingham City YJS and Nottinghamshire County YJS sharing data with us, informed consent / Public Task;
- A robust process to transfer data, i.e. Nottingham City YJS and Nottinghamshire County YJS will transfer data by secure methods such as secure email (CJMS) or using Switch Egress. Data will be obtained from the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County's case management systems, as well as a shared spreadsheet used for Divert Plus monitoring data;

- Secure storage of data, i.e. data is saved on our secure cloud-based Microsoft 365 servers. Personal or sensitive data has additional encryption with access only to designated/authorised members of our team;
- Pseudo-anonymisation where possible including separating personal data from questionnaire data and separate storage;
- Project data is deleted securely at the end of the project. We have followed YEF guidance on data protection, which includes producing privacy notices and information sheets (available on request).

9.2 Data Archive

At the end of the trial, all data that we collect as well as identifiable information will be transferred to the Youth Endowment Fund for archiving and future analyses. At that point, the YEF will become the data controller of said data. The archiving process will involve the following steps:

- We will securely transfer data to the Department for Education (DfE)
- The DfE will use the identifiable data in the datasets we provide to identify the target young people (YP) on the National Pupil Database (NPD)
- The DfE will replace all identifiable data with YP's unique Pupil Matching Reference (PMR) number from the NPD. I.e., at this point, all identifiable data will be destroyed and the YP's data will become pseudonymised. The DfE will only process YEF data for the purpose of pseudonymisation. Once this is completed and data transferred to the ONS, all YEF data will be removed from their systems.
- The DfE will pass the pseudonymised data to the ONS Secure Research Service (SRS)
- Separately, the DfE and Ministry of Justice (MoJ) are linking together the NPD and Police National Computer (PNC). This linked data will be made available via the SRS and it will be possible to link this data to the pseudonymised data on children held in the YEF archive. This will allow future evaluations and researchers to assess the long-term impact of YEF funded projects on education (e.g. truancy and exclusions, educational attainment etc.) and offending outcomes.
- The data will be held in the SRS indefinitely. However, this will be reviewed every 5 years, following submission to the YEF archive, to see whether there is a continued benefit to storing the data and its potential use in future research.

- The YEF will use Public Task as the legal basis for processing.
- Therefore, whilst participants are able to make a request for their data to be removed from the archive, and the YEF will consider all such requests on an individual basis, there is not an automatic right for data to be withdrawn from the archive.
- As Controller of the archived data, the YEF would never permit the recombining of the data in the YEF Archive with DfE data that would enable reidentification of individual data subjects. Furthermore, neither would the DfE or the ONS facilitate access to the NPD for this purpose. From the perspective of anyone accessing YEF Archive data, it will effectively be anonymised

10. Personnel

Key personnel from the Divert Plus programme delivery and Cordis Bright evaluation teams are presented below.

Divert Plus programme team

- Alison Donaldson – Portfolio Manager, VRU, with responsibility for project management.
- Sonia Burton – Specialist Project Manager/Team Leader – operational lead overseeing implementation of the programme, reporting into Youth Justice for operational matters and VRU Portfolio Officer for monitoring if outputs and outcomes.
- Qualified Youth Justice case workers x2 (FTE) – responsible for conducting ‘the moment’, initial assessment and then overseeing the case for young people.
- Non-qualified Youth Justice case workers x2 (FTE) – responsible for conducting ‘the moment’, initial assessment, and then overseeing the case for young people.
- Sessional youth workers x 6 (FTE) – responsible for delivering mentoring to young people.
- Speech and Language Therapists x 2 (FTE) – responsible for providing speech and language therapy.

Evaluation team

- Dr Stephen Boxford, Principal Investigator, Project Director. Steve will be involved in and will quality assure all activities across the study. Activities will include: project set-up and management; study design and protocol development; information governance; ethical clearance; research tool development; reviewing programme documentation; evidence review; stakeholder consultation and workshops; overseeing baseline and data collection; practitioner support; cost data capture; qualitative analysis; quantitative analysis; reporting.

