

HMP Lowdham Grange

Summary report for the provision of learning and skills

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Type of establishment:	Adult male category B
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Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)

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Inspectors judge the quality of the provision against the key questions in the *Common Inspection Framework 2009* and contribute to the inspection frameworks of Her Majesty's Inspectorates of Prisons.

These findings relating to the learning and skills provision will be published on the Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The following text is Ofsted's summary of the learning and skills contribution to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons' findings. A copy of the HMI Prisons published inspection report can be found on www.justice.gov.uk/inspectors/hmi-prisons/prison-and-yoi-inspections.htm

Information about the prison

HMP Lowdham Grange is a category B prison for convicted men. It is located near Nottingham and managed by Serco which is a private company. The prison has recently increased its operational capacity and can accommodate a maximum of 920 prisoners. The average length of stay is two to three years with prisoners typically serving between four and 25-year sentences. In addition, HMP Lowdham Grange has started to accommodate a small number of life-sentenced prisoners. At the time of inspection, there were 920 prisoners of whom 125 were foreign nationals; 35 prisoners required English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) support. The prison has 214 'Indeterminate Sentenced Prisoners' (ISP's). Approximately 92% of the prison population are involved in education, training and/or work.

Serco provides the prison's 80 full-time equivalent learning places as part of a contract with the Ministry of Justice. The company's staff offer the information, advice and guidance service and deliver resettlement programmes. HMP Lowdham Grange works with the Shannon Trust's Toe-by-Toe scheme to promote literacy. A Butler Trust award and help from HMP Dartmoor has supported the establishment of a 'Story Time Dads' programme. The prison also has a partnership with the Red Cross to train prisoner peer educators to deliver awareness training about the role of the Red Cross.

Summary report of the inspection findings of the learning and skills provision at HMP Lowdham Grange

Grades: 1 is outstanding; 2 is good; 3 is satisfactory; 4 is inadequate

Common Inspection Framework (CIF) aspects	Grade
Overall effectiveness	3
Capacity to improve	3
Outcomes for learners	3
Quality of provision	3
Leadership and management	3

Overall effectiveness

Grade 3

Achievements of qualifications and other learning goals are satisfactory for most learners and good in education and physical education. Learners develop satisfactory practical and employability skills and most produce work of at least a satisfactory standard. Prisoners usually enjoy participating in learning. They report appropriate improvements in personal confidence and self-esteem following participation in activities.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the better sessions, tutors carefully plan and skilfully manage group learning. Across the provision, tutors make good use of prisoners as teaching support assistants to help other prisoners learn. However, in education, required books are not always available and tutors have insufficient access to information and learning technology. The planning of personalised learning is not effective for all learners. The monitoring and review of learners’ progress is not always adequate. Arrangements for education induction are good.

The range of provision reflects the needs of the prison population. A ‘Story Time Dads’ programme provides prisoners with excellent opportunities to keep in touch with their children and wider family. Vocational training facilities are good and especially so in the electrical and plumbing workshops which offer industry standard facilities and qualifications. The business enterprise workshops are very well equipped. However, work activities provide insufficient progression opportunities. Prisoners are not able to gain the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card before release; the range of programmes beyond level 2 is inadequate. Skills for Life classes include learners of too many different levels of ability and attainment for effective learning. Prisoners receive satisfactory care, guidance and support.

The prison has an adequate strategic direction for learning and skills. Its good use of external links to develop partnerships has resulted in the provision of busy commercial workshops which effectively develop prisoners’ personal and

employability skills. However, whilst the prison's setting and use of targets are satisfactory, data are not used fully for performance management purposes. Equality and diversity are satisfactorily promoted. Allocation to activities is fair and equitable. Pay rates reflect the nature of the work and do not act as a disincentive to participation in education. Safeguarding arrangements are good.

Capacity to Improve

Grade 3

Since the previous inspection, HMP Lowdham Grange has successfully introduced new programmes and more purposeful activity places in response to an increased prison population and their resettlement needs. Successful participation in an innovative scheme has extended learning opportunities using cell-based computer terminals. Busy workshops promote prisoners' work to realistic commercial deadlines.

Investment in new buildings and facilities has improved accommodation and equipment for vocational training and work to at least a satisfactory standard. However, a minority of education sessions are in rooms that are too cramped for the class size. Accommodation is not satisfactorily maintained. Not all tutors have sufficient access to relevant learning resources.

Three deputy education managers have provided satisfactory operational management covering the vacant post of head of learning and skills (Senior Manager of Education)

for over nine months. Managers recognise the need to effectively deal with the high staff turnover rate and improve the pace of curriculum developments.

