

Sunderland Youth Offending Service

The Youth Court

The right way forward

What happens to it after court?

The court and the Youth Offending Service will keep a copy. If you were sent to custody a copy will go with you for the staff there.

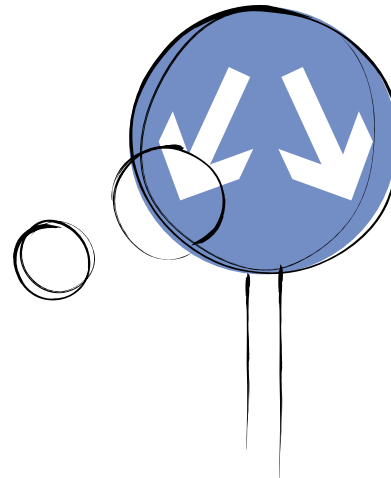
Sunderland Youth Offending Service

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The Youth Court

What is the Youth Court?

The Youth Court is set up to deal with young people separate from adults. It recognises offending by children needs special attention. It has rules that can help to protect you by stopping your name being printed in the papers. It still has the job of punishing you, but in a way that will also help you keep out of trouble. Members of the public cannot come into the Youth Court.

The Youth Court will usually insist that your parent or carer is with you when you are dealt with.

The court will tell you when you have to be there.

Where is the Youth Court?

There are two courts in Sunderland.

**Gilbridge Avenue,
Sunderland**

**Dairy Lane,
Houghton-le-Spring**

Who is in the court?

There will be up to three people called 'Magistrates' behind a desk. They are like judges but are not lawyers. The Magistrates have the job of deciding if you are guilty and what should happen to you.

A clerk who is a trained lawyer helps and advises them. There will also be someone to tell the court about the crime you are suspected of committing ('The Crown Prosecutor').

There will be someone from the Youth Offending Service there to help the court with information.

Who helps me?

You can have a solicitor yourself. It is a good idea to talk to one before court. Courts can be confusing. Solicitors understand how they work, and they are there to do their best for you.

Reports to court

If the court decide you are guilty of the offence you were charged with the magistrates will usually want to know about you before they reach a decision about any punishment and help you might need. This is done by asking for a 'pre-sentence report'.

Who will do this report?

Someone from the Youth Offending Service will be asked to talk to you about what happened and why. They will also ask you about other things in your life, such as family, work or school.

They will also want to know about any problems or good things in your life, who are your friends and what you do with your time.

The person writing the report will get to know the evidence for the charge and will talk to parents, school and others who can help. They will want you to help put ideas to the court about what sentence you should get.

It is very important that you keep the appointments given to you to speak to the person writing the report.

Who will see the report?

You, first of all. Also, your parents, your solicitor and the court. People who are going to work with you may need to see it. The report is private and so will not be shown to anyone who doesn't need to see it.