Steve is a Director and the Head of Research at Cordis Bright. He has over 20 years experience of delivering and publishing high quality research and evaluation in the area of criminal justice for Central Government Departments, What Works Centres, Police and Crime Commissioners and Fire and Rescue Services, Local Authorities, Health Agencies and Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations. He has a BA from the University of Oxford and an M.Phil. and PhD from the the University of Cambridge.

- Professor Darrick Jolliffe, University of Greenwich, Co-Principal Investigator. Darrick will lead on methodological decision-making and undertaking statistical analysis regarding the Pilot Trial RCT. Activities will include: project set-up and management; study design and protocol development; information governance; ethical clearance; research tool development; stakeholder workshops; cost data capture; quantitative analysis; qualitative analysis; reporting.

Darrick is Professor of Criminology at the University of Greenwich. He specialises in evaluation of criminal justice programmes and has published high-quality evaluations on RCTs and QEDs. He has been commissioned by the Ministry of Justice, Home Office, EHRC, NHS, Police and Crime Commissioners and Probation services.

- Caitlin Hogan-Lloyd, Co-Principal Investigator and Project Manager. Caitlin will have day-to-day responsibility for the delivery of the Pilot Trial RCT and be the main point of contact for YEF and the Divert Plus team practitioners. She will be responsible for organising and delivering quantitative and qualitative consultation and will support the delivery of training to Divert Plus practitioners. She will also lead on drafting analysis and reporting. Activities: project set-up and management; study design and protocol development; information governance; ethical clearance; research tool development; reviewing programme documentation; evidence review; stakeholder consultation and workshops; staff

consultation; practitioner support; cost data capture; qualitative analysis; quantitative analysis; reporting.

Caitlin is a consultant at Cordis Bright. She is an experienced project manager who has delivered research and evaluation on criminal justice and young people for clients including PCCs and large children's charities. Caitlin has a BA from the University of Cambridge.

- Kam Kaur, Co-Principal Investigator and Safeguarding Lead. Kam will provide expert input on safeguarding and consultation with young people. She will provide safeguarding oversight of the project and will be a point of contact for Cordis Bright team members to raise any safeguarding concerns that may arise from the evaluation. She will also be involved in qualitative consultation with staff and stakeholders and will quality assure outputs based on her experience in youth justice.

Kam is a Director and Head of Safeguarding at Cordis Bright. She leads projects across youth offending and children's services and is social work and probation qualified. She has a background in criminal justice practice, management and inspection, with a focus on trauma-informed approaches and restorative justice.

- Lily Rodel, Researcher. Lily will provide ongoing support to Divert Plus practitioners with administration of the evaluation tools. She will also be involved in organising and conducting quantitative and qualitative consultation with young people, staff and stakeholders, as well as analysis of data.

Lily is a researcher at Cordis Bright. She is a skilled social researcher, experienced in quantitative and qualitative research methods including in youth justice settings. Lily has a first class BA in Social Anthropology from The School of Oriental and African Studies and an MSc with Distinction in Digital Anthropology from UCL.

11. Risks

Figure 2 below outlines a number of key risks to the evaluation. We will be using this risk register to support the delivery of the evaluation. It will be reviewed regularly by Cordis Bright and Nottinghamshire VRU and updated to reflect progress.

Figure 2: Risks and mitigation strategies

Risk	Likelihood (Low/Medium/High) Impact (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigation
Recruitment to the trial	Likelihood: Medium-High Impact: High	<p>Divert Plus is reliant on young people and their parents/carers consenting to be involved in the evaluation. This means young people and their parents/carers must know that young people in the programme will be well supported – including those young people in the control group. We have agreed an approach with Divert Plus where young people in the control group are assessed, signposted/referred to alternative support, safeguarded and have their data collected. This approach is ethical and will also reassure parents/carers that young people will receive appropriate support. In addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A two-step consent process will be implemented, including a second meeting where young people and parents/carers can confirm or withdraw consent. This should allow young people and parents/carers the opportunity to discuss thoroughly their decision to participate in the study and ask any questions before confirming their consent, reducing the likelihood of later drop out. This second session is also likely to increase buy in and trust from young people and parents/carers in both the treatment and control group. • Practitioners will be trained in the process of recruiting and gaining consent from young people and

