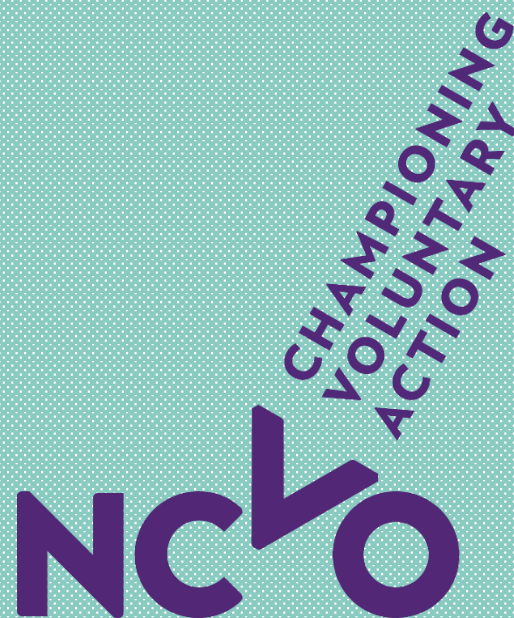


JUST FOR KIDS LAW CASEWORK EVALUATION 2021–22

Sarah Menzies with Sally Cupitt

May 2022



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Executive summary

The evaluation and Just for Kids Law support

Just for Kids Law commissioned NCVO to conduct an external evaluation of its casework model. The evaluation aimed to understand how the model makes a difference to the children and young people it works with, which aspects of the model are effective or less effective and how internal systems, processes and values help or hinder work with children and young people.

Just for Kids Law casework is holistic. Support includes access to advocates, a legal team, youth opportunities (employment, training and education), internal and external participation opportunities (where children and young people can influence decision making) and campaigning.

The evaluation was based on 15 depth interviews with children and young people, four interviews with staff, two surveys (with 36 children and young people, and 19 staff), a review of evaluation data held by Just for Kids Law and three co-production workshops held with young people and staff to explore the findings and co-produce recommendations.

The evaluation ran from May 2021 to May 2022, a time period which included high rates of covid-19, restrictions on socialising and higher rates of working from home for office-based jobs. Just for Kids Law transitioned most of its services to online in this time frame, although certain teams, including legal, still met with children and young people where needed.

May 2021–May 2022



19 interviews

15 with children and young people; 4 with staff



2 surveys

36 children and young people responded; 19 staff responded



Review of evaluation data

held by Just for Kids Law



3 co-production workshops

Just for Kids Law clients

Just for Kids Law works with some of London's most vulnerable children and young people. This includes **disproportionally high levels of clients from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, care-experienced young people and those with disabilities.**

Between April 2020 and March 2021 the team worked with **785 young people and 1,297 cases**. This is a similar total number of young people to the previous year but involved 20% more cases, reflecting increased need among Just for Kids Law's clients during this period.

During this period, **Just for Kids Law supported more older clients with more complex needs**: 77% were young people aged 18 or over (and 23% under 18); 80% were supported with multiple issues. This has been an accelerating trend over the last few years.

Satisfaction with support

Children and young people were very satisfied with Just for Kids Law support. They attributed this to the way they were treated by staff, who they found to be **supportive, positive and approachable**. **Empathy** was a key driver of satisfaction. They found the **holistic nature of Just for Kids Law, involving multiple support options in one place, the most useful aspect of support**.

Children and young people described Just for Kids Law as **looking out for their best interests** and more **respectful** and **compassionate than other services**. This approach to working with children and young people, combined with the multiple support options, appear to be **key values that distinguish Just for Kids Law from other agencies offering support**.

Children and young people **felt supported during the pandemic**, but there was preference overall for face-to-face support (although a smaller number liked the flexibility of online support).

Young people's outcomes

Children and young people reported multiple changes in their lives as a result of Just for Kids Law support.

- **The majority made progress on their issues**, despite the challenging external context and some children and young people having multiple complex issues. Progress translated into improved life situations, such as securing more stable housing, being allowed to return to school, maintaining custody/access to a child and avoiding prison.
- They felt **more confident, less isolated, more stable, calmer** and **less worried** as a result of Just for Kids Law support.
- There was a strong sense that children and young people **better understood their rights and entitlements** after Just for Kids Law support. This gave them **a newfound sense of 'power'** and **a new ability to challenge external agencies**, if needed.
- Many children and young people said their **relationships with external agencies had improved** as a result of Just for Kids Law. They felt **professionals listened to them more**.
- Many children and young people felt **more hopeful** about their lives and future. They **better understood their options moving forwards**. They mostly felt they would be in a **better position to tackle future issues themselves** and some already had. However, there were some

who felt that they would still need support moving forwards, particularly those with mental health issues.

Exploring change

As part of the evaluation, we wanted to understand the change experienced by children and young people, including what the most significant change was, how change happened, for whom and in what circumstances.

- Children and young people stated the most important changes for them were: **resolution of the issue they were facing, the increase in understanding about the issues they were facing and changes in how they felt.**
- **Increased contact** with Just for Kids Law seemed to lead to **greater outcomes**, particularly related to confidence.
- **Those accessing support for longer (over one year) tended to feel more confident about tackling future issues themselves and saying what they needed/wanted from external agencies.** However, there were cases where they strongly stated this was not the case and they were worried about what would happen next.
- There were **few differences in outcomes based on age, gender, ethnicity or disability**, although subsample sizes were small. **There were no examples where the interviewees felt they had been treated differently because of who they were (based on protected characteristics).**
- Children and young people and staff felt that Just for Kids Law embedded its values in its practice and was **largely child-centred, was led by young people, built trusting relationships, was strengths based and operated in a holistic way.** There were limitations identified by staff, including **having enough time to be strengths based and holistic and some lack of internal consensus as to what was meant by these values.**
- For some children and young people, **increased trust in Just for Kids Law led to greater satisfaction and increased trust with other external agencies.**
- Children and young people **attributed most of their reported outcomes to Just for Kids Law.**

Learning from delivery

There was significant learning from the delivery of casework.

- Children and young people needed **greater awareness of what support Just for Kids Law offered**; the same was true for some staff.
- Children and young people appreciated expenses for travel and meals. **Staff wanted more clarity on available expenses.**
- Some teams were frequently at capacity. As a result, there were cases where **staff did not signpost children and young people to other internal support.** In addition, **there were**

challenges related to referring young people to other teams because of capacity.

- Children and young people found the support to be accessible. **Staff communicated in ways they found easy to understand, tailored communications** for them and met with them at times and places convenient for them.
- Some children and young people **needed additional support to identify their needs**. There were cases where they had unmet needs, sometimes in part because they had not articulated these or felt they had not been asked.
- Staff reported **challenges in case management, particularly Just for Kids Law’s databases**. These were time consuming to keep up to date and did not collect the data they needed. Since the start of the evaluation, Just for Kids Law has started to make improvements to Apricot (one of the databases) in consultation with staff.
- Most children and young people **felt clear about how and when their support would end** but there were examples in which this was not the case. **Some staff also found it difficult to close cases** due to the complexity of the case, limited places to signpost to and the relational style of support. The advocacy team has recently introduced tailored disengagement packs for children and young people nearing the end of their support.
- Staff felt that **communication between teams** and in particular **sharing data about clients** were areas for improvement. They wanted more clarity on what could be shared.
- Children and young people wanted **more support from staff on mental health** in general, as well as specialised support staff. They also suggested **introducing a key worker** to help with everyday issues.

Conclusion

Just for Kids Law provides an important and distinct service to the children and young people it works with. This evaluation demonstrated that children and young people were very satisfied by its support, and this led to an array of important outcomes that had a significant impact on their lives and life quality.

The empathetic, supportive, holistic casework model was the main enabler of these changes. However, there was a tension here. What the children and young people valued the most (the way they were treated) was also challenging for staff to deliver. Certain teams frequently reached capacity under the current model.

Just for Kids Law support was largely accessible and equitable: there were no examples of children and young people feeling they had been treated differently because of who they were; this was in contrast to their experience outside of Just for Kids Law.

Evidence suggested staff and children and young people needed to better understand the full extent of the Just for Kids Law offer and to be reminded of this periodically. Staff understanding is a necessary precondition for the children and young people to understand the offer. This was a priority area for development.

The evaluation also highlighted some internal processes and systems that could hinder the ability of staff to support children and young people, such as standardisation and agreement of Just for Kids Law's approach. Some internal systems and processes needed streamlining to make working with children and young people smoother.

Recommendations

Short term

In the next three months, Just for Kids Law should:

- **raise awareness of its offer and its boundaries** among children, young people, staff and the external agencies it works with
- work with existing children and young people to **identify any additional needs** beyond their initial concerns
- dedicate time to reach cross-team consensus on **the Just for Kids Law approach**, including, for example, what it means to be holistic or reflective
- consider steps to **address its capacity issues**, such as introducing waiting lists, more clarity on current and anticipated capacity of teams and more transparent communication of this to the other teams and the children and young people.

Long term

In the mid to longer term, Just for Kids Law should:

- **develop its case management databases** to better meet the needs of staff and internal reporting requirements
- **improve communications between teams**, including clarifying what can and cannot be shared about children and young people's cases
- reflect on **which children and young people it should work with**. For example, should the organisation focus more on children? Should it prioritise those who would most benefit from holistic support?
- **work to develop more positive endings** for children and young people, including developing a transition plan
- consider **introducing new learning and socialising opportunities** for children and young people
- consider introducing **new keywork support** and **extending the advocacy offer**, for example to young parents and carers
- **further develop its monitoring and evaluation practices** to capture the rich learning from its work.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 About Just for Kids Law

Just for Kids Law is a children's rights charity founded in 2006. Its vision is for all children and young people in the UK to have their legal rights and entitlements respected and promoted, and their voices heard and valued. Its mission is to work with and for children and young people to hold those with power to account, and to fight for wider reform.

Just for Kids Law achieves this by providing legal representation and advice, direct advocacy and support, and fighting for wider systemic reform through strategic litigation, campaigning and equipping others to work for children's rights.

Just for Kids Law supports children and young people aged between 10 and 25, mainly in London.

1.1.1 Just for Kids Law's casework

Just for Kids Law's casework model is distinctive. The approach is child-centred, strengths based and holistic. Staff aim to support children and young people through listening to and being led by the children and young people's wishes and feelings, working at the child or young person's pace and designing an individual package of support to cover all areas of identified need.

Staff support children and young people to navigate their way through challenging times, whether they are facing difficulties at school or immigration problems, experiencing homelessness, in need of social care support or caught up in the criminal justice system. To meet this wide range of needs, Just for Kids Law's casework combines legal advice and representation with direct advocacy and development opportunities; children and young people can access support from Just for Kids Law through a single service or through a combination of the following casework elements:



Advocacy: Where a child or young person is assigned to an advocate or a trainee advocate. Advocacy involves empowering the child or young person to make sure their rights are upheld and their views and wishes are heard. For example, this could be on issues relating to community care, housing and/or education.



Legal: Where a child or young person is assigned a lawyer for legal advice and representation. As above, this can cover a range of issues.



Youth opportunities (employment, training and education): Where a child or young person is supported through a programme of advice, guidance, support and work experience that builds their skills and confidence for life and work.



Participation: Where a child or young person is supported to influence internal decision making within Just for Kids Law, for example sitting on recruitment panels, and to speak with policy makers and practitioners external to Just for Kids Law on issues relating to the organisation’s work.



Youth campaigning: Where a child or young person with lived experience of the issues that Just for Kids Law works to address is supported to design and deliver a youth-led campaign on issues arising in Just for Kids Law’s practice areas, such as school exclusion.¹

April 2020–March 2021

785

children and young people were supported through Just for Kids Law casework

Between April 2020 and March 2021, **785** children and young people were supported through Just for Kids Law casework. This was delivered by a team of lawyers, advocates, a youth engagement and participation officer, a youth engagement and campaigns organiser and a youth opportunities worker.

1.2 About the evaluation

Just for Kids Law commissioned NCVO to conduct an external evaluation of its casework from May 2021 to May 2022. The evaluation aimed to:

- understand how the model makes a difference to the children and young people it works with
- explore which aspects of the model are effective or ineffective for children and young people, including those with different needs or in different circumstances
- understand how Just for Kids Law internal systems, processes and values help or hinder work with children and young people
- highlight which components of the model work well, for whom and why.

Findings from this evaluation will be used to facilitate organisational learning and development, to directly inform how Just for Kids Law develops its casework model and practice, and to demonstrate impact to funders, the media and policy makers.

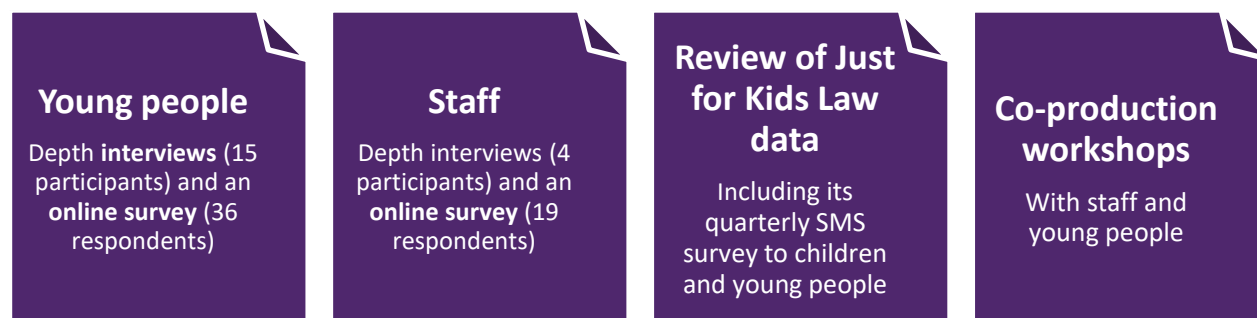
Funding for this evaluation has come from the Oak Foundation and The National Lottery Community Fund. Both are also funding Just for Kids Law to deliver parts of its casework offer.

¹ Just for Kids Law introduced a new therapy pilot during the evaluation. This is expanded on later in the report.

1.3 Evaluation methods

In May and June 2021, NCVO facilitated a theory-of-change workshop with senior staff from across the casework teams. We created five separate theories of change to reflect the different service areas: legal, advocacy, youth opportunities, youth campaigning and participation. We also created an overarching draft theory of change to indicate where there were common areas. These were used as a framework for planning and developing the evaluation and for writing this report.

