

# HMP Ashfield

Monitoring visit report

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<b>Name of lead inspector:</b>	Judy Lye-Forster, His Majesty's Inspector
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<b>Type of provider:</b>	Adult prison
<b>Address:</b>	Shortwood Road Pucklechurch BS16 9QJ

## 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 taken to ensure they thoroughly analyse the information available to them, including course outcomes, to ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum and its impact?**

#### Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have carefully analysed a detailed, prison-wide education 'needs analysis' to select appropriate curriculums that meet the needs of a broader proportion of prisoners. For example, as a result of this analysis they introduced GCSE mathematics for prisoners with higher level mathematics skills and an extra course in bricklaying.

Because the prison has 'people convicted of sexual offences' (PCoSO) status, leaders have focused well on helping prisoners enter self-employment on release. The range of provision for prisoners who have the potential to start their own business is highly effective. It includes vocational training options up to level 3, business and academic training up to level 4, and courses offered by the Open University.

Leaders have enhanced their ability to monitor and manage the performance of the provision by analysing success data that includes course outcomes. Leaders now identify trends accurately and can fully understand the reasons why some areas are performing better than others. For example, they have put in place effective actions to more closely monitor the progress of prisoners in one curriculum area where there had been unexpected low achievement.

HMP Ashfield's status as a national treatment prison for PCoSO means that only a very small minority of prisoners are released directly into the community. Leaders have rightly focused the curriculums on vocational skills training which can offer a realistic career path in the future, such as baking, plumbing and carpentry. Leaders only receive anecdotal feedback from prisoners on how well self-employment is

working out for them. Only prisoners who choose to do so let leaders know they have started their own business or gained employment. Leaders are unable to track the employment of prisoners more formally when they are released, due to its status as a national treatment prison. The vast majority of prisoners who leave HMP Ashfield are either moved to a resettlement prison, a Category D prison or are released to an approved premises (where they are not permitted to gain employment for a number of months).

**What actions have leaders and managers taken to further improve the quality of education ensuring that teaching staff use individual targets and progress monitoring effectively and that feedback to prisoners helps them to improve their work?**

**Reasonable progress**

Leaders and managers have recently reviewed and revised the procedure for marking prisoners' work. However, teachers have not yet integrated the new procedure into their practice in all aspects of education and vocational activities. As a result, there is still not a consistent approach to marking and feedback.

Teachers know their learners well and use this information effectively to ensure each prisoner is encouraged to meet their full potential. Teachers use verbal feedback constructively. They identify areas for improvement and acknowledge where prisoners have been able to demonstrate a good understanding of the tasks they are undertaking. Prisoners value this feedback and use it to improve their work. Prisoners can explain the skills they have developed. However, teachers are not using written feedback systematically or well enough to indicate what prisoners can review and improve.

Teachers set prisoners appropriate targets. This enables the teacher and prisoner to quantify the progress being made towards achieving the qualification they are working towards. Teachers track prisoners' development of new skills and knowledge well. For example, in vocational areas, teachers use up-to-date tracking sheets that show what prisoners have completed and what is still outstanding. However, teachers' tracking of prisoners' development of behaviours and personal skills requires improvement.

Since the previous inspection, education leaders have been working more closely with colleagues from interventions and mental health support to assess prisoners' neurodiversity needs when they arrive. Leaders have introduced a three-way review meeting where support, interventions and adaptations for individual prisoners are discussed and agreed. They then produce a support plan for all staff to follow. It is too early to see the impact of this new approach on assessment and support for prisoners with special educational needs.

**What actions have leaders and managers taken to provide effective advice and guidance for prisoners when choosing their activities, to ensure that they contribute to their long-term resettlement goals?**

**Reasonable progress**

Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have appointed a coordinator of information, advice and guidance (IAG) to provide prisoners with appropriate IAG while at HMP Ashfield. The IAG coordinator receives effective input from student services, IAG orderlies and the student services coordinator.

The IAG orderlies use their extensive knowledge well to deliver comprehensive induction sessions. These help prisoners make informed decisions when selecting activities which are relevant to achieving their employment goals. Staff carefully consider prisoners' prior achievements and learning, their ability in English and mathematics, their interests and long-term resettlement goals when allocating a prisoner to activities. There is no sense of just keeping everyone busy; each prisoner is placed with care onto a relevant programme.

Prisoners have open, drop-in access to a room containing information about a range of topics. These include activities and progression opportunities, careers advice and information about their next steps. They can also book sessions with external advisors, for example the Citizens Advice Bureau. Vocational tutors provide effective and specialist ongoing IAG to prisoners during their course.

Leaders provide sufficient purposeful activity places for all prisoners. There are no waiting lists and only three unemployed prisoners. When a programme becomes oversubscribed, managers have the flexibility to increase or reduce the number of starters to meet demand.

Prisoners' sentence plans are reviewed by a multi-disciplinary team. The IAG coordinator ensures the team is aware of prisoners' personal learning targets and that they are following an appropriate and realistic programme to meet their long-term resettlement goals. However, a recently introduced personal learning plan is not being used as leaders intended to collate all relevant information in one place. Leaders are working to make the plan less time-consuming in order to populate and make easier to navigate for staff and prisoners.

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