



Ministry
of Justice



Research Fellowship Applicant Workshop

MoJ-DfE linked dataset

October 2025

The MoJ DfE data-share

- The MoJ DfE data share is a cross departmental project that increases our understanding of the links between **childhood characteristics, education outcomes and (re)-offending**, analysis that is not otherwise possible to conduct.
- It includes data on young people's educational attainment and characteristics such as **free school meal eligibility, special educational needs, absence and exclusions** linked to the Police National Computer data on their **criminal histories** and interactions with the criminal justice system.
- The pilot of the share was carried out in 2015 which demonstrated the value that bringing education and justice data together can offer. Since 2019, rather than a single share we have agreed an ongoing link, expected to be updated annually.
- The share has evolved over the years in response to researcher feedback, for example the **inclusion of all episodes of social care** as previously only latest episode was available. This allows the sequencing of care experience and offending to be explored.
- The share will continue to evolve, and the next iteration of the share is underway, improvements include:
 - Reducing the time lag of the share – the new share will cover offending data up to May 2025 and education data up to academic year 2024/25
 - Inclusion of new, additional datasets including **AssetPlus** data, **prison education** data and **higher education** data

Projects utilising the MoJ/DfE datashare

We have approved more than 30 projects that have utilised the MoJ DfE share, common themes include:



Policy and Interventions

- Child social welfare interventions
- Impact of Sure Start
- EEF educational interventions
- Impact of Education Maintenance Allowance
- School Funding
- Impact of autonomous schools
- Exclusion
- School Absenteeism



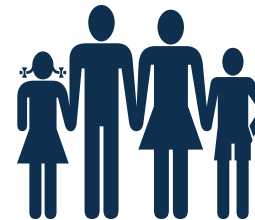
Juvenile Crime and Offending Trajectories

- Determinants of juvenile crime
- Nature and Drivers of trajectories
- Trajectories of excluded pupils
- Female offending trajectories
- Different school performance trajectories



Socio-Demographic Factors and Inequality

- Intersections between ethnicity, care experience and CJS
- Inequality in the CJS
- Outcomes for high achieving disadvantaged children



Mental health and behavioural factors

- Structural bias in identifying mental health
- Impact of neuropsychological difficulties
- Socio-emotional characteristics in early childhood

