



 Manchester Centre for Youth Studies

Annual Report 2024

MCYS



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Foreword



Welcome to the Manchester Centre for Youth Studies (MCYS) annual report for 2024. It had been an exciting year for MCYS. We have welcomed four new PhD students to the Centre (detailed on page 6). Their research focuses on a range of pressing contemporary issues facing children and young people. These include, for example, linguistic prejudice in the Youth Justice System, climate change, and racial disproportionality in the use of Out of Court Disposals. We have also welcomed Dr Anna Leyland from the University of Sheffield. Anna is one of the University's Third Century Fellows and will be using her Fellowship to further her research on children's wellbeing (see page 3). MCYS colleagues have also conducted some groundbreaking and exciting research (highlighted in our featured research projects on page 7). For example, Dr Jodie Hodgson received extension funding from the IDEAS fund to continue her research with young women at risk of sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester.

Fresh from her MetroPolis Chancellor's Fellowship with the Centre for Young Lives, Professor Hannah Smithson, alongside Dr Anne-Marie Day, has been awarded a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority to develop a child-focused justice approach across Greater Manchester. In addition, Dr Haridhan Goswami and Dr Paul Gray have been appointed to strategic roles within the University's new Institute for Children's Futures (ICF). Dr Goswami is one of the Co-Directors of the ICF and Dr Gray is the Faculty Lead for Arts & Humanities. Together they aim to ensure that MCYS will play a central role in the work of the ICF. We have also continued to grow our international partnerships with scholars in Bridgewater State (United States), the University of Gadjah Mada (Indonesia), Tampere University (Finland), and the University of Sydney (Australia), and we're excited to see how these partnerships will develop in the coming years. We hope you enjoy reading about some of the things that we've been up to in 2024.

Paul & Deborah



Member Spotlight



Dr Kate Westwood

Kate successfully completed her PhD in June 2024 and has been awarded a contract with Emerald to publish her monograph next year. Titled 'A multidisciplinary exploration of the language of school exclusion' – the research foregrounds young people's recommendations for education policy change, and insights for practitioners in mainstream and alternative education settings. The research developed a unique multidisciplinary approach, bringing together participatory research approaches and critical discourse studies, to explore the ways in which participatory researchers and linguists can better understand and challenge power dynamics in education settings.

Since completing her PhD, Kate has also been involved in multiple research projects in MCYS and is a valued member of the centre. To find out more about Kate's research, email k.westwood@mmu.ac.uk



Dr Samantha Burns

Samantha joined as a Research Associate in May 2024 to work with Professor Hannah Smithson and develop youth justice research. Samantha has previously been working on research projects addressing systemic issues across youth justice. Samantha's research engages with social harm and critical approaches with a particular interest in children's participation rights and co-production practice.

Samantha is also Deputy Chair of the National Association of Youth Justice, a charity organisation that lobbies for policy change across youth justice. In addition, Samantha works as an academic advisor for Peer Power Youth, a social justice charity that promotes co-production with justice involved children for system change. If you want to find out more about Samantha's work please get in touch with her at; samantha.burns@mmu.ac.uk

Member Spotlight



Prof Hannah Smithson

Hannah was awarded the Metropolis Chancellor's Fellowship, a scheme that provides experienced researchers with practical and financial support to strengthen an existing relationship with a policy-relevant organisation. This allows the researcher to act as a consultant and advisor, supporting their partner organisation in developing policy informed by research evidence and contributing to related activities. Hannah's work is based at the Centre for Young Lives, established by Anne Longfield, former Children's Commissioner for England and now a peer in the House of Lords, as a policy think tank advocating for children and young people. Hannah's work has been highly influential in shaping the national youth justice policy agenda. Email h.l.smithson@mmu.ac.uk for further details.



Dr Anna Leyland

Anna is undertaking data analysis using linked administrative and cohort datasets to explore outcomes for children facing early life disadvantage. The work explores outcomes in education, health, criminal justice and, child development. Anna has secured funding from ADR UK and Understanding Society to work with their linked datasets to explore criminal justice outcomes for children in the care system, and the influence of household circumstances on child development and school attendance. Find out more on the project website www.child-ren.org.

Anna is also co-lead for the MMU Admin Data Policy Hub, a network of researchers and practitioners, third sector organisations, and policy makers who are working together to bridge the gap between academic research using admin data and impacting change to policy and practice.

