



## Serious Violence Duty

### 1. Serious Violence Duty

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 requires specified authorities for a local government area to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a Strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence in the area. The Duty also requires the specified authorities to consult educational, prison and youth custody authorities for the area in the preparation of their Strategy.

The Strategy must be published, kept under review and revised from time. The strategy should be reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis.

'Specified' authorities are:

- Police;
- Probation Services;
- Youth Offending Teams;
- Integrated Care Boards;
- Local authorities.

A secondary group of 'relevant' authorities are able to co-operate with the specified authorities as necessary. This includes prison authorities, youth custody authorities and educational authorities.

To complement the overarching Serious Violence Duty, amendments to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 ensure that Community Safety Partnerships have an explicit role in evidence-based strategic action on serious violence. These amendments require CSPs to formulate and implement strategies to prevent people from becoming involved in, and reduce instances of, serious violence in the area.

For more information, see Serious Violence Duty - Preventing and Reducing Serious Violence: Statutory Guidance for Responsible Authorities.

Serious Violence Duty - Preventing and Reducing Serious Violence: Statutory Guidance for Responsible Authorities [Serious Violence Duty - GOV.UK](#)

To recognise the importance of effective multi-agency information sharing, the Serious Violence Duty legislation includes specific provisions to support partners to share information, intelligence and knowledge to prevent and reduce serious violence. See Information Sharing Procedure.

## 2. Principles

- Agencies work together to identify children who are at risk of, or affected by, serious youth violence, including children who are exploited. They intervene to reduce risk and provide support for children; they monitor effectively the impact of interventions so that risk is reduced;
- Children who are affected by serious youth violence or are exploited experience a child-centred approach from all professionals. Practice is based on a good understanding of children's experiences, their background and identity, including any barriers to them accessing help and support, and their needs and strengths;
- Professionals understand the importance of building trusting relationships with children. Professionals work together to ensure a strengths-based approach to engaging with children and their families. Partners have a shared understanding of the risks and needs of the child, and relationships are built on trust and respectful communication;
- Assessments show that the experiences, strengths and needs of children are well understood. Their views are clearly recorded and central to a multi-agency response. Assessments are timely, include contributions from all relevant agencies and consider extra-familial harm, including risks online. They consider strengths and risks within the family and address risk to, and the protective capacity of, other children, including siblings and peers;
- Assessments and plans are dynamic and adapt to changing risks and needs;
- Children are protected through effective multi-agency arrangements. Key participants attend multi-agency meetings. These meetings are effective forums for timely information-sharing, planning, decision-making and monitoring. Actions happen within agreed timescales, and they help. Protection provided reduces risk and meets need;
- Children and their families can access a range of effective services that are well coordinated, including therapeutic help. Where children are both victims and harming others, multi-agency responses address all their needs and reduce risks;
- Professionals and support staff across agencies are well trained and supported, including receiving support with the emotional impact of working with children and families. They are confident and knowledgeable and understand the impact of serious youth violence on children's health and well-being. They are aware of the importance of avoiding victim-blaming language and approaches as well as personal and institutional bias. This enables them to identify effectively how to help and protect children and to take action to do so;
- Health practitioners, including those in ambulance services, show professional curiosity when children present with injuries that may indicate they are victims of, or at risk of, serious youth violence. They respond to their immediate needs, share

information appropriately to reduce risk, and make sure that children are supported to access services to help them to stay safe and to meet their needs;

- Agencies avoid unnecessarily criminalising children. Partners understand the experiences that can contribute to children being violent and/or exploiting other children. They reduce risks through appropriate support for all children involved;
- Cases of serious youth violence and exploitation are investigated effectively. The safeguarding needs of all children are addressed;
- Children and their families are listened to. Multi-agency practice focuses on their needs and experiences and is influenced by their wishes and feelings;
- Schools/education providers have effective systems to identify children at risk of, or subject to, serious youth violence and/or exploitation and children who are missing from school. They make timely referrals to access appropriate support, including to early help or children's social care. Schools and partner agencies share information appropriately and work effectively together to make sure that children get the support they need;
- Schools/education providers are supported by local safeguarding partners to contribute effectively to multi-agency working, including joint work to ensure that children are protected from harm. They work to raise awareness and understanding of the risks of serious youth violence and exploitation. Partners work together to support children to remain in education;
- Taking a multi-agency approach, leaders and managers across agencies understand the causes and consequences of serious youth violence, including factors that make children more vulnerable. They target resources on prevention and early intervention, using evidence-based approaches. This includes work with the community, businesses, education providers and parents and children;
- Leaders and managers across agencies share and analyse information effectively so that partners know and understand: the prevalence of serious youth violence in their area; the localities where children may be at risk; the demographics of perpetrators and victims (including issues of disproportionality such as ethnicity, disability or gender); and the experiences of children. This leads to effective multi-agency strategy, planning and action, including commissioning services to meet local need;
- Leaders and managers share information and intelligence to inform decisions about partners' interventions in places and spaces. Relevant partners are involved and understand the aim of the intervention and the intended outcomes. Interventions mean that children and places and spaces are safer. Partners evaluate interventions and use that learning to continually improve;
- Partners engage with communities, children, parents and carers to understand their needs in relation to and views about serious youth violence and to inform their decision-making about interventions and commissioning services;
- Leaders and managers engage in critical reflection, and challenge and support practice. They promote continuous improvement in services for children at risk of serious youth violence;
- Leaders in the local partnership, through the MASA, actively and effectively monitor and evaluate the work of the statutory partners. The local partnership works closely

with other strategic partnerships and local organisations to make sure that children and their families get the help and support they need;

- The local partnership promotes multi-agency learning about identifying, assessing and responding to serious youth violence. The partnership informs and improves practice, planning and the design of services, using feedback from children and families, as well as research and intelligence about effective multi-agency practice.

(Joint Targeted Area Inspections of the Multi-agency Response to Serious Youth Violence).

Joint Targeted Area Inspections of the Multi-agency Response to Serious Youth Violence [Joint targeted area inspections of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence - GOV.UK](#)

### **3. Serious Violence Reduction Orders**

Serious Violence Reduction Orders (SVROs) are a civil order made in respect of an offender convicted of an offence involving a bladed article or offensive weapon.

The Order allows the police to detain a person subject to an SVRO, provided they are in a public place, and search them for bladed articles or offensive weapons.

Serious Violence Reduction Orders: Statutory Guidance sets out the background on SVROs, police processes, evidential considerations, court procedure and information on using SVROs alongside other orders and interventions.

Serious Violence Reduction Orders: Statutory Guidance [Serious violence reduction orders \(SVROs\) - GOV.UK](#)