We made some changes to our planned methodology throughout the evaluation to best meet the needs of Just for Kids Law and to extend our reach to young people. Data collection was carried out between September 2021 and January 2022. **Data sources included:**



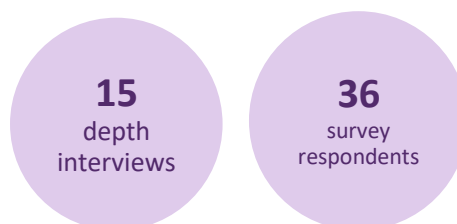
1.3.1 Depth interviews and survey for young people

The evaluation initially sought to interview 32 young people. They were to be chosen using a sampling matrix to help ensure we included children and young people from a range of backgrounds and patterns of Just for Kids Law service use.

We offered incentives (£20 gift voucher per interview), and Just for Kids Law advised on how to make our invite to interview as accessible as possible. The staff team also made considerable efforts to invite children and young people but fewer than planned took part in the evaluation. Staff advised that many of their clients struggled to take part because of precarious life situations and/or poor mental health. Attendees in the youth co-production sessions agreed with the staff view and also fed back that they found the idea of evaluation to be intimidating and suggested additional incentives could encourage more engagement in future research. They also felt that covid-19 may have impacted on likelihood to engage.

To widen the reach of the evaluation, we removed the planned sampling criteria and introduced a survey for children and young people. We checked the respondents against the original sampling criteria to ensure the key variables were covered.

We secured 15 depth interviews with children and young people and 36 survey respondents. The profile of the respondents can be found in the appendices.



We advised children and young people that they did not need to fill in the survey if they had already been interviewed.

The interviews were a mix of in person, online and phone, as per the young person's preference.

1.3.2 Staff survey and interviews

We invited all casework staff at Just for Kids Law to participate in a survey. Through the survey questions, we explored Just for Kids Law's internal systems, processes and values and whether these help or hinder work with children and young people. There were 19 respondents (of 31 staff delivering direct work to children and young people).



We also interviewed four senior Just for Kids Law staff to explore some of the themes emerging from the survey responses.

1.3.3 Just for Kids Law data

Just for Kids Law holds a range of case data on its children and young people, including the number and profile of young people, the services they accessed and some outcome data. Furthermore, it runs SMS surveys for children and young people exploring whether their situation has changed, whether they feel more confident since accessing Just for Kids Law support and whether they know more about their rights and entitlements. The data from **May and October 2021 SMS surveys** is included in this report.

There are some gaps in Just for Kids Law monitoring data. Updates to the referral form and process and to their case management system intend to address this.

1.3.4 Co-production workshops

We ran three co-production workshops in late March 2022. We invited young people who had taken part in the evaluation and those involved in the ambassadors programme (influencing Just for Kids Law services and wider work) to attend via two sessions – one online and one in person. **Four young people attended.** The third session was for all casework managers. **Eight staff attended.** During these sessions, we presented the preliminary results and asked attendees to comment on and critique findings and to co-produce recommendations.

1.3.5 Limitations

As with any evaluation, there are some limitations to our methodology. Participants were self-selecting. This may mean that the evaluation includes the views of those who held stronger views (more or less contented with the service) and/or those who were more engaged with Just for Kids Law.

We had fewer interviews than expected and, although we added a survey, we did not generate the depth of data we would have gained from 30+ interviews. Nevertheless, the interviews gave us rich insight and the surveys allowed an additional layer of analysis where we could check and compare responses across the tools.

The survey also had more people accessing single services, females and disabled people, and slightly higher rates of white British than the ethnicity profile of Just for Kids Law users. We considered this in our analysis. There were a small number of incomplete surveys but they did contain some data within and therefore we chose to include them. Additionally, there were several questions with lower response rates.

There were a small number of parents who took part in an interview (the mother and child were on the call) and the survey, despite the communications stating the survey was for the young person. We have included these responses in the evaluation and made it clear where the response originated from a parent rather than a child or young person.

Data on the profile of children and young people accessing Just for Kids Law services is not comprehensive. This is reported within the related chapters.

1.4 This report

This report covers:

- a description of who accessed Just for Kids Law support
- satisfaction with the support
- outcomes for children and young people
- an exploration of the most important change for children and young people, and the enablers to achieving outcomes, including any differences between children and young people
- learning from delivery
- conclusions and recommendations.

2 JUST FOR KIDS LAW'S CLIENTS

This chapter summarises Just for Kids Law's casework clients. It covers the number of children and young people supported, type of support accessed and participant profile, and compares this data with that of other years. Just for Kids Law internal data covers the period April 2020 to March 2021 with reference to previous year's figures where helpful.

Key findings

- The covid-19 pandemic affected casework in a number of ways.
 - **Just for Kids Law transitioned most of its casework to online support**, with the exception of the legal crime team who still saw children and young people in person.
 - The pandemic led to **more older clients with more complex needs being supported**, continuing and accelerating a previous trend.
 - There was a **decrease in the number of referrals being accepted** during this period.
 - Clients came with more needs, resulting in more cases (or issues) being worked on.
- Clients can have more than one issue dealt with by Just for Kids Law. **Most children and young people (80%) required support with multiple issues**; 20% on single one-off issues.
- Just for Kids Law worked with **785 children and young people in 2020–21**, representing **1,018 individual cases**.
- In the previous year, staff supported a similar number of clients but with fewer cases – this is despite the challenges of staff working from home and delivering casework online.
- **More young men/boys (57%) were supported** than young women/girls (37%), where gender was known.
- Just for Kids Law tended to support older clients: **77% of cases were 18 or over** and 23% under 18.
- **Just for Kids Law supported some of the most vulnerable children and young people in London**: ethnic minorities (82%), care-experienced children and young people (60% in general casework and 80% among advocacy clients) and those with a disability (more than a quarter).

2.1 Effects of the pandemic on who accessed the service

Just for Kids Law managed to transition many of its services online. Staff reported challenges in: trying to manage more intensive and challenging work with vulnerable children and young people without being able to see them in person; having to work from their homes; higher rates of staff absence due to illness.

Most of the legal team had to adapt to courts closing and a shift to online hearings. The crime team still saw children and young people in person, visiting police stations, prison and courts.

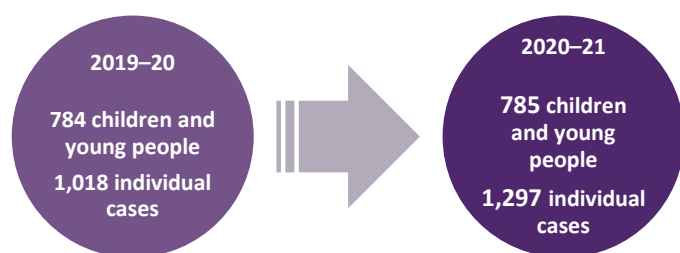
The pandemic and following restrictions led to worsening mental health for children and young people accessing support with Just for Kids Law and increased feelings of isolation. There were also disruptions in statutory and other charitable services meaning that children and young people

found it harder to access external support and needed Just for Kids Law more. Further, staff found referring children and young people externally to be more challenging and, overall, cases took longer to resolve.

Just for Kids Law saw an increase in demand from older clients, continuing a trend that had preceded the pandemic (formerly there were higher rates of children being supported). Demand increased for more intensive support, mental health support and vital needs, such as food and accommodation. Clients needed help with digital devices and data to be able to access online support where they otherwise could not access online services.

Staff reported that this affected how many children and young people could be supported, as individual cases were often more demanding. There was also a decrease in the number of referrals being accepted across the casework teams.

2.2 Number of children and young people supported



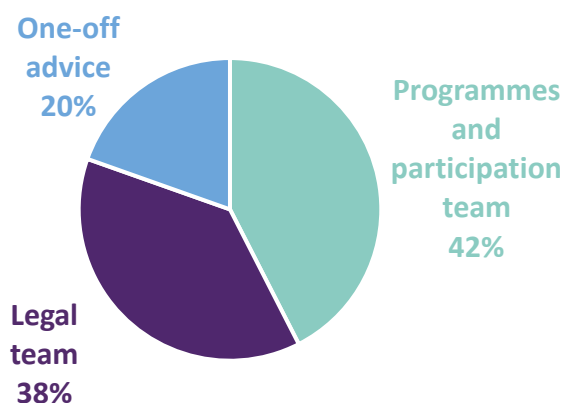
In the period 2020–21, Just for Kids Law supported 785 young people, almost the same as in 2019–20 (784 people). In 2021, there were 1,297 individual cases (clients may have more than one case, each relating to different needs), compared with 1,018 in the previous year. The increase in cases reflects the increased levels of need among the client group.

Despite the challenges of working from home and higher rates of staff absence, staff were able to support a similar number of children and young people to the previous year, with a greater number of cases.

2.3 Support accessed

Of the 1,297 casework examples worked on over 2020–21:

- 42% were with the programmes and participation team (advocacy, youth opportunities, youth campaigning and participation) (551)
- 38% were with the legal team (492)
- 20% were given one-off advice (254).



Children and young people were supported with a range of needs relating to housing and homelessness, social care, education, finance, immigration and criminal justice issues. The most common issues were crime (38% of clients) and education/training (21%) (see table below).

Table 1: Issues that children and young people were supported with

Issue	% of clients	Issue	% of clients
Crime	38%	Immigration	4%
Education and training	21%	Employment	3%
Housing and homelessness (18+)	13%	Financial position	3%
Community care	10%	Health	2%
Participation	6%	Family	1%

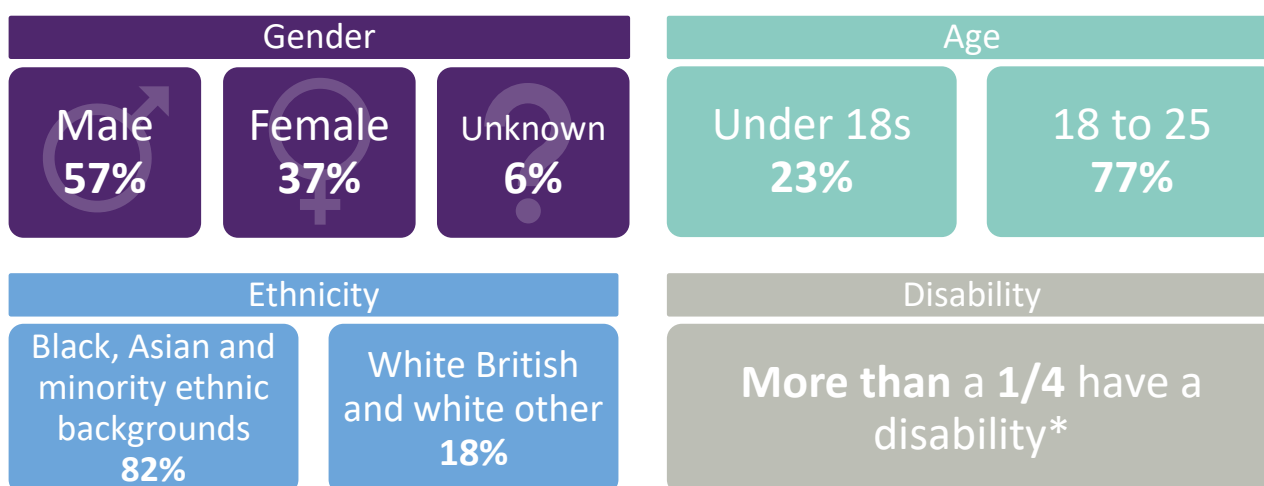
We do not have a base number for issues children and young people were supported with.

The majority of Just for Kids Law clients receive support on more than one case: 20% of children and young people were supported with a single issue and 80% with multiple issues.

2.4 Profile of the children and young people

Just for Kids Law supports some of the most vulnerable children and young people in London. This includes a high proportion of children from ethnic minorities, and care-experienced and disabled children and young people.

The following data represents the period April 2020 to March 2021. Data is not available for all children and young people and therefore the data below represents data held rather than data on the whole client group.



Involvement with children's services

60% of clients were in care, care leavers or have had some involvement with children's services*

For advocacy, almost 80% of clients were in care, care leavers or have had some involvement with children's services

**It is not always possible to collect this data, so this data is based on children and young people who inform Just for Kids Law.*

2.4.1 Gender identity

In this period, Just for Kids Law supported more males than females (n=737).

- Male – 57%
- Female – 37%
- Unknown – 6%.

This is the aggregated data. There is some difference across teams, for example legal crime team tends to work with more males whereas the participation team works with a higher number of females.

2.4.2 Age

Table 2: Age of children and young people accessing Just for Kids Law casework support

Age bracket	% clients	Clients tended to be older children and young people (77% were 18 to 25) rather than children (under 18s: 23%), with a large proportion in the upper age category of 21–25 (43%). See the table on the left for further details. Staff reported that the age of the average client has changed over the last few years and they now tend to support older clients. This became more pronounced during the pandemic.
9–12	2%	
13–15	8%	
16–17	13%	
18–20	34%	
21–25	43%	

We do not have a base number for age.

2.4.3 Ethnicity

The majority of clients (82%) were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. White British and white other accounted for the remaining 18% (n=504 young people).

Table 3: Ethnicity of children and young people accessing Just for Kids Law casework support

Ethnic background	% clients	Ethnic background	% clients
Black African	28%	Other Asian background	4%
Black British	16%	Asian Indian	2%

White British	13%	Asian Bangladeshi	<1%
Black Caribbean	10%	Other Black background	<1%
Other ethnic group	6%	Mixed white and Black African	<1%
Other white including Irish and Irish Traveller	5%	North African/Maghreb	<1%
Mixed white and Black Caribbean	4%	South or Central/Latin American	<1%
Other mixed/multiple ethnic background	4%	Arab (Middle East)	<1%
Asian Pakistani	4%	Total	100%

2.4.4 Involvement with children's services

Around 60% of Just for Kids Law clients were in care, were care leavers or had some involvement with children's services (470 young people). It is not always possible to collect this data and therefore this is likely to be an underestimation. In our interviews, many children and young people told us they did not have any family or other support networks to draw upon.

For advocacy, almost 80% of clients were in care, were care leavers or had some involvement with children's services (87 young people).

2.4.5 Disability

More than a quarter of Just for Kids Law casework clients have some form of disability. It is not always possible to collect this data so, again, this data may be an underestimate.

2.5 Profile of evaluation participants

NB: It is not always possible to collect this data, so the following data is based on children and young people who inform Just for Kids Law.

