

HMP Full Sutton

Monitoring visit report

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Name of lead inspector:	Sheila Willis, Ofsted Inspector
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Type of provider:	Category A and B
Address:	Moor Lane Full Sutton York YO41 1PS

Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

The purpose of the visit is to evaluate the progress that leaders and managers have made in rectifying the weaknesses identified at the most recent visit by Ofsted. This could be an inspection or a progress monitoring visit. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of the arrangements outlined in the 'Handbook for inspecting education, skills and work activities in prisons and young offender institutions' especially the section entitled 'Monitoring visits'. The focus of this visit is on the themes set out below. Ofsted undertook this monitoring visit in its own right, without accompanying His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP).

Themes

What actions have leaders and managers undertaken to provide an effective education, skills and work curriculum that meets the needs of the prison population, including those prisoners serving longer sentences or with higher prior academic attainment?

Reasonable progress

Since the previous inspection, two years ago, leaders and managers have extended the range of education provision and the levels of courses they provide. Prisoners can now study courses in art, business studies and catering up to level 2, and an award in education and training at level 3. Functional skills qualifications in English and mathematics can be studied from entry level to level 2. The number of prisoners on Open University (OU) and distance learning courses has increased.

Leaders and managers have mandated that prisoners achieve a level 1 qualification in English and mathematics as entry criteria for some skilled and better paid work. This has created extra demand and has led to waiting lists for English and mathematics courses. Leaders and managers have changed the way the courses are taught. Previously, prisoners with different levels could join courses at any time. Now, prisoners with the same attainment level are grouped together and study more frequently over a shorter period of time. This approach has improved both retention and the achievement of qualifications. It is helping to reduce waiting lists as more prisoners achieve their qualification more quickly and therefore places for new prisoners become available more frequently.

Leaders and managers have a clearly defined plan to increase the number of activity places in prison industries. However, they acknowledge that currently there are not enough activity places for all prisoners to be occupied fully. This has been exacerbated by the recently introduced regime lockdowns because of prison staff shortages.

What actions have leaders and managers taken so that prisoners receive impartial careers advice ensuring that they are allocated to, and attend activities that will support their long-term career goals?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have only recently restarted face-to-face inductions. The Virtual Campus, available on a large number of computers across the establishment, is used well to record the career and personal goals agreed at guidance interviews.

The information, advice and guidance (IAG) service is now fully functioning and effective following a period of closure during the pandemic and a change in the contractor last summer. All new arrivals have a scheduled IAG interview to establish their career and personal goals and prisoners can decide if they wish to have further support.

Prisoners that engage in the service are seen frequently. Many prisoners have long custodial sentences and the IAG rightly focuses on settlement and using their time in custody effectively. Advisors skilfully discuss activities that will help the prisoner settle into the prison. Together, they set and agree achievable and realistic personal and skill development targets. Leaders and managers make good use of established links with other agencies in the prison to refer prisoners for additional advice, as needed. Subsequent IAG meetings effectively review progress towards, and achievement of, the prisoner's targets. However, too many prisoners have not yet received any IAG support. Advisors have prioritised the prisoners they work with to reduce the backlog. Peer mentors, who are working toward a level 3 advice and guidance qualification, support the service effectively.

Leaders and managers communicate well and regularly with prisoners. A regular newsletter, informs prisoners about the regime and activities, including job vacancies. As vacancies arise in work, they are advertised in the newsletter and all prisoners have the opportunity to apply making the process equitable.

What actions have leaders and managers taken to improve the quality of education, skills and work provision, ensuring that all prisoners develop the necessary skills and knowledge for employment on release and that they achieve their qualifications?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have improved education facilities and accommodation since the previous inspection. Prisoners now study in a professional and learning focused environment where staff set clear expectations. Prisoners respond well to this and apply themselves to their studies.

In education, teachers ensure that prisoners develop and understand the essential knowledge and skills that they require in the subject they are studying. When prisoners have mastered these, teachers introduce activities that require prisoners to apply and build on this knowledge in more complex activities. As a result, the large majority of prisoners make good progress and gain the knowledge and skills that they need to achieve their qualification. A high proportion achieve their qualification and progress to higher-level courses or gain work in prison industries.

Education managers deploy mentors effectively to support the delivery of the education curriculum. Leaders and managers have ensured that all mentors hold a mentoring qualification and either have or are working towards a teacher support qualification in order to equip them better for their supporting roles.

Prisoners taking distance learning and OU courses receive good support from education staff to undertake research and to make good progress in gaining the knowledge they need to achieve their higher-level qualifications.

In the majority of prison workshops such as the logistics warehouse, textiles and contract services, prisoners engage well in their activities. They gain and apply new vocational knowledge and skills and good employment related attitudes and behaviours. However, in a minority of prison industries, for example the Ministry of Defence netting workshop, prisoners do not engage well in the routine tasks required to complete the work and are demotivated. They do not develop new knowledge or skills that would help them obtain work in the future.

Wing cleaners keep the accommodation units clean and well maintained. Staff ensure that food servery workers achieve appropriate food hygiene and industrial cleaning qualifications to support their role. However, although prisoners are largely productive there is not enough work to keep them fully occupied.

There are still limited opportunities for prisoners working in prison industries to take qualifications to accredit the skills that they are developing formally. Too few prisoners engage with recording the practical and work-related skills that they develop.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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