Team Members



Dr Paul Gray
MCYS Director



Dr Deborah Jump
MCYS Director



Dr April Pudsey
Deputy Director



Professor
Hannah Smithson



Dr John
Bellamy



Dr Ben
Bowman



Dr Samantha
Burns



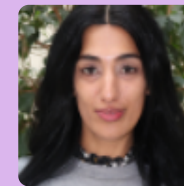
Dr Anne-Marie
Day



Dr Haridan
Goswani



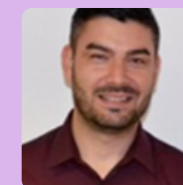
Dr Jodie
Hodgson



Dr Fatima
Khan



Dr Anna
Leyland



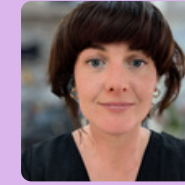
Dr Dan
Marshall



Dr Lucy
Newby



Dr Helene
Snee



Dr Kate
Westwood

Associate

Members

Dr Samiya Ambreen
Research Associated in Sociology

Dr Chloe Germaine
Reader in English

Dr Susan Atkin
Senior Lecturer in Fashion Design

Dr Gaby Harris
Lecturer in Fashion Cultures

Dr Jo Briggs
Reader in User Experience

Dr Katie Hunter
Lecturer in Criminology

Dr Gavin Bailey
Research Associate in Sociology

Dr Jo Jenkinson
Deputy Head, Fashion

Prof Jon Bannister
Professor of Sociology

Dr Kim Moore
Lecturer in English

Dr Anna Bergqvist
Reader in Philosophy

Prof Kate Pahl
Professor of Literacies

Dr Jennifer Cromwell
Reader in History

Prof Rob Ralphs
Professor of Sociology

Dr Ian Cushing
Senior Lecturer in Linguistics

Dr David Wilkinson
Senior Lecturer in English

Dr Rob Drummond
Professor of Sociolinguistics

Jess Williamson
Lecturer in Criminology

PhD Students



**Anuarita
Mphwina**

'Exploring the lived experiences of racially minoritised children in youth justice system subject to Out of Court Disposals' (ESRC, White Rose Doctoral Training Partnership)

**Beatrice
Tailby-Hardstaff**

'Solidarity! Engaging young people in working-class movements in the past, present & future' (AHRC, North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership Collaborative Doctoral Award)

**Clara
Paul**

'Understanding the experiences and perceptions of children who have been 'criminally exploited': reframing the debate' (ESRC CASE Studentship)

**Hollie
Rochfort**

'Investigating potential linguistic prejudice in the Youth Justice System to evaluate the impact on outcomes for children' (ESRC, North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership)

**Jennifer
Lavender**

'Disrupting Flood Risk Management Narratives: Youth-centred research into Education, Action and Resilience in Flood-Affected Places' (ESRC, White Rose Doctoral Training Partnership)

**Vicki
Morris**

How does children's interaction with professionals at police interview shape their future trajectory in the justice system?

Visting Scholars



This year MCYS has welcomed many visiting professors and PhD students to the centre for various projects, who have contributed to teaching and research development, including:



Cedric Foussard: Terre des Hommes Foundation

Cedric Foussard visited the MCYS in March. As well spending time with the team, he delivered a guest lecture for the Dept of Sociology's 2nd year students on the Youth Justice module, met with the Faculty of Arts and Humanities Head of International, Rachelle Viader Knowles to discuss developing international research and teaching links and with Hannah Smithson made plans for next Youth Justice World Congress event to be held in Madrid in May 2025. Cedric will visit the team again in the Autumn term.

Dr Meghan Murphy: Bridgewater State University

Manchester Centre for Youth Studies hosted Dr Meghan Murphy in October 2024. Meghan is a sociologist with an interest in Sociology of Education, Gender and Sexuality, and Research Methods. Her main areas of study include the sociology of education, social theory, and gender and sexuality. Dr Murphy delivered a keynote lecture to our undergraduate students on her research methods as well as MCYS' research cafe on her latest work into gender and sexuality.



Professor Magne Paalgard Flemmen: University of Oslo

Manchester Centre for Youth Studies and the Class Research Group hosted Professor Magne Paalgard Flemmen from the University of Oslo on Monday 21 October. Professor Flemmen presented his work on the relationship between cultural capital and youth, and the significance of youthful cultural consumption for classed inequalities.

Featured Research Projects



Race, Disproportionality and Diversion from Youth Justice

Dr Anne Marie Day has been co-investigator on a major new project funded by the Nuffield Foundation, examining the extent and nature of racial disproportionality when young people come into contact with the youth justice system. This included examining decision-making at the gateway to the YJS (initial contact with the police, including arrest). The research team reviewed national and international literature, sent out a survey to all youth justice services, spoke to 34 children who had been diverted from the youth justice system, interviewed 50 youth justice practitioners, and analysed 42 case files. Findings revealed that during the diversion process, racial disproportionality and geographical disparities increased through police and courts. In relation to education, a child's journey into youth justice diversion often began at school exclusion. Many of those excluded reported experiencing racism at school, from both teachers and peers, and when they reported these incidents, they felt ignored or treated unfairly. The study also found most children had unidentified Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and/or neurodivergent conditions. Recommendations have been produced for policy and practice, highlighting how decision-making would need to change to reduce racial disproportionality.