Gender				Age			
Interviews		Surveys		Interviews		Surveys	
Male 7	Female 8	Male 8	Female 20	Child 3	Young person 12	Child 5	Young person 25

Ethnicity				Disability			
Interviews		Surveys		Interviews		Surveys	
Ethnic minority 12	White British 2	Ethnic minority 18	White British 11	Disability* 6	None 6	Disability* 11	None 17

Services accessed			
Interviews		Surveys	
Multiple services 10	Single 5	Multiple services 12	Single 24**

* Disability and/or long-term health condition

** NB: Four respondents stated they had accessed a single service but then selected or mentioned more than one type of service accessed.

A comprehensive account of the profile of respondents can be found in [appendix 2](#).

3 SATISFACTION WITH SUPPORT

Drawing on interviews with, and the survey of, young people, this section looks at young people's satisfaction with Just for Kids Law support. It also compares Just for Kids Law services with others accessed by children and young people, such as social services and other charities. Further feedback from children and young people on the Just for Kids Law approach as a whole can be found in sections 5 and 6.

Key findings

- **Children and young people were mostly very satisfied** with Just for Kids Law support. They attributed this to the way they were treated by staff, who they found to be **supportive, positive and approachable**. **Empathy** was a key driver in terms of satisfaction.
- Children and young people found **having multiple support options in one place the most useful aspect of Just for Kids Law support**.
- Some children and young people felt they had been **treated poorly by other external services**. **They did not feel listened to, believed or respected**. **In contrast to this**, children and young people pointed to a journey of **positive change** as a result of the support they received from Just for Kids Law.
- We found **no difference in satisfaction levels for different groups** of clients in terms of gender, age or ethnicity, but this is based on small samples.
- Where issues were highlighted by clients, this tended to relate to a **lack of staff capacity**.

3.1 Levels of satisfaction with Just for Kids Law support

Levels of children and young people's satisfaction with Just for Kids Law was consistently high.



Of 32 respondents in the young people's survey, 24 respondents stated that they rated Just for Kids Law really positively. Seven thought it was OK. One person did not rate it positively (explored below). Among the interviewees, satisfaction was equally high.

Children and young people attributed their positive response to the following.

- Just for Kids Law was highly supportive. Children and young people felt staff were responsive to their needs and went 'above and beyond', for example going to the home of the young person to support them when they were feeling too low to leave.

- Just for Kids Law was approachable. Children and young people who were care experienced tended to emphasise this.
- The positive attitude of staff and the way staff treated children and young people. Children and young people described staff as empathic, caring and respectful (one of Just for Kids Law's core values):

[Caseworker] gave me respect; he wasn't pompous or anything like that. He was just literally always reassuring me. And I thought that was nice. He ... said look, we'll get to the bottom of this, and I can imagine how you felt. ... He had empathy. And I thought that took some of the stress out of it.
(Interviewee)

Some of the children and young people who had been with Just for Kids Law for multiple years described how young and vulnerable they had been when they first engaged with Just for Kids Law and how Just for Kids Law had helped them through some of the most difficult periods of their lives: 'I was a scared, broken little girl when I first came in.'

Some of the children and young people described feeling 'part of' Just for Kids Law. For example, one young person who had been active in youth participation said: 'I am part of what they do with young people. It's part of my life now.'

Some children and young people observed that staff were 'very busy', and in a small number of examples children and young people did not feel the support they were being given was frequent enough. They felt the organisation was, at times, understaffed. They described how communication between themselves and their caseworker slowed down. There were examples of children and young people contacting the person supporting them and finding they were not available when the young person had a pressing issue. They wished there was someone else who could help them in these moments. This may be related to the pandemic and higher rates of staff absence.

In one case, a parent (survey respondent) described a 'falling out' between a parent and a staff member. We do not have further details on this case, but the parent described that they had tried to follow up with the staff members but felt they had been ignored. This person scored negatively throughout the survey.

3.1.1 The most useful aspect of Just for Kids Law support

Children and young people reported a range of aspects of Just for Kids Law support that were most useful to them, all linked to the holistic nature of the casework model. These included:

- having multiple support options under one roof
- having Just for Kids Law at your side when dealing with issues (rather than having to do this on your own or with a less supportive agency)

- having support for both everyday issues and the major issues. An example cited was having support with time planning to be better able to attend meetings and appointments, as well as a lawyer’s support with a housing issue
- the new opportunities afforded to them, for example: taking part in an employment panel to recruit staff at Just for Kids Law; connecting to, and talking about, their experiences to new people including MPs and ministers; publishing articles through Child Poverty Action Group; new professional contacts.

3.2 Comparing Just for Kids Law support with other agencies

Children and young people described Just for Kids Law as very different to many external agencies. There were some exceptions, such as the work of other charities, including The Children’s Society, but many children and young people felt they had been treated poorly and unfairly by agencies that they thought should have been more supportive. This was particularly felt in relation to statutory bodies, including social work, those working in housing, teachers and the police.

Just for Kids Law	Other agencies
 <p><i>Going above and beyond</i></p> <p><i>Caring</i></p> <p><i>Professional</i></p> <p><i>They looked out for my best interest</i></p> <p><i>It’s like they like us</i></p> <p><i>Feels like a family</i></p> <p><i>Respectful</i></p> <p><i>Consistent</i></p> <p><i>More suited to children</i></p> <p><i>More compassionate</i></p>	 <p><i>They didn’t take me seriously</i></p> <p><i>They discriminated against me</i></p> <p><i>[I was] passed around</i></p> <p><i>Everyone’s against you and you’re not being heard</i></p> <p><i>Social work, they did nothing – they are my corporate parents but it took Just for Kids Law to intervene. ... Just for Kids Law did it in less than a year</i></p> <p><i>I’ve been mucked around</i></p> <p><i>They treated me disrespectfully</i></p>

One interviewee noted that Just for Kids Law was in a much better place to communicate with children and young people who had experienced trauma, adding that he felt Just for Kids Law ‘teach you your worth’. Whereas other agencies seemed to not believe him and had exaggerated reports on his behaviours, Just for Kids Law had not:

They were different agencies they were bringing in, writing reports on me – rude reports. A long time ago I used to smoke – they put down ‘he has a drug issue’, said I was violent and told other staff I was violent. With [Just for Kids Law advocate], she didn’t want to read what was on the paper – ‘that is not what makes you a person – I want to get to know you for who you are’. That is the way to connect to a child who has gone through trauma. *(Interviewee)*

3.3 Different experiences of Just for Kids Law

We explored user satisfaction for different groups of children and young people accessing Just for Kids Law support. No substantive differences were found, and given the small size of the subgroup numbers, it was not possible to draw any firm conclusions.

3.3.1 Potential influences on experience of the service

We undertook further analysis on the following variables to see if there was any difference in how children and young people accessed services.

- Accessing single or multiple services
- Accessing support for short or longer term (1–3 years or longer)
- Type of service accessed²

For each of the above, we found little difference. This may be because our sample size was small but it may also relate to Just for Kids Law’s equitable approach to working with children and young people.

3.3.2 Experience according to age, gender, disability and ethnicity

In this dataset, there did not appear to be any difference in experience of Just for Kids Law based on age, gender, disability or ethnicity.

We asked interviewees whether they felt they had been treated differently by Just for Kids Law because of their personal circumstances. We offered a range of prompts including ethnicity, gender and disability. There were no examples where children and young people felt they had been treated differently. They had examples of where other agencies had treated them differently based on one of these factors but this was not the case at Just for Kids Law. Some children and young people felt that the Just for Kids Law staff team was quite diverse and noted that there were people with lived related experience of issues among the staff team.

² Many of those engaged in the evaluation accessed multiple services and therefore it was not possible to explore their experience of a particular service unless they mentioned this in an interview. The sample size for those accessing single services tended to be too small to draw any conclusions from.

Those with disabilities or long-term health conditions reported being treated well by Just for Kids Law, for example staff communicating in ways they found easy to understand, tailoring communications; but there were cases where children and young people (survey respondents) needed support but were not offered it.

3.4 Young people's views on the impact of covid-19 on delivery

National lockdowns and subsequent restrictions to seeing people face to face inevitably impacted upon how support was offered. Just for Kids Law moved to online support, although there was some in-person support available for crime cases.

Children and young people reported that they still felt supported throughout the pandemic. They found communication to be good, if a little slower, and they appreciated Just for Kids Law signposting them to additional services where needed, for example food banks. They found staff to be as attentive as before.

However, the pandemic experience revealed a strong preference for in-person meetings. Some children and young people described how isolated they were and how important face-to-face support was to them:

Meeting face to face is a big thing for me. I don't have family. It's nice when someone could come in and see me. *(Interviewee)*

For one young person, moving to an online model of support was actually preferable due to their mental health issues, as it meant they did not have to travel.

More generally, children and young people described how the lockdowns had an adverse effect on their mental health. One person had become too unwell to work with Just for Kids Law during this period.

Some interviewees reported that statutory services slowed down or were not available during the year as a result of the pandemic:

It was slow, it wasn't good at all – the pandemic led to bad responses from people. It played a big part. I had a whole year set back. *(Interviewee)*

4 YOUNG PEOPLE'S OUTCOMES

This chapter draws on data from interviews, the online survey and SMS surveys. It describes Just for Kids Law's success in achieving casework outcomes and focuses on key outcomes.

Key findings

- Most children and young people **made progress** on their issues while working with Just for Kids Law, **despite the challenging external context** and some children and young people having multiple complex issues.
- Children and young people **reported improved life situations**, including securing more stable housing, being allowed to return to school, maintaining custody/access to a child and avoiding prison.
- Many children and young people felt **more confident** following Just for Kids Law support, including feeling **more able to self-advocate and more able to articulate their wishes and feelings**.
- Following Just for Kids Law support, children and young people felt **less isolated**, both in dealing with their issues and more generally. Many did not have any family or other support networks to draw upon.
- Some young people, prior to Just for Kids Law support, reported feeling debilitated by stress. They reported feeling **more stable, calmer and less worried** as a result of Just for Kids Law support.
- There were four cases where interviewees had attempted suicide or felt suicidal because they were so desperate about their situation. Following Just for Kids Law's intervention, these four felt in a **much better state of mind**.
- There was a strong sense that children and young people **better understood their rights and entitlements after the support**. This gave them a newfound sense of 'power' and a new ability to challenge external agencies if needed.
- Many children and young people said their **relationships with external agencies had improved as a result of Just for Kids Law**. They felt **professionals listened to them more**.
- Many children and young people felt **more hopeful** about their lives and future. They **better understood their options moving forwards**. They mostly felt they would be in a better position to tackle future issues themselves and some already had. However, there were some who felt that they would still need support moving forwards.
- Some children and young people **appreciated access to new** opportunities offered by Just for Kids Law, including talking to politicians/decision makers, having articles published and becoming 'changemakers'.

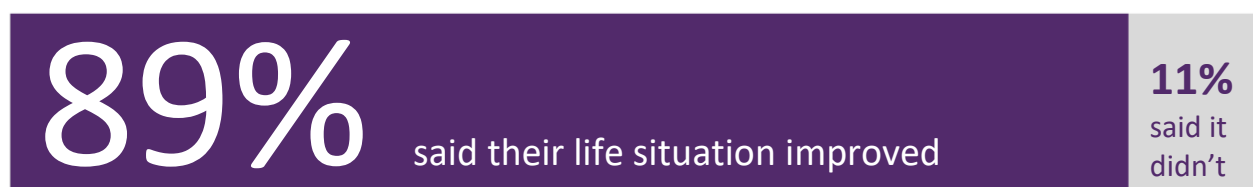
4.1 Overall progress on issues

Most children and young people reported that they had made progress on their issues, despite a challenging external context.



Of the 31 who responded to this question, 24 stated they had made a lot of progress and five a bit of progress. Two had not made any progress at all. In the interviews, there was a similarly positive response.

Children and young people reported that progress was not straightforward. Many came to Just for Kids Law with multiple complex issues. The journey to resolving some of their more pressing issues had been long and arduous and slowed down by external factors, including overstretched social services and the covid-19 pandemic. They attributed progress to Just for Kids Law and felt that Just for Kids Law’s dedicated and responsive support enabled this change.



Just for Kids Law sends out an SMS survey for young people’s feedback, which includes a question on whether children and young people feel their life situation has improved. Of the 73 responses³ across the May and October 2021 surveys, 65 said yes and 8 no.

Among the interviewees, there were several stark examples demonstrating how much young people’s lives had changed because of Just for Kids Law support. Four interviewees described feeling suicidal or attempting suicide before Just for Kids Law intervened and gave them new hope. Others said that, had they not received Just for Kids Law support, they might have served a prison sentence, remained in unsuitable unsafe temporary accommodation or lost custody of their child.

For many interviewees, particularly those who had accessed multiple forms of support, the transformation that happened between the start of the support to the point of interview was considerable:

³ NB: The surveys are sent to all clients each time, so some people may have completed the survey twice.

When I went to prison, I used to self-harm, the only thing [that] stopped me from killing myself was X on the phone saying you are worth more. ... When everyone is against you – I am not a bad person, but everyone was against me – when there is someone in the corner – saying ‘you have these talents’ – you can see it through. *(Interviewee)*

A small number of survey respondents had not made progress (two) or had made a bit of progress (five). One respondent was the person who scored negatively throughout. In this instance, they felt their caseworker had hindered their case. There were two others who would have liked more support from Just for Kids Law.

4.2 Changes in circumstance

There were several examples of changes in circumstances as a result of Just for Kids Law support. Housing was a major theme mentioned across the evaluation. Other themes included changes to employment and training, finances, crime, family and care-leaver cases.

4.2.1 Housing

Many of the children and young people faced housing issues, including living in inappropriate and unfit accommodation and homelessness. Ten interviewees (as well as many of the survey respondents) accessed housing support from the advocates and legal team. As a result, interviewees described multiple ways in which their circumstances had improved. These included: a better housing situation, for example being moved into secure accommodation after staying in multiple hostels; being relocated to a different borough to move away from people exploiting the young person; accessing emergency accommodation; and securing a lease. There were also examples of children and young people being supported to make challenges against local authorities and private landlords, for example to obtain care-leaver status or to challenge the provider over unfit accommodation.