The prison had no established self-assessment process until recently and wrote the current self-assessment report in anticipation of the inspection. The report is overly descriptive and does not sufficiently use data to evaluate learners' outcomes. Grades in the report generally match those given at inspection. The prison's accurate identification of a suitable range of key curriculum developments and implementation of actions have started to deliver improvements benefitting learners. Quality assurance processes are satisfactory and well supported by an effective action plan to drive improvements. However, the prison has delayed the full implementation of some key quality assurance arrangements, such as observations of teaching and learning.

Outcomes for learners

Grade 3

Strengths

- high achievements on many education courses in 2009/10
- good achievement of skills and vocational qualifications in physical education that effectively support resettlement on release.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient consistently high achievements across the full range of provision.

The quality of provision

Grade 3

Strengths

- good training and use of prisoners as teaching support assistants to support other prisoners in their learning
- particularly good electrical and plumbing workshops that are well aimed at providing skills for future employment
- broad responsive training and work provision that reflects the needs of the prison population and develops appropriate practical and employability skills
- good induction into education that effectively allows prisoners to preview the available courses
- outstanding 'Story Time Dads' provision that provides prisoners with an excellent opportunity to keep in touch with their children and develop a wide range of skills.

Areas for improvement

- limited teaching and learning education resources that adversely affects the variety and effectiveness of activities experienced by learners
- unsatisfactory planning to provide Skills for Life sessions that take account of prisoners' different needs
- inadequate planning of individual learning which deprive learners of opportunities for personalised learning
- insufficient progression opportunities and structure of work to ensure education and training become a priority for all prisoners and allows them to progress to the most highly paid employment
- no opportunity for prisoners to gain the CSCS card to allow them to demonstrate competence to employers
- insufficient progression opportunities beyond level 2 in education.

Leadership and management

Grade 3

Strengths

- good use of external partnerships to provide realistic commercial workshops which effectively promote learners personal and employability skills development
- good safeguarding arrangements that protect all prisoners participating in education, training and work

- effective use of the learning and skills action plan to drive curriculum improvement and development.

Areas for improvement

- insufficient use of data to effectively monitor programme performance and inform decision making
- slow response to the provision of adequate cover for staff vacancies
- insufficient implementation of all quality assurance cycle stages to inform a self-assessment of provision that fully drives improvement.

What does HMP Lowdham Grange need to do to improve further?

- Extend the availability and use of teaching and learning resources in education so that learners benefit from a wider range of learning activities.
- Implement an effective Skills for Life strategy that recognises the need to differentiate learning according to learners' ability and attainment within single subject class sessions.
- Introduce consistently effective planning, monitoring and review of individualised learning, to raise achievements and standards across all provision, through the better use of individual learning plans in education and workshops.
- Extend the range of qualifications in work areas, and above level 2 in education, to improve learners' progression and resettlement opportunities.
- Provide prisoners with the opportunity to gain a CSCS card so they can demonstrate competence when applying for employment in the construction industry.
- Further develop the use of data to improve the effectiveness of programme performance monitoring and decision making.
- Ensure all staff vacancies are promptly filled to improve the management and development of learning and skills facilities and the curriculum offer.
- Fully implement all key stages of the quality assurance cycle to inform a self-assessment of provision that more effectively drives improvement.

Record of Main Findings (RMF) – Young adult and adult prisons

Prison Name:	HMP Lowdham Grange	Inspection No	52309
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	Overall
Grades using the 4 point scale 1: Outstanding; 2: Good; 3: Satisfactory; 4: Inadequate	
Approximate number of learners in training and work and education with or without qualification outcomes at the time of inspection	808
Overall effectiveness	3
Capacity to improve	3
A. Outcomes for learners	3
A1. How well do learners achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
A1.a) How well do learners attain their learning goals?	3
A1.b) How well do learners progress?	3
A2. How well do learners improve their economic and social well-being through learning and development?	3
A3. How safe do learners feel?	3
A4. <i>Are learners able to make informed choices about their own health and well being?*</i>	Yes
A5. <i>How well do learners make a positive contribution to the community?*</i>	3
B. Quality of provision	3
B1. How effectively do teaching, training and assessment support learning and development?	3
B2. How effectively does the provision meet the needs and interests of users?	3
B3. How well do partnerships with employers, community groups and others lead to benefits for learners?	3
B4. How effective are the care, guidance and support learners receive in helping them to achieve?	3
C. Leadership and management	3
C1. How effectively do leaders and managers raise expectations and promote ambition throughout the organisation?	3
C2. <i>How effectively do governors and supervisory bodies provide leadership, direction and challenge?*</i>	n/a
C3. How effectively does the prison promote the safeguarding of learners?	2
C4. How effectively does the prison actively promote equality and diversity, tackle discrimination and narrow the achievement gap?	3
C5. How effectively does the prison engage with users to support and promote improvement?	3
C6. How effectively does self-assessment improve the quality of the provision and outcomes for learners?	3
C7. How efficiently and effectively does the prison use its available resources to secure value for money?	3

*if applicable to the type of prison

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