

A Guide for Children going to Court

You have been told you must go to court.

This booklet explains what will happen and what you need to do.





Your checklist:

- ✓ Go to court on the date you are given.
Do not miss it.
- ✓ Arrive on time.
- ✓ Follow your bail conditions.
- ✓ If you miss court or break your bail conditions, you could be arrested.
- ✓ Get a solicitor to help you. If you don't have one, ask for the duty solicitor at court.
- ✓ If you are under 16, you must bring a parent or carer with you.
- ✓ Bring any paperwork or letters you have been given.
- ✓ If you're unsure about anything, contact the Youth Justice Service.



After you've been charged:

- If the police let you go home, you are on bail.
- Bail means you are being trusted to behave and follow the rules given to you.
- You must go to court on the date and time you are told.
- You will get a bail notice with any rules (conditions) you must follow.
- If you break those rules, you may be arrested and taken back to court.

You will get into more trouble if you:

- Break the law while on bail
- Do not follow your bail conditions
- Do not arrive at court on time



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Legal advice:

- Speak to a solicitor as soon as you can.
- You don't have to wait till you go to court.
- Be honest with your solicitor so they can help you in court.
- Your solicitor will ask you to sign a form for legal aid to pay for their work.
- If you don't find a solicitor, ask for the duty solicitor at court.





Important advice to parents and carers:

- Your child must attend court.
- If they are under 16, you must go with them.
- If you do not attend, you may be arrested.
- Talk to a solicitor with your child.
- Make sure you know which court, how to get there and how long it will take.
- Arrive on time.
- Your child's case may be delayed until you arrive.
- If you cannot attend, another responsible adult over 18 can go with your child.
- Even if your child is over 16, it is helpful if you attend to support them.



When you arrive at court:

- Security staff will use a wand to check you are not carrying anything unsafe.
- The usher will sign you in and tell you where to sit.
- If you don't have a solicitor, ask the usher to help you see the duty solicitor.
- If you do have a solicitor, they will come and speak to you when they are ready.
- Tell your solicitor your side of the story — they are there to help you.
- The Youth Justice Service will also speak to you.
- When the court is ready, the usher will take you into the courtroom.
- The only person who can go into court with you is your parent/carer.



In Court:

- If it is your first time in court, the legal advisor will explain to you who everyone in the court room is.
- You will be able to sit next to your parent/carer in court.
- When the Judge or Magistrates come into the Court room, you must stand and be seated when they sit down.
- The Judge or Magistrate will ask to confirm your name, date of birth and address.
- Your case will then be heard, and your solicitor will speak for you.
- The Judge or Magistrates will ask you questions. Please try to answer these as nicely as you can.
- If you plead guilty or are found guilty, the court can either decide on your sentence there and then, or ask you to go back to court to another date.
- The Court will speak to the Youth Justice Service who will give information to the court about you and make a sentence recommendation.
- You will usually be asked to see a member of staff from the Youth Justice Service when your case is finished.
- Listen carefully, if you do not understand ask for help and/or speak to your solicitor.



Illness/Special needs:

- If you are too ill to attend court, you must tell the court and your solicitor.
- Usually, you will need a note from your doctor to show you are unwell.
- If you, or your parent/carer need additional help or support because of a disability, please contact the court a few days before the day you have to be there.

The Youth Justice Service:

- The Youth Justice Service is there to help you and your family at every stage of the court process.
- The Court may ask you to talk to the Youth Justice Service.
- Listen carefully to the Youth Justice Service and the Court. If you don't do what they tell you, you could go back to court.
- If you don't understand, please let them know.
- If you would like to speak to the Youth Justice for further advice before and after court, please call the office **01472 325252**.



North East Lincolnshire