The Societal Effects of Boxing

In March 2024 Dr Deborah Jump and Dr Stephen Hills from London Metropolitan University presented their commissioned research to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Boxing chaired by Imran Kham MP. The [report into The Societal Effects of Boxing](#) acknowledges the positive impact of boxing on individual physical health and mental well-being, and the role of boxing in providing constructive activities for young people, potentially diverting them from street-related activities. However, rather than solely emphasizing success stories, Deborah and Stephen advocate for a more balanced assessment of the efficacy of boxing, one that considers potential harms alongside perceived benefits. This research has therefore led to the Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) commissioning a multi-site trial into the impact of boxing on serious youth violence

Evaluation of the Remand Pilot in Greater Manchester

Professor Hannah Smithson, Dr Deborah Jump, Dr Paul Gray and Dr Kate Westwood were commissioned by Manchester City Council in April 2024, to undertake a process evaluation of the GM Remand Pilot. The pilot will test and evaluate whether local regions are able to provide robust community alternatives to secure remand. The project will develop a comprehensive and co-produced understanding of the aims of the remand pilot, map current practice and understand barriers and enablers to the delivery of the pilot, identify and articulate examples of good practice that can be used to inspire and inform partners across Greater Manchester, identify what data would be required to undertake an outcome evaluation of the pilot. The project involves multiple methods including interviews with youth justice professionals such as Greater Manchester police and court staff. Participatory research is being conducted with children in both community and custodial settings.





Children and Young People's Perceptions of Hot Spot Policing across Greater Manchester

The team at MCYS were commissioned by Manchester City Council in March 2024, to undertake a piece of research exploring young people's understanding of 'hot spot policing'. This project grounds a collaborative 'what works here' approach to landscape regional Greater Manchester (GM) evidence about the impact of 'Grip' policing on young people. The objectives of the project are to explore young people's views and experiences of the police in their communities, including identifying good practice and whether more visible police presence has an impact on community safety. The team developed participatory workshops to engage with youth groups across Greater Manchester, which included the creation of artwork and youth informed recommendations for policy and practice.

Ground-Breaking Language: The Language of Mining Communities as Cultural Heritage

Dr John Bellamy is co-leading in AHRC international project examining coal mining language through a comparative exploration of the Ruhr Area (Germany) and the North East (UK), both historically important mining regions. As with other post-industrial regions of Europe, they have developed varied strategies to find new senses of identity, community and belonging. The project aims to investigate linguistic variation of mining language on the levels of the individual and their community and comparatively between the regions, documenting salient linguistic features and usage to ensure the preservation of such linguistic varieties; ensuring the effective representation of linguistic mining heritage through collaboration with local mining communities and museums; while also analysing the role of mining language in nurturing and supporting regeneration strategies for informing how intangible cultural heritage can support successful place-based regeneration. This project is ongoing until 2028



To see the full list of our current research projects please visit our website at;
www.mcys.mmu.ac.uk/our-research

Events



10 Year Anniversary Event

MCYS celebrated its 10th Birthday in June 2024 and hosted a research partners and stakeholders dinner at Ducie Street Warehouse. This event was a thank you to all those organisations who have granted access and supported MCYS research over the past decade. Guests included Manchester Youth Justice Service, Deputy Mayor Kate Green, Greater Manchester Violence Reduction Unit and many other charities and organisations who join us in celebrating and co-producing youth research in Greater Manchester and beyond. We were also joined by Diane Modahl OBE who provided the inspirational speech to keep MCYS inspired for the next 10 years!



NAYJ Annual Seminar

Dr Samantha Burns hosted the NAYJ Annual Seminar in Manchester, titled 'Youth Justice: current challenges and future directions' on 28th November 2024. The event was kindly sponsored and hosted by Lincoln House Chambers, held in Manchester. The seminar brought together youth justice practitioners, students, managers, legal professionals, local government officials and academics from across the country. Three themes emerged from the seminar; ongoing systemic racism, reimagining justice in the context of socioeconomic inequality and the importance of caring relationships. Read more on the [NAYJ blog here](#).