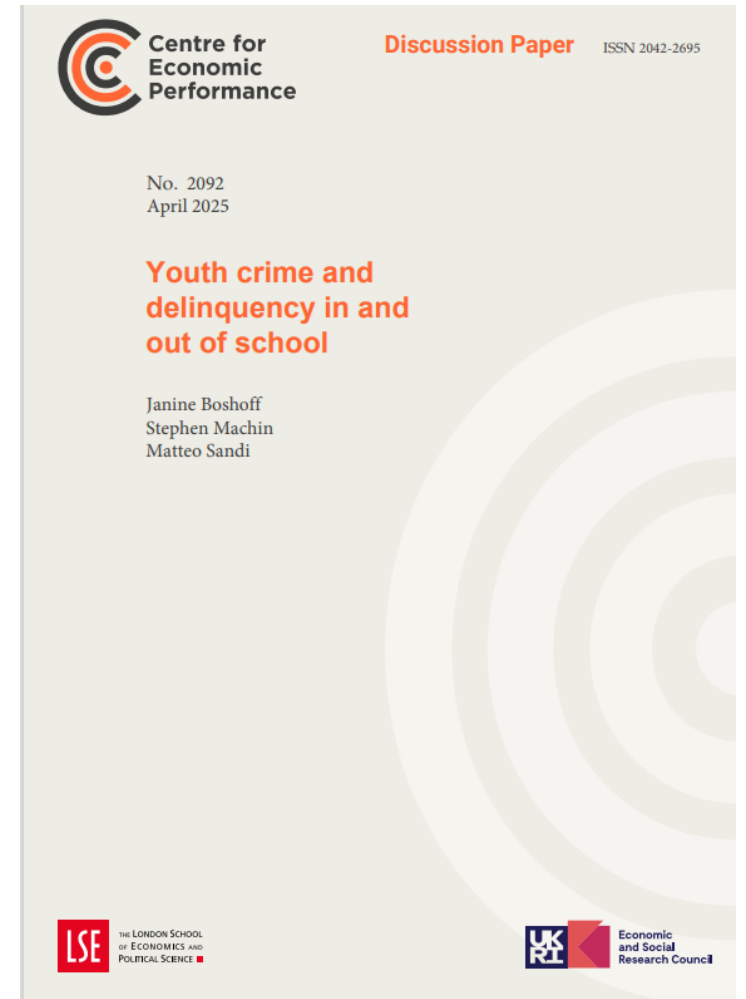
Emerging policy insights from academics

- The **IFS** conducted a robust evaluation of the impact of access to **Sure Start** on children's **absence** and **suspensions** at school, youth **offending** and contacts with the children's **social care** system.
- Access to a nearby Sure Start centre between ages 0 and 4 **significantly reduced youth crime** that resulted in convictions or custodial sentences. Living within 2.5 kilometres of a Sure Start centre reduced the share of 16-year-olds who had ever received a criminal conviction by 13%. Meanwhile, custodial sentences – the most severe sanction – fell by a fifth due to access to Sure Start.



Emerging policy insights from academics

- The Centre for Economic Performance at **LSE** studied the causal impact of **compulsory schooling** on the day-to-day possibility, desire and actual act to commit crime by combining idiosyncratic variation in **school closure dates** for all secondary schools in England with administrative records of educational and criminal trajectories.
- They found schools attendance **reduces the incidence of indictable violence** and it **increases the incidence of summary violence**, they provide at least strongly suggestive evidence that schools may prevent not so much the incidence but rather the most serious types of physical violence
- In person interactions at school are important drivers of minor acts of violence among students. They recommended schools in the same locality should set their closure dates on different weekdays.



Emerging policy insights from academics

- The **Behavioural Insights Team** combined administrative data including the MoJ DfE share with randomised controlled trials to understand whether **educational interventions** led to additional benefits or costs.
- Results from the primary analysis show that none of the interventions from the five trials in scope demonstrated any significant impacts on criminal convictions in the twelve months after the intervention started.
- The prevalence of criminal convictions is generally very low for pupils in the EEF archives, reflecting the low prevalence overall in the school-age population



Reanalysing education experiments with linked administrative data

An analysis report from the Behavioural Insights Team

November 2022

Alex Sutherland, James Lawrence, Kim Böhring, Tania Locke, Amber Evans, James Farrington, Anna Bird

Funded by:



Emerging policy insights from academics – ADR fellows

ADRUK Data Insight

Childhood educational predictors of re-offending trajectories

Author: Dr Hannah Dickson
Date: August 2024

ADRUK Data Insight

School funding, pupil performance and crime

Author: Dr Will Cook
Date: October 2023



How well people do at school and their involvement in the criminal justice system

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Youth justice

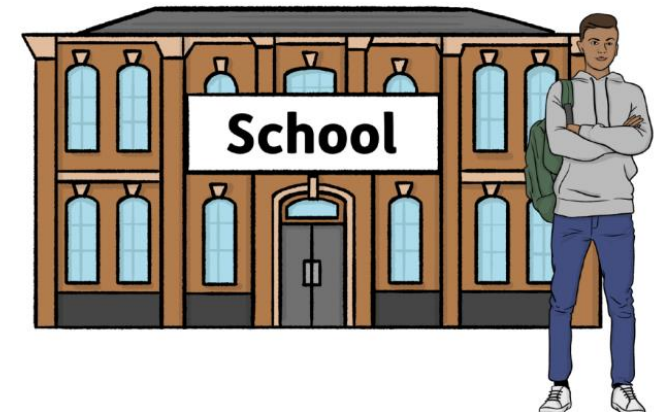
This article is more than 5 months old

Childhood in care raises risk of entering English youth justice system eightfold

ADRUK Data Insight

Children involved with child welfare services and the likelihood of a custodial sentence