I feel more settled. I wasn't settled before. I was in temp accommodation – they didn't meet my needs – there was no time to grow, no ability to feel settled, having a place to stay and call home. I've always been in care. They've helped me – basically helped me build home. I was moving around before – some not suitable – before I had advocacy involved, I was in a studio apartment with my kids. Now I am in a one-bed trying to get to my next target. They are fighting, helping with my life issues. Everything gets on top of you sometimes, it good to have those professionals that are there. *(Interviewee)*

4.2.2 Employment and education

Children and young people were able to access employment and education support. For many, this tended to be once their initial crisis/es had been resolved and was towards the end of their support from Just for Kids Law. There were different outcomes related to this.

Those accessing youth opportunities described accessing a range of support from Just for Kids Law, helping them to set goals, devise CVs and work towards gaining qualifications and employment. Some were in new employment or education as a result; others were working towards 'a plan' (a career plan devised with help from Just for Kids Law).

4.2.3 Financial situation

Some children and young people accessing Just for Kids Law described financial hardship, a key source of worry. Just for Kids Law supported some of the respondents to access new benefits, such as universal credit, housing benefit and personal independent payment (PIP). Some children and young people reported that they were not able to work due to disability and therefore accessing these benefits was significant. There was also a case of a financial pay out from a local authority; support with this significantly eased their stress and worry.

Children and young people also described being signposted to grants to buy goods for a new home, new laptops and clothes for interviews, and to a food bank.

An advocate supported a young migrant to access advice on university funding, which she was very worried about due to her immigration status. This was successful and she was able to study as a result.

There were also examples related to the legal team where children and young people had legal representation. For example, there were three cases where children and young people had challenged decisions made about their schooling and, in two instances, had returned to school. In these cases, two had special education needs.

4.2.4 Additional changes to circumstances



Criminal cases: Some children and young people were found not guilty or avoided a prison sentence during a criminal case.



Family: At least two interviewees managed to retain custody of their children. There were also examples of support for young parents, such as support to access benefits, goods for the baby and signposting to additional sources of support.



Being given care-leaver status: Some children and young people required support to gain this status, with a range of accompanying support entitlements.

Towards the end, I realised it must be like they care for the people they're working for. That's what I saw actually cos as I said, the people that represented me for my last case when I was at court they really spoke passionately for me towards the judge. And that's what I noticed. And that's why I think they were so lenient because of the way they spoke. *(Interviewee)*

4.3 Improved wellbeing

Beyond changes in circumstance, children and young people reported significant improvements in their wellbeing as a result of support from Just for Kids Law.

4.3.1 Mental health

Thirteen survey respondents⁴ (highest score 17) reported feeling in a better mood as a result of Just for Kids Law support. Interviewees reported feeling more stable, calmer and less worried. They described the overall effect as improved mental health.

13
felt in a
better mood

I had really bad depression. I was taking medication and wasn't in a good place but now I feel much better. And I saw that that was because of the help of Just for Kids Law. They've helped me to be more stable. They've helped me feel like I've had a bit of support. Yeah, they've just helped me a lot. I'm just grateful for them. *(Interviewee)*

A young person involved in campaigning with Just for Kids Law described how they felt like they were making a difference and how positive that was for their wellbeing:

And yeah, another thing is just my general wellbeing kind of like just knowing that I have them there for support that we're working on things that they're helping us be kind of changemakers and stuff like. *(Interviewee)*

⁴ The survey data referenced throughout this section refers to an opt-in matrix-style question. The highest response rate to any of these outcome questions was 17.

Recovery from mental health issues is rarely linear and some children and young people still experienced poor mental health, despite the support. In some cases, it was more manageable but in others, it persisted:

Because I suffer [poor] mental health, this is a hard question to answer. Sometimes I feel the world is horrid, sometimes I feel great. [There's] not much anyone can do. There is no magic wand from any charity.
(Interviewee)

4.3.2 Stress levels

Young people, through the interviews and survey, reported feeling less stressed as a result of Just for Kids Law support.

Fourteen survey respondents reported feeling less stressed. Interviewees described how debilitating their stress was prior to Just for Kids Law support and explained that knowing that Just for Kids Law was there and able to help made them feel much more hopeful and more reassured:

14

felt less
stressed

Well, at least I have like a little bit of weight off my shoulders knowing that I might move from this area thanks to their help. I feel like they've really been helping me. If I have any problems, I can go to them. *(Interviewee)*

4.3.3 Levels of isolation

Seventeen children and young people responding to the survey said they felt less alone when dealing with issues (the most popular response to the outcomes questions in this section) and there was a very strong sense of this among the interviewees. Three interviewees reported no change in isolation levels, but further analysis suggests these interviewees did not feel isolated in the first place.

17

felt less
alone

For a very vulnerable client group, with high levels of care experience, this reduction in isolation was significant. Some interviewees did not have anyone else to help them or support them in any way and were therefore on their own if any issues arose.

There were examples where children and young people expressed that attending Just for Kids Law meetings or connecting to their advocate or other Just for Kids Law staff members helped them feel less isolated and/or improved their mood:

I think my ambassadorship with Just for Kids Law is my only way out of isolation. I tend to self-isolate all the time ... Sometimes I just stopped going to work when I get in those modes, I stop talking to friends, families, but with Just for Kids Law when we have those ambassador meetings, it's just like my time to socialise with people. And when I do get those meetings, or when I do attend, I just feel like afterwards it is just like a doorway for me to open up more ... And when I just attended our meeting this Wednesday, as you can tell, I feel so much better now just from that brief socialisation with the other ambassadors and with X, you know it's giving me an entryway to socialisation again. *(Interviewee)*

I was quite isolated [before]. I had no professional network or structure. Now I can say I am part of the campaigning group. I do things. *(Interviewee)*

4.3.4 Confidence levels

Across the evaluation, children and young people reported significant increases in confidence as a result of Just for Kids Law support.

93%

had more confidence to face their issues

7%

said they didn't

Of the 73 responses across the May and October 2021 Just for Kids Law SMS surveys, 68 said they had more confidence to face their issues because of Just for Kids Law support; five said they did not. Among the interviewees, increased confidence was the strongest outcome. (We also include data from the survey where appropriate). This included confidence to:

- act by themselves
- articulate their feelings
- find solutions/options to tackle issues they may face in the future (see 4.5.2)
- ask for what they want/need from other agencies (13 survey respondents also reported this).

These confidence outcomes were experienced by children and young people accessing all the different service areas.

One respondent described her growth in confidence:

My confidence in myself and what I can fight for myself has skyrocketed. I feel like I could do things for myself now that I couldn't (before) ... *(Interviewee)*

One young person emphasised that they were now confident enough to accept help, something they had not been able to do before:

It's completely, completely, completely changed. I wasn't in a good place back then. I was vulnerable. I wasn't OK. And to be fair I didn't do what they needed me to do. Because they needed me to hand documents in and that, but I wasn't in a good space for meeting deadlines and stuff like that. I wasn't meeting them halfway. I wasn't even allowing them to come and meet me because I wasn't answering phone calls. It was really bad. So I would say it's a big change, because I finally started accepting the help. And I've just changed. It helped my confidence a lot and just helped me be who I am today. *(Interviewee)*

In some cases, children and young people involved in youth campaigning and/or internal youth participation opportunities felt more confident at public speaking and were more able to talk to people in positions of authority and to share their story:

I never used to like groups or sitting in a group session. [Just for Kids Law] have helped me – I can now do it. Even the Mayor and TV with loads of people around, this is the opportunity for me to push – pushing me to do something I am not comfortable with. I could also say I don't want to go but its bettering your life even more. I had social anxiety but it's a really great opportunity to push this to the side. *(Interviewee)*

There were two instances among the interviewees where confidence had not changed but this was because they felt confident from the outset.

4.4 Accessing rights and entitlements

4.4.1 Understanding rights and entitlements

Throughout the evaluation, children and young people reported that they had a better understanding of their rights and entitlements because of Just for Kids Law support; this emerged as one of the strongest outcome areas among the interviewees.

93% better understood their rights and entitlements

7%
said
they
didn't

- Of 72 responses to the Just for Kids Law SMS surveys in May and October 2021, 67 reported that they better understood their rights and entitlements.
- Sixteen survey respondents and all the interviewees reported that they better understood their rights and entitlements (the second most popular response to this question area).
- Ten survey respondents and the majority of the interviewees better understood what support they were entitled to from other agencies, outside of Just for Kids Law.

Children and young people described how gaining this understanding had led to feeling that they had more power and a new ability to challenge external agencies when their rights were being violated:

I have a right to speak my mind, and that power. *(Interviewee)*

For example, one of the child protection meetings ... I was sitting in a meeting ... X [was] there and we'll have an interaction I've disagreed, but the social worker said, 'If you're not going to listen to me, you're just going to disagree with me, you can't see your daughter ... this that and the other.' X said, 'But how can you say that?' I knew that in that situation I was being violated, I knew my rights are being taken away from me by the social worker, a lot of things there were wrong, but I didn't quite know how to put it across myself, and X was amazing she spoke up ... that I have the right to agree or disagree and be treated fairly basically. I was treated very unfairly during that meeting by the social worker. *(Interviewee)*

X told me about my rights and how the police can't question me if an adult isn't present, or my legal guardian isn't present. ... And getting searched they can't search me if I'm under age and stuff like that. So she really opened my eyes to stuff that I didn't know before. *(Interviewee)*

One young person expressed a wish to have workshops focusing on learning, such as housing rights and benefits. She felt this would deepen her understanding of the issues the advocate was helping them to think through.

Care leavers' understanding of rights and entitlements

Care leavers gained a more in-depth understanding of their rights and entitlements as a result of the support of Just for Kids Law. They described the challenges they faced as care leavers, including no networks to draw upon and a lack of understanding of how to communicate effectively with social services. There were examples where they felt they had been treated badly or denied their basic rights by social services. They described how Just for Kids Law had supported them to make challenges to social services, with the support of advocates and lawyers. Through this process, they saw a significant increase in their knowledge of what they were entitled to.

4.4.2 Relationships with external professionals

Among the survey respondents and interviewees, children and young people felt that professionals listened to them more as a result of Just for Kids Law support.

In the interviews, children and young people reported that they were more articulate, were better able to ask external agencies for what they wanted/needed, better understood how external agencies worked and, with support from Just for Kids Law, were better placed to communicate with and challenge agencies:

They started listening to me more while I have my advocate.
(Interviewee)

They helped get my thoughts and feelings across. If I didn't have the advocate there, when I was at the meetings or social services, then social services would never have listened to me. And it was a case of they knew I had no one there for me. And it's only when I really got X, they knew that I had an advocate, they started going, Oh, well, we're suggesting this to Y, and they never suggested that [before]. *(Interviewee)*

I was a care leaver – they were helping me approach, helping me understand my social services. They helped me to think how to go around them in an appropriate manner. They were the main connection in how to talk to social services and how to engage them. *(Interviewee)*

4.5 Feelings about the future

Throughout the evaluation, there were many examples of children and young people feeling more positive about the future as a result of Just for Kids Law support.

Fourteen survey respondents felt more hopeful about life. Among the interviewees, four mentioned wanting to live more peacefully or have a better life. These tended to be those involved in the criminal justice system; one had been excluded from school:

14
felt more
hopeful
about life

It has changed me like I don't do silly stuff anymore. I stopped getting in trouble. *(Interviewee)*

I feel positive, I feel happy, and I feel like they make me want to change and help people. *(Interviewee)*

[They made me feel] like I have a shot at life. *(Interviewee)*

4.5.1 Understanding of options moving forwards

Children and young people reported that they better understood their options moving forwards as a result of Just for Kids Law support.

Sixteen survey respondents said they better understood their options, the second most popular response to this question. In the interviews, children and young people described how Just for Kids Law had supported them in situations where they had previously been unaware of their options:

16

**better
understood
their options**

And the first thing she [key worker] wanted to do was basically put me in social housing. I did not want to go to social housing, but I thought that was my only option of help. Basically, [my advocate] told me like that was not the only help they can provide. There was other things they could help me with, especially with my mental health condition. They could help me with getting my own place or they could help me with a deposit and advanced rent to actually get my own place and then they will be helping me with housing benefits and stuff like that. I didn't know any of that. I was actually going to go to the social housing because I thought that was my only option in the way of help. So yeah, I would think they did give me options. *(Interviewee)*

4.5.2 Confidence to tackle future issues

Children and young people felt more able to tackle future issues, across the evaluation.

Of 73 responses to the Just for Kids Law SMS surveys in May and October 2021, 68 reported that they felt more confident about facing future problems; five said they did not. In the survey, 14 reported feeling more confident to tackle any future issues that might arise. There were many similarly positive responses among the interviewees, but some had reservations.

Some had already faced new challenges since being supported by Just for Kids Law and had managed to resolve the issues themselves. This included a case where a young person had accessed funding to support their studies and had resolved this themselves despite complications related to their immigration status.

There was an additional example where a young person had secured new, more suitable housing themselves replicating the support they had received from Just for Kids Law:

I think working with X has taught me a lot because with my housing situation I didn't know anything and I was just observing X then I figured out how to work with the council and to try to fight for myself and stand for myself. Just recently, I had to move because of my mental condition in London was deteriorating severely and I needed to move just out of the city. I needed help from the council to do that so I had to go and find my keys again to get them to help me with a deposit and advancement and moving fees so I could move away from the city. Basically it was just basically copying what X had done, and you know just doing it on my own and I actually got it done and I felt this great satisfaction. Like yes, I've learned something on my own. I came to that sort of independence like I can fight by myself. *(Interviewee)*

Some felt that they had gained wisdom from their experience with Just for Kids Law, combined with their own developing maturity:

Because when you're older, you get a little bit more independent. I think that I'll handle it way better because ... now I've got understanding of how things go. Because I've never been through anything like this before, so you really learn new things. *(Interviewee)*

Dealing with other authorities I had involved with me – other professionals – helping me understand a bit more on what I am entitled to, what I can ask, just be a bit more comfortable from growing from a teenager into an adult. *(Interviewee)*

Some flagged up that they would still need support if a major issue arose:

If something of that scale happened again, I would need the support. More weight comes with the advocate or personal adviser's words than just a little young care leaver. But I did learn from the whole thing: persistence is key. *(Interviewee)*

Some children and young people were still struggling with trauma and/or anxiety. While they may have gained skills and experience, they did not feel confident to face future issues themselves, particularly if they had another phase of acute stress/anxiety. They felt their confidence levels fluctuated in line with their mental health.

4.5.3 New opportunities

For the children and young people involved in campaigning and participation, there was a strong sense of having new opportunities. They mentioned meeting decision makers, having articles

published through Child Poverty Action Group and talking about their experiences to a wide array of public figures. A key part of this was learning to tell their story and using that to influence change.