Risk	Likelihood (Low/Medium/High) Impact (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigation
		<p>their parents/carers, to ensure all elements of the study are explained clearly and accurately. This should help to support recruitment and retention, as young people and their parents/carers will be clear on what is required of them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment numbers will be regularly reviewed and rates of participants moving into the evaluation both in the treatment and control groups to ensure numbers are fit-for-purpose for the Pilot Trial and potential Efficacy Trial. Numbers will be discussed regularly with Divert Plus colleagues and recruitment strategies amended if deemed necessary, based on feedback from practitioners.
Attrition from the Trial	Likelihood: Medium Impact: High	<p>Key mitigations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedding recruitment and data collection into project practice; Reviewing data capture progress regularly; Following-up participants who may have moved-on; Exploration and application of keep in touch techniques used in longitudinal studies; Reviewing strategies during the Trial phase with the aim of addressing issues of attrition.

Risk	Likelihood (Low/Medium/High) Impact (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigation
The Divert Plus programme changing its delivery approach during the Pilot Trial	Likelihood: Medium Impact: High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working closely with the project to understand changes. • Flexibility in research design where possible. • Ensuring all stakeholders are aware of the impact changes have on evaluation.
Data collected not addressing the key evaluation questions.	Likelihood: Low Impact: High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-design approach. • Piloting of tools. • Early analysis to assure fit-for-purpose approach and tools.
COVID-19 places unexpected restrictions	Likelihood: Medium Impact: Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodology designed on premise of digital first except where face-to-face is essential. • Regularly review methods and timescales. • Boosting size of evaluation team if appropriate.
Safeguarding/public safety/data breach	Likelihood: Medium Impact: High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take actions as agreed with YEF/Divert Plus project protocols. • Ensure that there is learning across the team about what happened and what steps could be taken to avoid in future. • Take these relevant steps going forward. • Introduce additional training if required. • Re-visit methodology if required. • Re-allocate team members if appropriate.

Risk	Likelihood (Low/Medium/High) Impact (Low/Medium/High)	Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree an appropriate communications strategy.

12. Timeline

Figure 3 below sets out the key milestones for the delivery of this Pilot Trial.

Figure 3 Pilot Trial Milestones

Dates	Activity	Staff responsible/ leading
January 2022	Pilot Trial commences	Cordis Bright and Nottinghamshire VRU
February 2022	Ethics application submitted to the University of Greenwich Research Ethics Committee Data Protection Impact Assessment and Information Sharing Agreement discussions begin Consent procedure discussed and forms drafted Target group finalised	Cordis Bright and Nottinghamshire VRU
March 2022	Scoping consultation with key stakeholders Consent procedure and forms finalised Trial research tools finalised Divert Plus approach to recording monitoring data agreed and finalised Randomisation approach finalised and agreed Scripts and guidance for Divert Plus practitioners developed Delivery of Pilot Trial Evaluation Protocol	Cordis Bright and Nottinghamshire VRU

Dates	Activity	Staff responsible/ leading
April 2022	<p>Divert Plus practitioners receive training in obtaining consent from young people, carrying out randomisation, and administering research tools.</p> <p>Data Protection Impact Assessment and Information Sharing Agreement in place</p> <p>Ethics clearance achieved from the University of Greenwich Research Ethics Committee</p> <p>Divert Plus practitioners receive support in rolling out research tools</p> <p>Baseline data collection begins</p>	Cordis Bright and Nottinghamshire VRU
April 2022- April 2023	Baseline and 9-month data collection progress for both the treatment and control groups	Divert Plus practitioners with support from Cordis Bright
February-April 2023	Implementation and Process Evaluation (interviews with Divert Plus staff and stakeholders)	Cordis Bright with support from the Nottinghamshire VRU
April 2023	Pilot Trial Data completed	Divert Plus practitioners with support from Cordis Bright
May-June 2023	Analysis and reporting	Cordis Bright
July 2023	<p>Trial report completed</p> <p>Efficacy Trial protocol drafted</p>	Cordis Bright and Nottinghamshire VRU

Appendix A: Divert Plus Theory of Change

This Theory of Change is based on the original draft produced by Nottinghamshire VRU as part of their submission to YEF and subsequent workshops and discussion. It has been further developed through a co-design process between Nottinghamshire VRU, Cordis Bright and YEF during the scoping phase of this evaluation.