Events



Through the lens of Tish

On Thursday 14 November, Manchester Centre for Youth Studies, the Class Research Group and SODA collaborated with SharpFutures on an exhibition launch showcasing the project 'Through the Lens of Tish: Gen Z's reflections on class and creativity', supported by the Department of Sociology. The project aimed to create a compelling discussion that honoured the photographer Tish Murtha's legacy and provide a platform for Generation Z to share their experiences, advocate for social change and inspire others from similar backgrounds to work in the creative industries. A video showcasing the work was installed in the SODA building along with a takeover of the screens. Images of the exhibition can be viewed on the [SharpFutures Instagram](#) and you can view the video on their [YouTube channel](#). The launch featured a talk by guest speaker Professor Dave O'Brien from the University of Manchester on social mobility in the creative industries, followed by a panel hosted by Lee Stanley from our partner SharpFutures. This featured photographer Anne Worthington, Michelle Calame from Creative UK, and freelance producer, broadcaster and podcaster John Offord, along with reflections from the young creatives who participated in the project.



International Women's Day: 'Girl Wise' justice

'As part of their lived-experience peer-mentoring project, Jodie Hodgson and Deborah Jump facilitated an International Womens Day workshop with girls and mentors affected by child sexual exploitation. The workshop was supported by poet and artist Ella Otomewo and consisted of zine making to form part of a manifesto for 'Girl-Wise' justice. The zine workshop provided a unique way to capture what social change and justice means for girls and women living in Greater Manchester.'



AQAs

MCYS continues to accredit young people for their contribution to research and skill development

MCYS is proud to still be an accredited awarding centre for the AQA's Unit Award Scheme (UAS). AQAs award young people for their important work as co-researchers in centre projects.

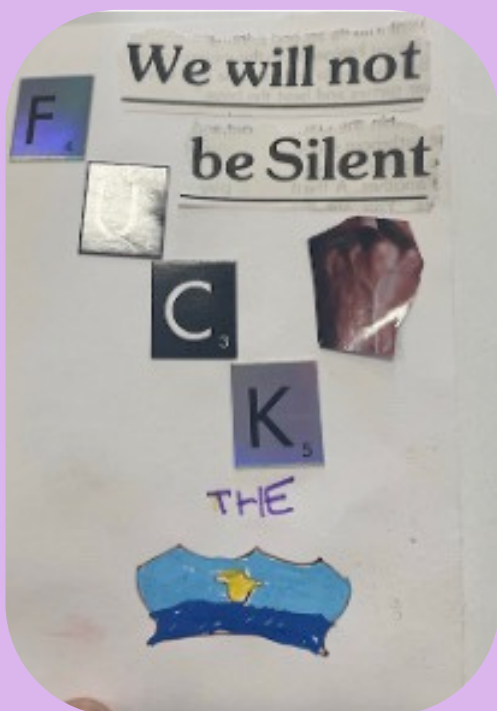
All of the children and young people that engage in MCYS projects have the opportunity to gain AQAs across a range of topics and at various levels (from Entry level through to Level 3). AQAs help to build confidence and can act as important stepping stones towards education, training and/or employment.

To supplement the wide range of existing available AQAs, MCYS have developed a bespoke suite of AQAs that focus on introducing children and young people to social research.



Many of the children and young people that are involved in the Centre's participatory projects play a central role in the research process.

To recognise their involvement, the new AQAs build from Level One (equivalent to GCSE grades 1- 4) through to Level Two (equivalent to GCSE grades 5-9). 'Introduction to Social Research (Unit 1)', for example, introduces children and young people to the field of social research, while 'Introduction to Social Research (Unit 3)' requires them to develop research tools, undertake fieldwork, and be involved in analysis.



Publications Directory



To see the latest publications from our research centre please visit individual team members ORCID profiles

Professor Hannah Smithson	<u>0000-0003-4096-0172</u>
Dr Paul Gray	<u>0000-0002-1546-9333</u>
Dr Deborah Jump	<u>0000-0001-5525-6693</u>
Dr April Pudsey	<u>0000-0002-2541-0298</u>
Dr John Bellamy	<u>0000-0003-1617-1309</u>
Dr Ben Bowman	<u>0000-0003-2866-1612</u>
Dr Samantha Burns	<u>0000-0002-9439-8472</u>
Dr Haridan Goswani	<u>0000-0002-7045-7407</u>
Dr Jodie Hodgson	<u>0000-0002-7443-451X</u>
Dr Fatima Khan	<u>0000-0001-7960-4998</u>
Dr Anna Leyland	<u>0000-0001-8593773X</u>
Dr Lucy Newby	<u>0000-0003-1701-1232</u>
Dr Anne-Marie Day	<u>0000-0001-8525-770X</u>
Dr Dan Marshall	<u>0000-0003-4795-5392</u>
Dr Helene Snee	<u>0000-0002-6572-8348</u>
Dr Kate Westwood	<u>0009-0001-8419-7570</u>



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[mcys podcast](#)

This years report was created by

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