5 EXPLORING CHANGE

This chapter explores aspects of change for children and young people who are supported by Just for Kids Law. It looks at what changes were most important to young people, whether any groups achieved more or less changes, enablers to change and attribution of change.

Key findings

- For young people, the most significant changes were:
 - **resolution of the issue they were facing** (14)
 - **better understanding (of their situation, rights and entitlements, options, etc)** (9)
 - **how they felt** (15).
- **Increased contact** with Just for Kids Law seems to lead to **greater outcomes**, particularly related to confidence.
- **Those accessing support for longer (over one year) tended to feel more confident about tackling future issues themselves and saying what they needed/wanted from external agencies.** However, there were cases where they strongly stated this was not the case and they were worried about what would happen next.
- There were **few differences in outcomes based on age, gender, ethnicity or disability.**
- Children and young people and staff felt that Just for Kids Law embedded its values in its practice and was **largely child-centred, was led by young people, built trusting relationships, was strengths based and operated in a holistic way.**
- There were limitations; **having enough time to be strengths based and holistic was the main challenge.**
- For some, **increased trust in Just for Kids Law led to greater satisfaction and increased trust with other external agencies.**
- Staff felt they were reflective practitioners but that there was no overarching organisational approach to this and no means of recording this in internal forms.
- Some children and young people may **need additional support to identify their needs.**
- Children and young people **attributed most of their outcomes to Just for Kids Law.**

5.1 Most important change

In both the survey and the interviews, we asked children and young people what the most important change that had happened for them was.

Resolution of a practical issue was most commonly cited (14⁵), with respondents mentioning issues like access to housing or schooling, keeping a child and avoiding a criminal record. For nine young people, the most important change for them was understanding: their rights (5); how the

⁵ Number of children and young people who mentioned this in the survey and interview.

system does not always meet the needs of children and young people (2); why someone might get excluded from school (2).

However, for 15 others, perhaps surprisingly, the most important change was not about a shift in circumstance but about how the interaction with Just for Kids Law made them feel. Issues mentioned by more than one person were:



**Feel more hopeful/
less stressed (4)**



**More confident to voice concerns/
issues (3)**



Improved mental health (2)



**Feeling heard/
believed (2)**



Feeling supported (2)



**That people do care/
feeling valued (2)**

5.2 Who achieved different outcomes?

We explored the outcomes for different children and young people accessing Just for Kids Law support. The subgroup numbers are small and therefore it is not possible to draw firm conclusions about wider experience. Overall, there was little substantive difference in outcome, other than longer access to Just for Kids Law support resulting in greater change, particularly in confidence. How different subgroups of children and young people experience Just for Kids Law is discussed in 3.3.

5.2.1 One or more services

Based on survey and interview data, as one might expect, greater outcomes were achieved by those accessing multiple Just for Kids Law services. This is unproblematic if those who used one Just for Kids Law service did so as they had fewer needs, and therefore fewer outcomes were possible. However, some children and young people who only accessed one service stated they didn't know about the other support available when asked in the survey why they did not access more services.

We tested whether there was any difference in progress between those accessing a single service and those accessing multiple services but we did not find significant difference.

5.2.2 Length of time in service

We carried out further analysis to see whether the length of time spent in service had any impact on experience or outcomes.

Nearly all the survey respondents who had been with Just for Kids Law for over a year had made a bit or a lot of progress on their case. There was also a strong response among the subgroup on feeling more confident to tackle future issues and feeling more confident to say what they needed

and wanted from other agencies. Conversely, those who were supported for less time did not have such strong outcomes related to confidence. This implies that confidence continues to build with more contact with Just for Kids Law.

5.2.3 Age, gender, ethnicity, disability and young parents and carers

In this dataset, there did not appear to be any substantive differences in experience of Just for Kids Law based on age, gender, ethnicity, disability or being a young parent/carers. As above, this may be related to small sample size and/or Just for Kids Law's equitable approach to working with children and young people.

There were a few exceptions. For example, regarding gender, fewer males (survey respondents) felt confident to say what they needed and wanted from other agencies. It is not clear why this was the case or whether this was an anomaly.

5.3 Enablers to change – the casework approach

The way in which Just for Kids Law delivers its services helps bring about outcomes for young people. This approach, particularly when compared with other agencies, is distinct and regarded highly by young people.

In discussion with senior staff, we identified that the Just for Kids Law approach involves four key aspects:

- child-centred
- strengths based
- holistic
- staff as reflective practitioners.

The evaluation explored the extent to which these translated into practice. We found that overall most children and young people and staff perceived the organisation as employing this approach. Children and young people found it very helpful, with some suggestions for improvement. Staff cited lack of capacity as a limiting factor and identified some lack of agreement as to what these aspects looked like in practice.

5.3.1 A child-centred approach

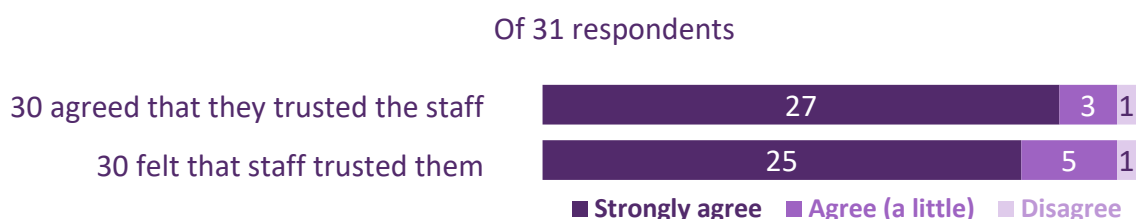


In the staff survey, the 17 respondents were positive about the extent to which Just for Kids Law was child-centred. Eight respondents strongly agreed, eight agreed and one neither agreed nor disagreed.

To ask children and young people about this, we broke it down into its component parts: two-way trust; listening to young people; being led by young people.

Two-way trust

Children and young people felt strongly that Just for Kids Law staff trusted them, and they trusted the staff.



There were similarly positive responses among the interviewees:

Yeah, I've never felt unsafe with Just for Kids Law. Even when I share some of my personal things, it's always in a supported way. *(Interviewee)*

Trust was a challenging area for some young people. They described being treated badly by many adults in their lives and therefore had reservations about trusting people. Despite this, they had been able to build some trust with their Just for Kids Law worker:

I find it very difficult to trust anyone [because of poor treatment by authority figures in the past]. But I suppose there was more trust in Just for Kids Law than I've put in anyone else for a while. *(Interviewee)*

Children and young people explained why they could trust Just for Kids Law. This included the positive relationships they had with staff members, including across the staff teams, and how, with support, they were able to overcome initial inhibitions:

The more I engaged with different members of staff, that moment trust levels increased. It was generally a linear progression. And it was accelerating as well because when those initial inhibitions were broken down, with ... my advocate ...

A further change as a result of building trust with Just for Kids Law was that trust builds more generally:

... then it became a lot easier for my trust issues to fall away with not just other members of Just for Kids Law, but other agencies. *(Interviewee)*

Another explanation for developing trust was staff sharing personal experiences with the young people, demonstrating that they are ‘human’ too:

My advocate was also human. I got to also know that like that she had needed advocacy growing up ... and she also has family who have learning disabilities. ... This all helped so much with the trust issues. *(Interviewee)*

Listening to young people

31

young people agreed that staff listened to them



Client respondents to the survey and interviews felt strongly that staff listened to them and were led by their instructions. Thirty-one (of 32) felt that staff listened to them, with 27 agreeing strongly. One disagreed (as before, this is the person who scored negatively throughout the survey).

Interviewees gave examples of what staff listening to them looked like in practice, including where the staff member changed the way they represented them to better meet their needs:

They definitely listened to me. If I if I didn't agree with something they were saying they would take on what I was saying and explain it to me in a different way. And if I didn't like the way it was phrased, they'll change the whole way that they represent me, for example. *(Interviewee)*

100% [they listen] ... they will go back to you and go over a few times before taking action on what you [have said]. They take everything seriously and carefully. *(Interviewee)*

Being led by young people

Similarly, children and young people felt strongly that staff were led by them and that children and young people were in control of what staff did for them.

31

young people agreed they were in control of what staff did for them



In the survey, 31 children and young people (of 32) agreed they were in control of what staff did for them, with 26 strongly agreeing. One disagreed. The interviewees gave examples of what being led by them looks like in practice:

You are always in control. *(Interviewee)*

X listened to me. They gave me options and suggestions and her way of working was, she wasn't like leading, she was more enabling, which was amazing. *(Interviewee)*

It is not about telling you [what to do]. It's about your situation, the best routes and at the end of the day, it's up to you. ... Even if wrong they would listen to you. *(Interviewee)*

One respondent noted how this young-person-led approach was new to them and had surprised them:

They would start off the visit like 'How I would want it to start?' They would ask me how I would like it to go ... that was quite new. *(Interviewee)*

Modelling positive behaviour

An unexpected outcome from the evaluation was that children and young people learnt how a service should treat them as a result of their experience of Just for Kids Law. There were a number of references to this, for example:

I feel like as a young person, when you're in the care system, you feel like you know everyone's against you and you're not being heard. My one experience with this organisation has shown me that you know people do care and they are trying to make a difference, which is nice to know. *(Interviewee)*

This positive modelling behaviour led to further attitudinal changes for children and young people:

I have that resilience now to be like, ‘Oh, if that one’s not working then I can find another way,’ because that’s just how I’ve seen [my advocate] do it. Like if this doesn’t work, we’re going to find another way. We’re going to do it; we’re going to get it done. You know that kind of way so my confidence and my resilience both have changed. *(Interviewee)*

5.3.2 A strengths-based approach

Most children and young people and staff strongly agreed that Just for Kids Law was strengths based. We defined this as helping children and young people to see their personal strengths and how these can be used towards resolving the issues they are facing.

Young people’s view



In the young people’s survey, 27 (of 31) agreed that Just for Kids Law casework was strengths based, with 23 of these strongly agreeing. Four disagreed; it was not clear from the data why they felt this.

In interviews, children and young people gave many examples of how they had learnt more about their strengths through the casework experience and how best to use these to get better outcomes:

When I was with the advocate [Just for Kids Law advocate] ... they told me I was stronger than I look. We had to go through a lot of battles, especially with my caseworker [external to Just for Kids Law]. That made me think actually I can do this. I'm strong enough to overcome this.

(Interviewee)

There's a lot of things that I've worked on, like writing emails, communicating with people, where I can go to for help. There's a lot of personal strengths, but that before I saw as weaknesses, and I sort of built upon some of them. ... There's a lot of things where I'm just like, 'Okay I understand this more now.' And it's definitely going to help me in the future. ... I've always been a bit of a fighter when I know I'm right, and someone tells me I'm wrong. And Just for Kids Law have definitely helped me put it across in a more sensible manner. *(Interviewee)*

For some reason I struggle with public speaking ... I've definitely been pushed in that area and shown that I can actually articulate my story as well. *(Interviewee)*

Where there were examples of Just for Kids Law not taking a strengths-based approach, this tended to be among those accessing one-off support. It was not clear from the data why this might be the case.

Staff view

13

staff agreed Just for Kids Law
support is strengths based



Most staff agreed that Just for Kids Law takes a strengths-based approach, with 13 out of 16 survey respondents agreeing (three strongly). Two neither agreed nor disagreed, and one person disagreed.

Staff highlighted some limitations.

- It was more challenging for the legal team to be strengths based because of the nature of their work and time limitations.
- There was no standardised approach to being strengths based within the casework teams.
- Some internal systems were not set up to be strengths based, including the referral form and the databases.

- Staff felt that a truly strengths-based approach takes time. This was time they did not always have: ‘I think in terms of time [you are] allowed to spend with a young person it is not [strengths based]. It takes time.’

5.3.3 Holistic support

Children and young people and staff generally felt that the Just for Kids Law offer was holistic, but there were some examples where children and young people had not yet expressed an existing need. Further, staff had some reservations about how truly holistic their support could be.

In the survey and interviews, we defined holistic as: support of a ‘whole person’; thinking about different areas of your life; giving different types of support under one roof in a joined-up way.

Young people’s view



Most children and young people felt that Just for Kids Law was able to support them in a holistic way as opposed to focusing on single issues (unless they presented with a single issue and did not need further support). Of 27 respondents, 18 strongly agreed, six agreed a little bit and three did not agree. Of those who disagreed, two had accessed a single service and one had accessed multiple services.

Interviewees described Just for Kids Law as unique in offering so much support in one setting:

I’ve worked with loads of different charities in my life. Just for Kids Law was the only one that had every service under one roof, and they were the only charity that even made a dent [to my circumstances]. *(Interviewee)*

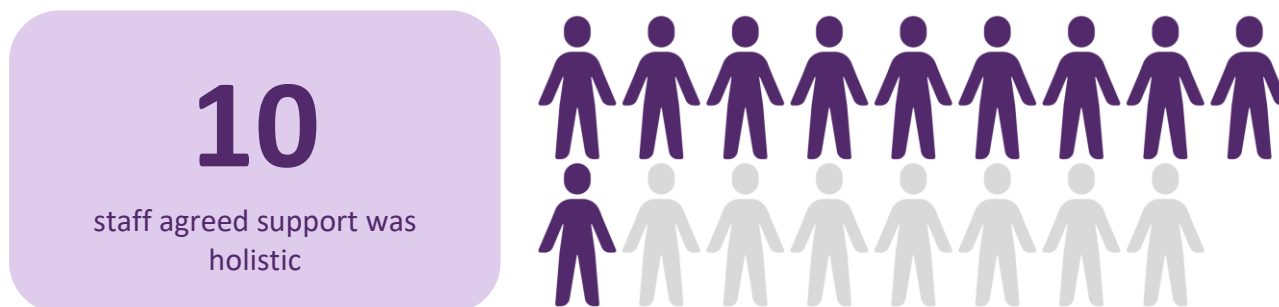
Where needs were not being met, this was because they hadn’t been identified or because staff did not have the capacity to meet them. Where they had not been identified, this was sometimes because the children and young people hadn’t disclosed them – presumably in some cases because they didn’t know Just for Kids Law could meet those needs. Sometimes, it appears they also had not been proactively asked:

They do offer more than one service so it would have been good for them to look at my whole file, whole case and then see if there's anything else that could be done. I don't know. But then I wasn't really that focused to be quite honest on anything else. I really just wanted this issue resolved. And to be quite honest, I could have come back and said, look I'm interested in this side of thing. I'm sure they would have referred me. *(Interviewee)*

Some children and young people felt that Just for Kids Law currently didn't offer support for some of their needs. Other areas of need that Just for Kids Law might consider covering are discussed in the next chapter.