Why	Why	Who: participants	How: intervention	What: short-term outcome	What: medium-term outcome	What: long-term outcome
<p>Divert Plus has been designed to address three key areas:</p> <p>1) Too many children who have been arrested go on to commit (further) offences including serious youth violence (SYV), crime and anti-social behaviour. Specifically, this might include: Violent Criminal Offences; Gang involvement; Bullying perpetration; Weapon carrying; Substance use/misuse; Drugs offences; Aggression.</p> <p>2) The point of arrest, prior to charge and court action,</p>	<p>The point of arrest, prior to charge and court action, is a key moment for young people at risk of SYV – they are more aware of consequences, and are having to think about their next steps.</p> <p>Positively engaging with children at this point can start to build a trusted relationship.</p> <p>Children with speech and language needs are not being identified and are not provided with sufficient support to address their needs².</p> <p>Children get involved in SYV despite being arrested because:</p>	<p>Individuals who have been arrested for violence or associated offences with risk factors for violence such as drug dealing <u>and</u> who are young people aged 10-17 (although those aged 10-14 will be a particular focus) <u>and</u> who consent to be involved in Divert Plus.</p> <p>The intervention will have a particular focus on individuals who are in contact with criminal justice services for the first time but will not exclude those arrested previously.</p> <p>The intervention intends to accept as many of the children fitting these</p>	<p>Engage with the child in the custody suite or at home within 24 hours</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child is in need of (and more open to) support and guidance; - Child gains a better understanding of the implications of arrest - Child is supported to have a better understanding of their options including OOC and Restorative Justice (RJ) - Child and worker jointly agree a personal change plan (will normally include mentoring) 	<p>Higher proportion of children involved in routes that involve restorative justice practices and OOC.</p> <p>Child has a better understanding of the implications of their behaviour and the impact on victims.</p> <p>Child reports they are less likely to commit (further) future offences.</p> <p>Increased number of children report they have a trusted</p>	<p>Child behaviour improves</p> <p>Child engagement with ETE improves</p> <p>Child engages with more positive role models and has more positive trusted relationships</p> <p>Child has fewer contacts with the police</p> <p>Child demonstrates more pro-social skills and behaviours</p>	<p>Fewer people in the treatment group commit/are involved in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Violent criminal offences b) Non-violent offending c) Gang involvement d) Weapon carrying e) Bullying perpetration

Why	Why	Who: participants	How: intervention	What: short-term outcome	What: medium-term outcome	What: long-term outcome
<p>is a key moment²⁷ for young people at risk of perpetrating SYV²⁸.</p> <p>Local evidence for the effectiveness of engaging child at the moment has come from the existing U Turn intervention, which has reduced reoffending through the provision of trained youth workers in custody providing wraparound support through effective coaching and mentoring to get</p>	<p>- They lack an understanding of the impact of crime on victims³³.</p> <p>- They have difficulties with emotional regulation³⁴.</p> <p>- They experience delays in the swift administration of justice³⁵.</p> <p>It is known that the propensity for involvement in SYV is also increased by low levels of pro-social</p>	<p>criteria as it can. Where prioritisation needs to occur, it will be done on the basis of a risk assessment tool.</p> <p>Where a child is released under investigation, this will be included as an additional risk factor within the assessment.</p> <p>Those receiving a no further action from police will be included where capacity allows and where the case</p>	<p>- child begins to develop a trusted relationship with an adult.</p> <p>Screen for speech and language needs and provision of support to address those needs:</p> <p>- Increase identification of children with speech and language needs;</p>	<p>relationship with a positive role model.</p> <p>Improved skills in emotional regulation.</p> <p>Improved consequential thinking and decision-making.</p> <p>Child feels that needs are better understood and that they are accessing</p>	<p>Recognised risk factors reduced</p>	<p>f) Substance use/misuse</p> <p>e) Aggression</p>