Author: Dr Anna Leyland
Date: September 2024



Research Interests

- We welcome applications exploring policy-focused questions based on the following themes. Other research questions are also welcomed providing you can evidence policy-relevance. Please see the [MoJ Areas of Research Interest \(2025\)](#) which sets out MoJ's evidence priorities

Reducing reoffending: understanding characteristics, needs and risks factors of offenders

- Is there an association between particular interactions with the education system and offending, and if so, is one of these factors typically the driver?
- How are the relationships between educational and criminal justice outcomes impacted by demographic factors?
- What are the protective and risk factors for the likelihood of committing crimes and how do these differ across crime types?
- How do education or children's social care and adversity interact?
- How can disparities in the youth justice system be addressed? Why are some children criminalised and others are not

Safer Streets mission: advance our understanding and generate new knowledge to support the UK Government's objectives for the Safer Streets Mission

- To explore education, social care, health and demographic backgrounds and outcomes for children who have committed knife offences, anti-social behaviour (ASB) or Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) offences
- To understand what drivers and outcomes make young people more likely to engage in knife crime, including links to social care and educational outcomes
- To evaluate the impact of early interventions and education policies on different areas of youth justice offending, for example, knife crime, VAWG and ASB.

Applying for access to MoJ DfE data share

Two stages for accessing data:

1. Become an [accredited researcher](#).
2. Apply for access to the specific data required for a research project from relevant data owners using the MoJ '[Secure access to data](#)' combined form for access to data held in the ONS SRS

What makes a good application

- Be specific about what data you are requesting to access, why you need it, and how you are planning to use it
- Be clear in your definitions: e.g. how will you define an outcome measure? If you are looking at reoffending, reconviction, or reappearance, over what time period will you be measuring this?
- Review our [Approved external data request log](#) and MoJ Statistical Publications, to check your proposed project does not overlap with any existing projects.
- Use concise, clear language in your application. Not everyone reviewing your application will be an expert in your field or chosen methodology.

What you can expect from us

We are keen to support and engage throughout the end-to-end research process:

- Advice and guidance to produce a successful application for the data owner approval panels
- Provision of detailed data catalogues
- Availability to provide insights into dataset queries and quality issues throughout the project
- Timely review and clearance of outputs - confirm in line with approved project and advise on framing
- Informal academic peer review
- Opportunities to present and share research
- Engagement with policy

Email: datalinkingteam@justice.gov.uk and data.sharing@education.gov.uk (for queries regarding the external data linking shares e.g. MoJ-DfE share)



Questions?

We are here to help – please get in touch:

Query Category	Contact
Call queries	ADRFellowships@esrc.ukri.org
TFS System queries	support@funding-service.ukri.org
General or unknown, to be passed to the appropriate recipient	ADRFellowships@esrc.ukri.org
Methodology queries	adrcuration@ons.gov.uk
Accredited Researcher queries	SRS.customer.support@ons.gov.uk
RAP queries	SRS.Customer.Support@ons.gov.uk
Data linkage queries	datalinkingteam@justice.gov.uk and data.sharing@education.gov.uk
MoJ or DfE queries	datalinkingteam@justice.gov.uk and data.sharing@education.gov.uk
Research question queries	datalinkingteam@justice.gov.uk and data.sharing@education.gov.uk
Data or metadata queries/data feasibility	datalinkingteam@justice.gov.uk and data.sharing@education.gov.uk

Get in touch:

datafirst@justice.gov.uk

(for signing up to the Data First mailing list and any Data First related queries)

datalinkingteam@justice.gov.uk

(for queries regarding the external data linking shares e.g. MoJ-DfE share)

Find out more:

- Existing datasets, user guide & privacy statement: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ministry-of-justice-data-first>
- Application form and approved projects:
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/moj-data-first-application-form-for-secure-access-to-data>
- Splink data linking package: <https://github.com/moj-analytical-services/splink>