Staff view

Most staff felt the service was holistic, but there was some disagreement. The main limitations to offering a holistic service were related to lack of capacity.



In the staff survey (17 respondents to this question):

- 10 staff agreed (nine agreed; one agreed strongly) that the support offer was holistic
- four neither agreed nor disagreed
- three disagreed (one strongly).

Some staff did not feel the organisation was holistic:

We are multi-agency rather than holistic. We 'meet' a number of needs through the different sectors at Just for Kids Law, but our way of working isn't necessarily holistic.

Staff identified limited capacity as the main limitation to the holistic model:

I don't think anyone would be fully satisfied that we work as holistically as we would like to. I think there might be a disconnect between the idealistic view of our charity and then the practicality, which is that we are quite a small charity. We reach capacity really quickly.

One staff member noted that some clients only access specific support, meaning that not all the work can be holistic:

Clients with legal needs but no identifiable advocacy needs are often referred to the organisation and such clients will only ever work with the legal team. Advocates may have clients referred who are already working with lawyers from other firms. It isn't always possible for us to work together, supporting clients.

5.3.4 Reflective practitioners

We asked staff about reflective practice, defining reflective practice as thinking critically about the underlying issues for children and young people that may cause certain behaviours or relationship dynamics.

The staff interviewees generally felt that staff were reflective but there was a need to create a more cohesive approach across the different casework teams. Of 16 survey respondents, eight strongly agreed that staff were reflective, six agreed and two disagreed.

The internal staff survey (a general annual staff survey) was held up as a positive example that allowed the casework team to be reflective as a wider team.

Staff highlighted that there were no overarching guidelines for being a reflective practitioner, meaning that how teams approached this varied.

5.4 Attribution

We asked interviewees how much they felt any change/progress in their case could be attributed to Just for Kids Law and whether any other agency might also be responsible for outcomes.

A strong contingent of children and young people attributed all progress on their case to Just for Kids Law. They gave examples such as cases dragging on for a long time before Just for Kids Law intervention and how quickly Just for Kids Law had been able to resolve them:

I have been for years and years fighting the system and trying with these agencies, it just didn't happen. Feels overnight here. *(Interviewee)*

In the cases where solicitors were involved, children and young people felt this added impetus to their case:

It was all down to Just for Kids Law. Because I've tried advocates, I've tried educational advisers, and the only thing that worked was Just for Kids Law, because they quoted the law, and they knew the law. ... The fact that a solicitor now was involved, that definitely made them budge. *(Interviewee)*

Some children and young people felt their progress was partially down to Just for Kids Law and partially down to their own motivation. Others listed additional support including from foster carers, their family, external solicitors and charities such as The Children's Society and Stonewall.

It should be noted that there were several children and young people who said they had no other support, including no family, and they had felt alone when dealing with their issue prior to Just for Kids Law support.

6 LEARNING FROM DELIVERY

This chapter explores the effectiveness of the Just for Kids Law casework model. In particular, it examines whether internal systems help or hinder young people's progress, how accessible Just for Kids Law services are and how far Just for Kids Law values are applied in practice. It explores the views of both children and young people and staff and includes data from interviews and surveys.

Key findings

- Children and young people and staff needed **further clarity on what support Just for Kids Law offered**. Greater emphasis could be placed on the holistic package of support available to children and young people – particularly for those who are only accessing one service.
- There was evidence that **staff did not signpost children and young people to other internal support** where they were concerned other teams did not have capacity.
- Most children and young people accessing single services did not need other support. However, **there were cases where they needed it but were not offered it**. There were also cases where they had not expressed their need yet or were not able to access further support.
- Given the pandemic and pivot to providing services online, staff were concerned about children and young people becoming digitally excluded. Children and young people reported that **staff adapted services to make them more accessible to them**, including tailoring communications and meeting children and young people at times and places that suited them.
- **Staff needed more clarity on expenses**.
- Staff reported **challenges in case management, particularly the databases**. These were time consuming to keep up to date and did not collect the data they needed.
- Most children and young people felt clear about how and when their support would end but there were cases in which this had not happened. **Some staff also found it difficult to close cases** due to the complexity of the case, limited places to signpost to and the relational style of support.
- Where children and young people were referred across teams, they largely found this **quick and straightforward**. The only limitation was due to **limited capacity of certain teams**. **Staff faced challenges in referring across teams**, primarily related to capacity. Youth opportunities and participation were held up as good-practice examples of how referrals should work.
- Staff felt that **communication between teams** and in particular **sharing data about clients were areas for improvement**. They wanted more clarity on what could be shared.
- Children and young people wanted more support from staff on mental health in general, as well as specialised support staff. They also suggested that having a key worker helping them with everyday issues could be helpful.

6.1 Knowledge of Just for Kids Law services

6.1.1 Young people's awareness of Just for Kids Law services

Most (11) interviewees were aware of what Just for Kids Law offered to young people. They felt they had been given a 'good overview' and felt they had been told about the offer at an appropriate point:

They showed me – they speak to you about what services they do provide and what you can access. X advised, 'When you are comfortable and ready to disclose, we have these services. You can go straight to them.' She gave me the choice; ... it's hard for me to trust and this really helped me.
(Interviewee)

However, four interviewees and five survey respondents did not know about Just for Kids Law's other services, were not clear or found it hard to remember. In all but one case, these children and young people were not new to the organisation and had been supported for over six months.

Some survey and interview respondents who accessed just one Just for Kids Law service had less knowledge of the organisation's other services than those accessing multiple services. There may be several reasons for this.

- *Lack of need:* They may not have needed more services from Just for Kids Law (17 survey respondents).
- *Lack of awareness:* Some survey respondents who accessed a single service reported that they did not access other Just for Kids Law services as they were unaware of what was on offer (10 – combining survey and interview respondents).
- *Nature of the single service accessed:* There was a higher representation of legal clients among those who had less knowledge of Just for Kids Law services (seven of 10 respondents); this may be in part because it is a more discrete service.

Children and young people suggested it would be helpful to be reminded of the offer more often.

In the interviews, there were a few (three) instances where the young person would have liked to have accessed more services but 'were not in the right place' because of other issues in their lives, including poor mental health, having small children or other issues that meant they felt distracted and were not able to focus on anything else:

There were a few courses that I was supposed to go to, but I missed them because of money or issues or inconvenience or being unwell. So it's unfortunate that I haven't progressed further with work to be honest.
(Interviewee)

When staff inform children and young people about the Just for Kids Law offer

Staff reported that they let children and young people know about the Just for Kids Law offer at different points in the support process. There was not a uniform response.

Some staff reported that they let children and young people know at the very start of their support journey. This might be in the first or second meeting/call. Others reported informing children and young people when they felt it most relevant or natural to tell them:

I would inform the client of the services we offer if/when they bring up a situation or issue that could benefit from the relevant support.

Some noted that they told children and young people repeatedly:

At all different points of engagement: at the beginning, during, when something relates to another piece of work, when support is ending, when they are in crisis, when they mention certain language – needing work/finances, wanting to make change, etc.

One person stated that they: ‘would not often proactively promote [legal or advocacy] services as I do not know if they would have capacity to support the client’.

One staff member reported waiting until the worst of the initial crisis that children and young people presented with was over. Another shared learning about the importance of not assuming a young person does or does not need a specific form of support:

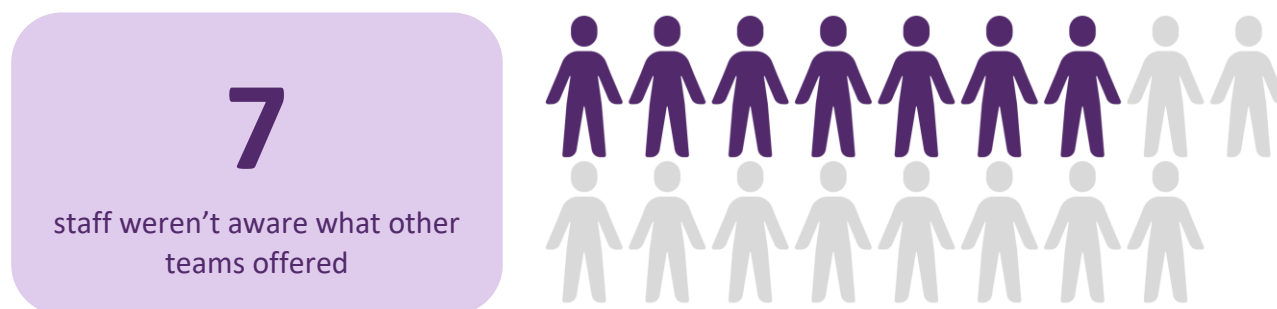
There have been times where we have found out about a client need at a later stage despite having been working with the young person for a while.

This staff member continued by noting the importance of the intervention’s timeliness. Waiting meant that there were fewer opportunities to help: ‘... by when the outcomes, we could achieve were vastly different, ie the young person had turned 18’.

It seems that being flexible and responsive to the young person, rather than having a fixed approach of when and how to inform young people, is important to staff. However, this may mean some children and young people are occasionally inadequately informed about Just for Kids Law services.

Ensuring all staff take responsibility for informing children and young people of services on offer and tackling limited capacity of certain teams are areas for further reflection.

6.1.2 Staff awareness of Just for Kids Law services



While the majority of staff were aware of what other teams at Just for Kids Law offered children and young people, a significant minority (7 out of 17) said they either weren't aware or were neither aware nor unaware. The less positive responses were not limited to those who were newer to the organisation. There were instances where staff members who had been with the organisation for more than four years were not fully aware of what other teams offered. There were examples of this from across the different teams.

We discussed this issue in the co-production session with staff. Staff explained that Just for Kids Law has a broad offer with different funding streams, meaning that some programmes change over time.

6.2 Accessibility of services

Overall, children and young people found Just for Kids Law services to be accessible. However, there were examples where the children and young people had a need for additional support and had not been offered it.

6.2.1 Adaptations to support accessibility

Young people's view

Survey respondents and interviewees generally reported that Just for Kids Law had changed the way they worked to accommodate the client's learning or physical disability, where needed.

For example, 14 survey respondents reported that Just for Kids Law staff communicated in ways that they found easy to understand; of this group, 11 had disclosed a health problem or disability. This was not their experience with other agencies. Of the remaining survey respondents, 11 stated they did not need any additional support (NB: six stated they were not offered additional support and had needed it; this is explored below).

Interviewees gave examples of Just for Kids Law staff tailoring how they communicated with the young person to make it as accessible as possible. This including sharing transcripts of conversations for those who struggled to remember details, written communications following meetings to summarise the main points discussed and using preferred communication channels, such as phone and video calls for those who preferred this to in person.

Some children and young people also had parents and carers involved in their case, as they were 17 or under and/or had capacity issues: ‘They went through my mum for a lot of the things, so she could help me understand.’

Practical support offered by Just for Kids Law included: travel expenses; an interpreter; childcare costs; a hot meal. One young person commented on the importance of being offered a hot meal:

Just for Kids Law would give me like a £10–15 voucher to order food while I was at the sessions. And that was an incredibly important part of accessibility ... I didn’t have enough money to eat. And some days, neither did I have the time to cook ... or ... the energy to deal with all of the people at the hostel for using communal areas ... It made such a dramatic difference. *(Interviewee)*

There were examples where Just for Kids Law advocates or lawyers came to the children and young people for appointments when they were in poor mental health and could not leave their homes or were in prison. Other staff had offered help ‘out of hours’ and at short notice. These children and young people described how important this was to them and how they would not have been able to access their support without it.

One young person had been supported with creating a planning calendar. This, for her, was one of the most significant outcomes of her work with Just for Kids Law. She had struggled to manage time and had missed appointments prior to the introduction of her planning calendar.

The organisation generally adapted more for those who need it. However, six children and young people (four with health problems or disabilities) stated in the survey that they were not offered support and needed it. It is not clear from the data what this support was. This is an area for development.

Staff view

Staff also reported positively (four strongly agreed and 10 agreed) that the casework team made adaptations to widen accessibility by offering travel expenses, providing an interpreter and tailoring communications. No one disagreed.

6.2.2 Suggested improvements to accessibility

Staff suggested ways to ensure all children and young people get the necessary practical support to access Just for Kids Law services.

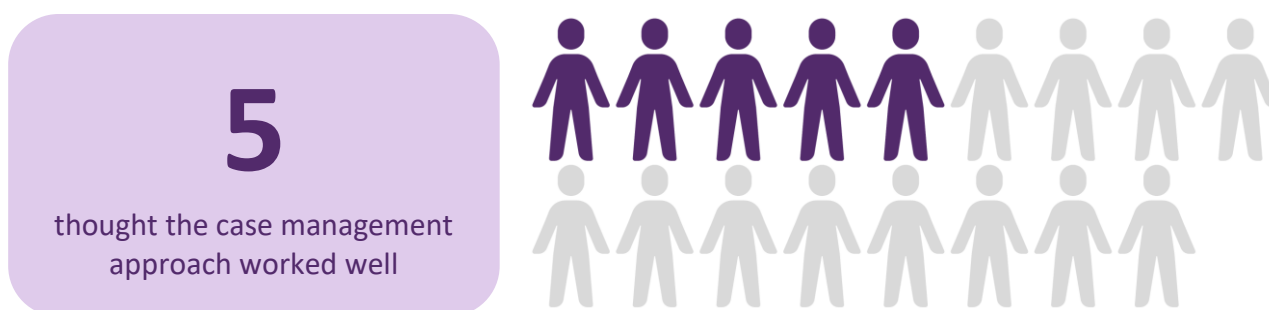
- Some children and young people do not have smartphones or laptops and struggle to cover the costs of wifi and data, meaning they are digitally excluded. It was felt that ringfencing budget to cover the costs of phones, laptops, tablets and wifi would be helpful.
- More availability of food and travel expenses, when necessary, would also help.

- Young parents need further consideration, as they need a more flexible schedule and access to childcare costs if possible. It was understood that work was underway to accommodate this.

Further, staff felt quite strongly that there needed to be a shared understanding of what expenses could be given, and when, as this was not always consistently understood or applied.

Children and young people felt that Just for Kids Law could do more promotion to reach other children and young people in need. This was particularly the case for care-experienced children and young people or those who had stayed in hostels. They described many other children and young people there who needed support.