²⁷ The term ‘teachable moment’ has been criticised for taking agency from the child so for this proposal we refer to ‘The Moment’ (implicitly a learning moment)

²⁸ Child is commonly very vulnerable at the point of arrest and in custody: this represents a window of opportunity to impact swiftly on their pathway through the justice system and also potentially to prevent offending in the future.

³³ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232894872_Experiences_of_shame_and_empathy_in_violent_and_non-violent_young_offenders Last accessed: 25/02/2022

³⁴ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0093854817695842> Last accessed: 25/02/2022

³⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243718/evidence-reduce-reoffending.pdf Last accessed: 25/02/2022

Why	Why	Who: participants	How: intervention	What: short-term outcome	What: medium-term outcome	What: long-term outcome
<p>children aged 16-26 into employment²⁹.</p> <p>3) More than 75% of children arrested have speech & language needs. If not identified and addressed, the risk of the child going on to commit violent offences or</p>	<p>skills/values³⁶, self-esteem³⁷, and a lack of positive relationships³⁸.</p>	<p>suggests intervention may be needed.</p>	<p>- professionals receive tailored advice on how to communicate with the child;</p> <p>- Improve speech, language and communication skills of child which in turn increases their ability to articulate their needs, increases the likelihood of accessing services and support that can address these needs, and improves engagement with education</p> <p>Provision of one-to-one mentoring:</p>	<p>support that meets those needs.</p> <p>Higher proportion of children accessing speech and language therapy.</p> <p>Improved speech, language and communication and engagement skills.</p>		

²⁹ In 2019/20 U Turn connected with 133 offenders at custody suites, approximately 80% of which were arrested for violent crime. There was only capacity to support 28 of those offenders with intensive mentoring however 100% of these have not re-offended within the 12 months timeframe.

³⁶ See: Boxford, S. (2006) *Schools and the Problem of Crime*. Routledge

³⁷ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01639625.2017.1395667?journalCode=udbh20> Last accessed: 25/02/2022

³⁸ See: Boxford, S. (2006) *Schools and the Problem of Crime*. Routledge

Why	Why	Who: participants	How: intervention	What: short-term outcome	What: medium-term outcome	What: long-term outcome
experience exploitation is increased ³⁰³¹³² .			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourages child to consider options for their future and supports them to make informed, positive choices. - Equips child with new skills to help with emotional regulation. - Supports child to engage with (and stay with) services; -this also increases the take up of restorative justice and out of court disposals (OCD). - Increases understanding of the needs of the child and enables mentor to act as an advocate to access other 			

³⁰ Evidence: <https://evidence.nihr.ac.uk/alert/young-offenders-with-undiagnosed-language-problems-are-twice-as-likely-to-reoffend-within-a-year/> Last accessed: 25/02/2022