6.3 Just for Kids Law case management



There was mixed opinion on whether the case management approach worked well. Five of 17 staff respondents thought it worked well, six disagreed and six neither agreed nor disagreed.

6.3.1 The casework databases

Just for Kids Law databases are a source of some frustration for some staff. It appears that reporting based on the current databases may not be capturing the full extent of the work or outcomes achieved.

There are two separate databases used for Just for Kids Law casework: the legal team uses LEAP and the other teams use Apricot. Staff described how the different databases evolved to meet the needs of different teams. LEAP is specifically for the legal team and, because of sensitive data, cannot be accessed by others in the organisation. Apricot is the system through which all referrals into the organisation are managed. Because of this, Apricot is intended to be the primary source of data for reporting purposes; it is currently being redesigned to improve recording and reporting functionality.

Many staff reported that they faced challenges with the current systems. In the survey, six felt their current use of database met their needs but eight disagreed and three neither disagreed nor agreed. There were several comments related to staff frustrations and system limitations:

The system is clunky and inefficient. Updating is laborious, recording of data in different areas, ie partially on Apricot, partially on LEAP, partially in SharePoint folders. The main system is unclear/difficult to read or find what you are looking for in relation to a client. Training of the system for new employees is also inefficient. Case recording works against you instead of supporting the work and has a significant effect on gaps in recording. The system does not capture strengths-based work outside of youth opps and participation. It's limiting.

Some staff noted that the database hindered their ability to be responsive to young people. One member of staff described how, for them, the frustrations of the current database: 'takes away a lot of the job satisfaction'.⁶

Other specific issues included:

- some staff members have to update both systems; they do not sync with one another, which is time consuming
- the databases do not capture the full extent of the work being delivered, particularly related to outcomes and way of working, such as being strengths based
- case records are not always kept up to date and there is missing data
- some cases remain open even if the support to the young person has finished
- crime cases are not always logged on Apricot.

One staff member suggested that all staff need a better understanding of what needs to be collected, why and how. They felt that a consistent approach is key.

Ensuring the database facilitates the work of the caseworkers rather than hinders them is an area for development.

6.3.2 Closing cases

Most children and young people felt clear about when and how their support would end but there were examples where they did not. Some felt confident enough to move on, but others did not feel this and were worried about what would happen next without Just for Kids Law support. Correspondingly, some staff struggled to close cases. They found it difficult to bring cases to a close because of their complexity, because there were limited places to signpost to and because of the relationships they had built.

⁶ At the point of writing, a range of improvements were made to Apricot, allowing for improved recording of support offered and improving how new referrals are captured, reviewed and allocated across teams.

Young people's view

22

young people said it was clear
how their support would end



Of the 31 children and young people survey respondents:

- 22 said that when and how their support would end had been made very clear to them
- four were quite clear but felt it could have been clearer
- five stated that they were not clear at all.

Those who felt more prepared for their case coming to end described how they had been told from the start, reminded when their case was due to close and been 'mentally prepared' by staff. In some cases, there had been a positive resolution to their case and they no longer needed the support. There were also examples where the young person felt confident enough to manage the situation themselves following on from the Just for Kids Law support.

Where interviewees were older, they also talked of a hard deadline of reaching the age of 25. It was very clear that support must end at this point. One child/young person felt the age cut-off was not appropriate for all young people.

Three client interviewees were worried about their cases coming to an end; they felt uncertain and worried about what would happen next. Although Just for Kids Law had signposted them to alternative sources of support, this did not reduce their worries. One interviewee described how he felt stressed thinking about it. He felt that he was going to be overwhelmed when Just for Kids Law support came to an end (due to his age). These three clients had been supported by Just for Kids Law for longer and had accessed multiple forms of support from the organisation.

There is some potential learning from an example where a staff member left, and the young person's specific case was closed. The young person did not feel they had closure on their case and felt there were unresolved issues. The young person emailed another staff member to seek clarification, but this was not responded to. They did not feel they could complain as they were grateful for the progress that had been made. Nevertheless, they felt: 'that ending wasn't the best'.

Some long-term clients said it could have been clearer when their case would end. In terms of closing cases, children and young people suggested that Just for Kids Law create a transition programme and/or leaflet to help prepare children and young people.⁷

⁷ At the time of writing, the advocacy team had developed and begun using disengagement packs as part of case closure – providing affirmations on progress made and information about external support that children and young people can draw on with ongoing/future issues arising.

Staff view

Four staff members reported that closing a case was difficult or somewhat difficult. Six found it easy or somewhat easy. The others stated it was neither easy nor difficult (four) or felt they could not respond as they did not know (four).

Staff reported that it often depended on the young person and their case. In some cases, it was uncomplicated, particularly if the intervention was straightforward. It was more challenging for the longer-term, more-complex cases and for older clients when there were limited options of where else to signpost them. This corresponded to findings from the client interviews.

This depends on the client. Some clients disengage or never really engage. Others are happy for their case to be closed as soon as they've achieved a desired outcome. The clients whose cases are most difficult to close are longer-standing clients, clients who have relied on us for emotional support, clients with mental health issues and clients with high levels of need but limited support networks.

There were a couple of mentions of the challenges inherent in the relational model that Just for Kids Law employs. One explained that their 'work is centred around relationship-building and so it can often feel difficult to bring a relationship to a close'.

Further, staff described how it was challenging to end support for those close to the upper age limit of 25 as there were few services to signpost them on to. This was particularly the case for young people in their early to mid-20s presenting with more complex needs, including mental health problems. They highlighted the lack of agencies to be able to refer children and young people on to:

We're monitoring and taking stock of the number of clients that [our team] are working with. There are those high-intensity clients that have a lot going on, lots of safeguarding issues, lots of mental health issues. They're older, there aren't the support services to refer them to ... [that is] where it starts to become unethical to step away.

It was noted that youth opportunities, in some cases, is the last area of support that children and young people access before leaving Just for Kids Law. Therefore, the ending following on from youth opportunities support was felt to be of utmost importance:

Often clients have developed a relationship with Just for Kids Law, especially if they have been long-term clients, and often youth opportunities or the work of the youth projects team, is the last piece of support they receive. Therefore, sometimes it feels like I am saying goodbye on behalf of the whole organisation and often the client is reluctant to leave Just for Kids Law. We are currently working within my team on creating effective and supportive endings processes.

The youth opportunities staff member raised some challenges inherent in closing cases related to their area of work:

Youth opportunities support is rarely finished – could often benefit from ongoing support. It is, therefore, sometimes down to my judgement as to when the young person has reached their goals and if they have what they need to be empowered to continue their journey – and to close their case in a meaningful way that celebrates their work and achievements.

Some staff felt that clearer boundaries were needed:

I think it would be helpful to do work around boundaries as well, as sometimes cases are not closed as young people still have issues but [ones] that we do not provide direct support with.

Just for Kids Law needs to consider how to best create consistent and supported endings from across the different teams.

6.4 Cross-team working

6.4.1 Internal referrals

Young people's view

Children and young people reported that both the referral process and accessing other Just for Kids Law teams were largely straightforward.

32

young people said referral to
other teams was easy



In the survey, 32 (of 33) respondents reported accessing other Just for Kids Law teams was easy. Most interviewees felt the same, describing the referral process as ‘quick’ and ‘straightforward’. Most children and young people did not have to repeat their case history each time they were referred to a new team. This was appreciated, as they did not need to: ‘repeat my trauma over and over’. (With the exception of cases that had been taken by the legal team, which cannot disclose case details due to legal obligations.)

Whenever my case was transferred ... the person who took on the case knew me extremely well and she knew the background of the case because she obviously read the case notes. *(Interviewee)*

In the two cases where referral was not straightforward, this was attributed to lack of capacity from a specific team, meaning that the young person had to wait for support.

There were two examples where children and young people did have to explain their situation again and would have preferred not to have had to do this.

Staff view

8

staff said referral to other
teams was easy



Staff had mixed views on how easy referrals across teams were. Of the survey respondents:

- eight felt it was easy to refer a young person to another team, five disagreed, three neither agreed nor disagreed and one felt they didn’t know/couldn’t comment (17 respondents)
- four felt referrals were picked up quickly, three disagreed, eight neither agreed nor disagreed and one felt they didn’t know/couldn’t comment (16 respondents).

These responses were not limited to a single team – these were issues experienced across the casework teams.

Respondents referred to youth opportunities and participation as positive examples of how referrals should work. The referral process, response of staff and acceptance of the client were viewed as quick and effective. Staff highlighted that ‘lots of effort has gone into making this easier, and clearer’ for the two teams. It was hoped that the new systems developed in these teams could be replicated across the other teams with client-facing work.

In some cases, referrals were made and it was not clear whether the referral had been responded to:

When I refer a client to another team, I often don’t receive effective communication as to whether that referral has been picked up or not.

Challenges included advocacy and legal teams frequently being at capacity and therefore not able to take on new referrals. Staff described how this placed a strain on them and the young people:

It does not feel like a simple process to refer a client to another team, and I often get the response that the team is at capacity and so cannot support the client. This can mean having difficult conversations with children and young people when they don’t understand why they cannot receive support when they are a client of Just for Kids Law.

One respondent felt that where there were capacity issues, priority should be given to internal clients, meaning those already accessing Just for Kids Law support, rather than giving external referrals equal weighting. This would merit further discussion.

6.4.2 Communications between teams

3

staff felt communications
between teams worked well



Only three staff (of 17) felt communications between teams was working well. Four disagreed and the others neither agreed nor disagreed (nine).

I think communication between teams could be better. It would be useful to know when legal team are at capacity and when they can take on cases.

Similarly, staff had mixed opinions regarding how effective the sharing of client data – specifically the sharing of knowledge and insights about children and young people – was across teams. Six agreed it was effective, six did not and five neither agreed nor disagreed.

A staff member described how both basic and more significant changes to their clients' cases were not being communicated to them:

Sometimes basic updates on the young person are not always communicated and that can be just little things such as they got a job, and told some members of staff and not others, but sometimes it is bigger things such as quite serious safeguarding incidents ... Staff working with the young person are not always made aware of important updates on their case. This is often understandable because when you're doing the safeguarding, there's often a lot of things going on. Referrals to be made, social services, other services, and so it's not usually the thing on your mind to let other staff team members know and from the point of view of the worker it might not be urgent that they need to know. But the communication (or lack of) of major updates can have a big impact on a team's work with that young person.

It is important to mention that since starting the evaluation, the casework team has carried out work to strengthen cross-team information sharing related to safeguarding concerns, including database alterations to alert allocated staff of relevant updates. Further, existing safeguarding procedures and flowcharts have been adapted to note the same.

Management team meetings were felt to be a useful space to share information on cases.

Staff made some suggestions for improvement, including more clarity on what can and cannot be shared about clients from each team and how. One person suggested pre-meetings between different team members when a young person is referred to a new service area, although others argued strongly that anything that slowed down a young person receiving support should be removed.

6.5 Suggestions for additional support

We realise Just for Kids Law may have limited capacity to provide additional areas of support. However, children and young people and staff suggested some areas where additional support might be helpful.

- **Mental health** and additional support for those with **disabilities/other conditions**. Many children and young people struggled with mental health conditions or had disabilities (considerably higher incidences among the clients compared with the population at large). Children and young people and staff suggested Just for Kids Law might employ a mental health advocate and offer additional staff training or internal resources to be in a better position to

support all young people. For example, training on working with children and young people who have a borderline personality disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder or who are neurodiverse. Since starting this evaluation, in partnership with The Children's Society, children and young people accessing Just for Kids Law support can access the support of a mental health therapist.⁸ The therapist works with children and young people and offers additional training to equip staff to work with and advocate for young people with mental health issues.

- **A support worker**, similar to a key worker, or training to help manage everyday life administration/develop life skills:

I would have liked to see more support work in regards of all areas like attending meetings with me or helping me with a hospital appointment or things like that, help me understand my bills and what they mean, and just general, everyday stuff would have been great, which is what I was looking for, plus the things with court but unfortunately, they didn't provide that.
(Interviewee)

- **Additional workshops/seminars** to help children and young people consolidate their learning. Children and young people mentioned that they had learnt a lot from working closely with Just for Kids Law but would appreciate additional sessions to deepen their understanding of their situation and their rights and responsibilities, for example. There were also requests for sessions on consciousness raising – a small number of children and young people expressed similar ideas related to the idea of understanding why people and agencies act in certain ways and why inequalities exist.
- **More opportunities to socialise** with other children and young people being supported by Just for Kids Law.
- **Online safety** to support children and young people to safely navigate the web.
- Children and young people can gain **work experience** in Just for Kids Law. It is hoped that this will be **expanded** and more paid opportunities and volunteering will be offered, for example internships, specific paid tasks or more opportunities to volunteer. Young people – clients – do apply for paid roles at Just for Kids Law and, in light of an example where a client applicant did not feel they were treated in a consistently positive way, should be treated in the same way as other applicants.
- Another respondent expressed a wish for **support for families** not just the young people.

⁸ The therapist works alongside Just for Kids Law's practice teams, receives internal referrals for Just for Kids Law clients and is co-located with the staff team. The Children's Society employs and provides clinical governance and case supervision for the therapist.

6.5.1 Maintaining the NCE team

Some staff emphasised the importance of the NCE (new client enquiries) team. This was not an area we asked about in the evaluation but it was mentioned a number of times. Some staff were concerned that there may be further cuts to this team, yet they felt they were the bedrock of the casework team.

A few staff suggested that the NCE team be upskilled to offer more technical support to be able to play a larger role in ensuring the smooth running of new and internal referrals and signposting. Mention of the NCE team (which was not intended to be specifically explored) may have been the result of redundancy and restructure proposals shared around the time the interviews took place; at the time of writing, this role has moved into the practice team to work more closely with staff supporting young people.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Evaluation conclusions

Just for Kids Law works with children and young people who are among the most vulnerable in London. Many of those who took part in the evaluation had no other support and had been dealing with their issues on their own prior to Just for Kids Law support.

This evaluation demonstrated that children and young people were very satisfied by its support and this led to an array of outcomes. For children and young people, the most important change was making progress on their issues. This progress included being allocated stable accommodation after periods of instability and homelessness, being readmitted to school after an exclusion and disputing and winning a case against social services to be able to keep a child or access support as a care leaver.

Feeling like they had been ‘given power’, a voice and new confidence also stand out as significant changes children and young people experienced. Further, children and young people reported becoming more knowledgeable about their rights and entitlements and feeling more confident to face the future should any issues arise. However, there were also cases where children and young people who had experienced poor mental health and/or trauma in their lives were not confident about life after receiving support from Just for Kids Law.

There were few significant differences found between different groups of children and young people accessing support, although this was based on small subgroup samples. This may well be as a result of Just for Kids Law’s equitable approach. One exception was that those who have more contact with Just for Kids Law experience greater outcomes and more progress on their case.

The main enabler of outcomes was the casework model and the way staff treated the young people. Children and young people felt respected, believed and trusted. They felt they were in control of their case. This was not always the case outside of Just for Kids Law, where they felt they were treated poorly. Comparing their experiences before or outside of Just for Kids Law highlighted the strengths of the Just for Kids Law model. However, there is a tension here. What the children and young people value the most (the way they are treated) is also challenging for staff to deliver due to the complexity of cases and the intensity of the work. Certain teams frequently reach capacity under the current model.

Just for Kids Law made adaptations to ensure children and young people could access their services: tailored communications and flexible support were some of the standout features here. There were no cases where children and young people felt they were treated differently because of a protected characteristic. Children and young people had many of their needs met through the support. However, there were cases where children and young people did not have all their practical needs met. A continued emphasis on meeting accessibility needs and removing barriers would be beneficial to children and young people.

The Just for Kids Law casework team has grown over the last few years. New funders and projects have come onboard; staff have changed over time. With this growth and breadth of work, staff have become less clear about the offer.

Staff and children and young people need support to better understand the full extent of the Just for Kids Law offer and to be reminded of this periodically. Staff understanding is a necessary precondition for the children and young people to understand the offer. This is a priority area for development.

The evaluation also highlighted some internal processes and systems that can hinder staff's ability to support children and young people. There is a need for standardisation and agreement of Just for Kids Law's approach. Some internal systems and processes need streamlining to better enable work with children and young people smoother. The casework database in particular needs to be more user-friendly and redesigned to better meet the reporting needs of the charity. As it stands, there are gaps in monitoring data. Having a more complete picture of who accesses Just for Kids Law services will help the charity to better understand who uses the services and, importantly, who does not, and could further support the organisation's policy-influencing activities. Work to improve Apricot started during the evaluation; all practice teams are feeding into this.

Lack of staff capacity was raised a number of times in this evaluation. Some children and young people felt that they didn't always get the support they needed as staff were too busy; some needs were not being met because of this. Lack of capacity was also limiting the extent to which staff could implement the Just for Kids Law model in the way they would like.

7.2 Recommendations

This section summarises the discussions from the co-production sessions with children and young people and staff held on 30 and 31 March and 1 April. It also draws upon the recommendations suggested throughout the evaluation.

Just for Kids Law faces capacity challenges and therefore any change may need to take place as a staggered process. We present the findings in order of priority.

There is a plan to set up cross-team bimonthly sessions to support and embed practices. These could be a useful space where recommendations can be further explored.

The involvement of children and children and young people in any new resources or approaches through a process of co-creation is essential.

The legal team operates quite distinctly from the rest of the casework teams because of professional standards and regulatory requirements. Any recommendations therefore need to take this into account.

7.2.1 Short-term recommendations

In the **short term** (next three months), Just for Kids Law should focus on the following actions, which can be addressed within existing resources:

Raise awareness of Just for Kids Law's offer and boundaries: Just for Kids Law's support offer should be made clearer to children and young people, the staff teams and external agencies.

This could be achieved through some or all of the following.

- Create a short YouTube film explaining the different services and the offer.
- Developing a welcome pack.
- Extending the legal team's letter of engagement to include a section on Just for Kids Law's offer.
- More information for new staff during the onboarding process.
- Dedicated time at the bimonthly cross-team meetings to better understand what other teams do.
- More text on the website explaining the offer (this in turn could be referenced throughout other resources).
- More targeted communication via social media.
- More work to inform referral agencies of the offer (medium-term recommendation).

Some staff also suggested that the team should be frank with children and young people about limited capacity and in communicating boundaries.

Identify children and young people's secondary needs: Just for Kids Law casework staff should more frequently explore young people's needs beyond their initial crisis issue. Children and young people may need support and time to identify and articulate any additional issues they may be facing, particularly related to mental health.

Build cross-team consensus on Just for Kids Law's approach: Just for Kids Law should dedicate time to agree its approach, including what it means to be holistic, strengths based, reflective, etc. All teams need to be involved in this to ensure agreement and standardisation of approaches.

Tackle capacity issues: In the short term, Just for Kids Law should introduce waiting lists and prioritise internal referrals as a starting point to address capacity limitations and make the most of its holistic offer. Further, each team needs to be clearer about current and anticipated future capacity issues and communicate this to other teams, children and young people and external agencies.

7.2.2 Medium to long-term recommendations

In the **medium term to long term**, Just for Kids Law should consider the following recommendations (additional resourcing may be required):

Improve case management systems: Just for Kids Law should develop its database with the input of staff to ensure it is more user-friendly and better meets the needs of staff and the organisation. NB: This commenced during the time period of the evaluation and included consultation with the practice teams.

Improve communications between teams: Just for Kids Law staff need to improve communication between teams, including sharing data on clients. Further clarity on what can and cannot be shared is needed.

Staff also felt that more should be done to share what works from each team. This could involve setting up opportunities to regularly share good practice.

Consider who to work with and for how long: Just for Kids Law may wish to review its current client profile and the length of time children and young people are supported. The team may wish to (i) work with more children moving forwards (as well as older clients), (ii) prioritise cases where children and young people can be worked with holistically from the outset and (iii) prioritise internal referrals over new cases.⁹ Agreement is needed on these points.

Some staff suggested proactively targeting children in care to prevent issues developing into crises. Further, other staff felt the team should introduce a time limit from the outset. These suggestions need further exploration.

Young people who attended the co-production workshop were keen for support for older clients beyond the age of 25.

Work to develop more positive endings: The advocacy team introduced new approaches for disengagement during the evaluation, including information packs and more consistent approaches on working with clients, particularly those supported over a long period of time. Cross-practice team meetings could explore whether these similar approaches could be implemented across different teams.

Additional learning opportunities for children and young people: Just for Kids Law may wish to:

- introduce seminars and workshops for children and young people, including on topics such as rights and entitlements, and self-awareness
- develop more opportunities for children and young people to socialise and ‘build community’ with others with similar lived experience
- create more opportunities for volunteering, work experience and paid opportunities at Just for Kids Law, including for those who have exceeded the support age (25).

Introduce keyworker support and extend the advocacy offer: Just for Kids Law may wish to explore the offer of a keyworker in future funding applications to meet the needs of and requests from children and young people.

⁹ Since the start of the evaluation, the advocacy team has undertaken work to further define the model, including likely time frames for working with clients.

Children and young people in the co-production session also mentioned that they would like to see more advocacy support for young parents and carers.

Ensure accessibility of services: Just for Kids Law’s staff need more clarity on available expenses. Children and young people should be consistently offered practical support to maximise accessibility.

Additional changes to internal systems and processes: Once Just for Kids Law’s approach is agreed across teams (regarding working holistically, in a strengths-based way and reflectively, etc), internal processes should be adapted to better guide staff and capture this. For example, the referral form, staff handbook, policies and database could be redesigned to reflect this.

The team should also work to develop uniform processes for when staff should let children and young people know about the Just for Kids Law offer at different points during the support process.

Further, there is work to be done to strengthen the induction process to ensure all practice staff understand what support is available from internal teams.

Future evaluation practice: Just for Kids Law may wish to consider how to capture more comprehensive monitoring data on its clients. This may involve adaptations to the way data is collected to streamline it into existing processes. Further, there is much rich learning from the work Just for Kids Law delivers and it may wish to consider introducing new evaluation tools to capture the journey of change that children and young people experience. Children and young people could be further incentivised to take part, including by offering payment.

Further, Just for Kids Law should review its casework theory of change in light of these findings.

8 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Adapted evaluation questions

NB: These were adapted over time to meet the needs of Just for Kids Law and to fit the evaluation tools.

We explored the following key questions:

1. What are the impacts of Just for Kids Law’s casework model?
 - To what extent does the model:
 - help children and young people navigate challenging times, resolve their problems and have their needs met
 - ensure that children and young people have their legal rights and entitlements respected and promoted
 - enable children and young people to feel more confident about facing their problems
 - increase young people’s understanding of their rights and entitlements
 - enable children and young people to be more able to tackle their problems in the future?
 - Does the model have any unintended impacts (positive or negative)? What are they?
2. Which aspects or components of the casework model’s design¹⁰ and implementation enable or inhibit its effectiveness?
 - Do single aspects/components or a combination of aspects/components contribute to outcomes?
 - Who benefits, and why? How do factors like the following affect outcomes?
 - Client demographics, for example age, sex, ethnicity
 - Clients’ presenting needs
 - Previous use of Just for Kids Law
 - Clients’ personal circumstances
 - What do children and young people think about which aspects are important?
3. What external factors (for example in external services) affect the extent to which outcomes occur?
4. What are young people’s experiences of Just for Kids Law? How do these experiences vary depending on young people’s needs or circumstances?
5. How might the casework model be developed in the future to more effectively achieve its aims and serve the needs of the children and young people we work with?
 - How might Just for Kids Law further enhance outcomes for young people?
 - How and when does Just for Kids Law close client cases?
 - How do children and young people think the model might be improved?

¹⁰ Including but not limited to: referral routes and access; the legal advice offered; the advocacy support offered; the youth opportunities support offered; partnerships with other agencies.

APPENDIX 2. Just for Kids Law evaluation – participant profile

Interviewee profile

Age		Gender	
Age	Responses	Gender	Responses
Under 16	3	Male, including transgender men and boys	7
16–17	0	Female, including transgender women and girls	8
18–21	5	Total	15 respondents
22+	7		
Total	15 respondents		

Sexual orientation of respondents		Whether gender is same as that assigned at birth	
Sexual orientation	Responses	Gender same at birth	Responses
Heterosexual/straight	9	Yes	
Gay man	1	No	
Don't know yet	1	Total	respondents
No response	4		
Total	15 respondents		

Whether respondents are limited because of a health problem or disability		Whether respondents are parents or have caring responsibilities	
Limitation	Responses	Parent/caring responsibilities	Responses
Yes, limited a lot	5	Parent/guardian/carers	3
Yes, limited a little	1	None of the above	12
No	6	Total	15 respondents
No response	3		
Total	15		

Working, in training and/or education		Ethnicity	
In employment, training or education	Responses	Ethnicity	Responses
Yes	12	White British or other white background (please describe below)	2
No	1	Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	2
No response	2	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	9
Total	15 respondents	Other	1
		Prefer not to say/unsure	1
		Total	15 respondents

Services accessed

<i>Services accessed</i>	<i>Responses</i>
Advocacy	11
Legal	10
Participation, including campaigning	8
Youth opps	7

Accessed single or multiple service/s

<i>Accessed single support or multiple</i>	<i>Responses</i>
Single	5
Multiple	10
Total	15 respondents

Length of time supported by Just for Kids Law

<i>Length of time being supported by Just for Kids Law</i>	<i>Responses</i>
< 1 year	6
1–2 years	1
2–3 years	5
3 years +	3
Total	15 respondents

Whether the young person is care experienced

<i>Care experienced</i>	<i>Responses</i>
Yes	8
No	5
Don't know/no response	2
Total	15 respondents

One interviewee was a mother speaking on behalf of her disabled daughter.

SMS survey

Support accessed

<i>Team</i>	<i>May 2021, no of respondents</i>	<i>Oct 2021, no of respondents</i>	<i>Total</i>
Legal	24	32	56
Advocacy	14	22	36
Youth opportunities	3	8	11
Youth campaigning and participation	2	4	6
Total	33 respondents ¹¹	39 respondents ¹²	72 respondents

¹¹ Respondents may have accessed multiple services.

¹² Respondents may have accessed multiple services.

January 2022 youth survey – young person profile

Age of survey respondents

Age	Responses
Under 16	2
16–17	3
18–21	9
22+	16
Total	30 respondents

Gender

Gender	Responses
Male, including transgender men	8
Female, including transgender women	20
Prefer not to say	1
Total	29 respondents

Sexual orientation of respondents

Sexual orientation	Responses
Heterosexual/straight	24
Gay man	1
Gay woman	0
Bisexual	3
Prefer not to say	2
Total	30 respondents

Whether gender is same as that assigned at birth

Gender same at birth	Responses
Yes	30
No	0
Total	30 respondents

Whether respondents are limited because of a health problem or disability

Limitation	Responses
Yes, limited a lot	7
Yes, limited a little	4
No	17
Prefer not to say	2
Total	30 respondents

Whether respondents are parents or have caring responsibilities

Parent/caring responsibilities	Responses
Parent	11
Guardian	0
Carer	3
None of the above	14
Prefer not to say	2
Total	29 respondents

Working, in training and/or education

In employment, training or education	Responses
Yes	19
No	10
Prefer not to say	1
Total	30 respondents

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Responses
White British or other white background (please describe below)	11
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	4
Asian/Asian British	2
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	11
Other	1
Prefer not to say	2
Total	31 respondents

Services accessed

<i>Services accessed</i>	<i>Responses¹³</i>
Advocacy	9
Legal	25
Participation, including campaigning	6
Youth opps	7

Accessed single or multiple service/s

<i>Accessed single support or multiple</i>	<i>Responses</i>
Single	24
Multiple	12
Total	36 ¹⁴

When first accessed support

<i>First accessed support</i>	<i>Responses</i>
< 1 year ago	12
1–3 years ago	17
4 years + ago	6
Total	35

We estimate that around four survey respondents were the parents or carers of the young people who had accessed Just for Kids Law support.

Staff survey – respondent profile

Staff survey respondents

<i>Team</i>	<i>No of respondents</i>
Legal	9
Advocacy	5
Youth opportunities	2
Youth campaigning	2
NCE	2
Participation	1
Total	21 ¹⁵

Length of time worked at Just for Kids Law

<i>Team</i>	<i>No of respondents</i>
0–6 months	2
7–12 months	1
1–3 years	9
4 years +	7
Total	19

¹³ Respondents may have accessed multiple services.

¹⁴ NB: Four respondents stated they had accessed a single service but then selected or mentioned more than one type of service accessed.

¹⁵ Some respondents represented more than one team.

NCVO

Society Building
8 All Saints Street
London N1 9RL
ncvo.org.uk

Registered charity number 225922