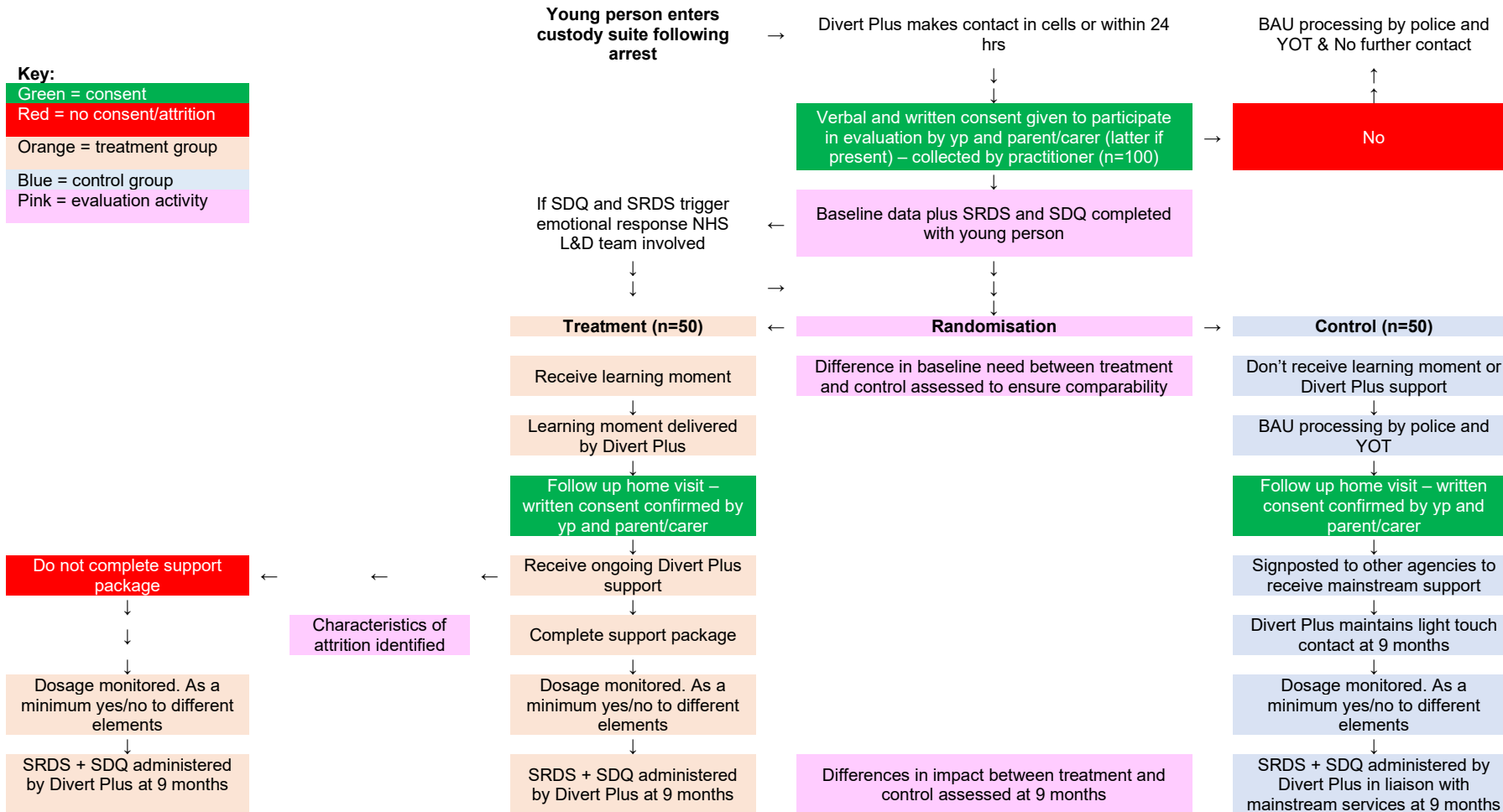
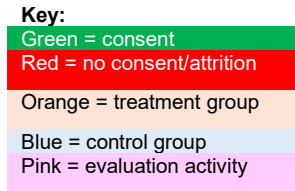
³¹ See: Hadden, D. & Dominey-Hill, E., 2020. CAMHS and Youth Justice Speech and Language Therapy Service Final Report, Nottingham: NHS Nottinghamshire HealthCare.

³² See: Nottingham City Council, 2020. Speech and Language Therapy in Youth Justice Evaluation

Why	Why	Who: participants	How: intervention	What: short-term outcome	What: medium-term outcome	What: long-term outcome
			services that can help them address identified need ³⁹			

Appendix B: Divert Plus Pilot Trial Flow Diagram

³⁹ The APPG report on Knife Crime and Violence 2020 highlights the unique role youth workers can play in reaching out to vulnerable young people in society including those who are at risk of or are being exploited.





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