

HMP Highpoint

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number:	55273
Name of lead inspector:	Shane Langthorne, His Majesty's Inspector
Inspection dates:	21 to 23 November 2022
Type of provider:	Adult male prison
Address:	Stradishall Newmarket Suffolk CB8 9YG

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

<p>What actions have leaders and managers taken to ensure that all prisoners attend sessions as planned and that they are fully employed so that they can gain the skills and qualifications that they need for successful resettlement?</p>	<p>Insufficient progress</p>
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Prison and education leaders have not increased the number of places for prisoners to participate in education, skills and work activities since the previous inspection. As a result, approximately one fifth of the population are unemployed. While most work and vocational training is available full time, there are insufficient education places available and most are part time. The lack of education places inhibit prisoners from progressing, especially in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL,) English and mathematics.

Leaders have not taken effective action to reduced staff vacancies in education, skills and work activities. Too many jobs remain unfilled. Staffing instability has undermined leaders' capacity to provide a high-quality education, skills and work activities for prisoners.

Prisoners' attendance and punctuality to activities is now good. Senior leaders ensure that any absences for education, skills and work are for appropriate reasons.

Prison managers work effectively with subcontracted training agencies to provide a relevant range of work-related options. These include, for example, roofing, mini-digger and forklift truck driving, railway working and the Construction Skills Certification Scheme. Most of these courses result in qualifications and are provided over a short period of one to three weeks, with most prisoners achieving their qualifications. However, leaders have not put in place a quality assurance monitoring process for this significantly increased subcontracted provision. As a result, leaders do not know whether the quality of this training is of good quality.

Leaders work effectively with employers to plan the curriculum and provide training to meet local and national skills needs. Employers provide work for when prisoners are released, working closely with prison staff to find employment that meets the

skills and expertise prisoners have. Leaders have recently started monitoring progression into sustainable employment data, which showed early positive results.

<p>What actions have leaders and managers taken to ensure that prisoners participate in high quality education sessions and receive appropriate support during all activities to help build their English, mathematics and/or personal development skills?</p>	<p>Reasonable progress</p>
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Leaders ensure that prisoners' English and mathematics needs are accurately assessed before they start their courses. Education staff visit lessons on a regular basis to help prisoners who are struggling to improve their English and mathematics related to the subjects and work they are studying. Teachers in vocational areas develop prisoners' skills through routine work activity. For example, in carpentry, teachers routinely include measuring and calculating complex angles to further prisoners' mathematics skills.

Leaders prioritise English and mathematics through the pay and reward system. Most prisoners stay on their course and achieve. Prisoners in education and vocational areas take the opportunities provided to develop their skills.

Prisoners in education lessons settle quickly and are motivated to learn. There are good levels of cooperation among prisoners, with some readily and informally supporting and helping their peers. In ESOL classes, prisoners rehearse their conversational skills thoroughly and seek advice from the tutor when needed. In mathematics, prisoners are confident in handling equations because of effective teaching. Teachers create a conducive learning environment. Prisoners are respectful and appreciative of teachers.

Prisoners develop good work-related skills, such as teamwork, patience and leadership. These skills prepare them effectively for work when they are released. Teachers in vocational provision have a strong and effective focus on developing prisoners' personal and employability skills.

Education managers do not prioritise the development of prisoners' digital skills. Teachers do not routinely plan for prisoners to develop their digital skills, in readiness for prisoners' release. In addition, managers have not enabled new teachers to incorporate digital skills into their teaching.

Managers monitor the quality of teaching in the prison effectively. They use this information to provide teaching staff and peer mentors with good support and regular training, based on the areas of weakness identified through their quality assurance processes.

<p>What actions have leaders and managers taken to support the needs of prisoners with learning disabilities to ensure that these are fully addressed to promote prisoners' achievement?</p>	<p>Reasonable progress</p>
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Since the previous inspection, leaders have ensured that prison staff rapidly and accurately identify prisoners with learning difficulties through the prison induction process. Prison staff ensure that prisoners' prior learning history is captured effectively. Where needed, staff carry out detailed assessments of prisoners learning needs. Prison staff use the information they gather to prioritise help for prisoners to overcome the barriers they face to making good progress in their studies. Staff carefully devise the most appropriate interventions needed.

Education managers have ensured that teachers and trainers receive the training and guidance they need to support prisoners' specialist learning requirements. Specialist staff provide support to teachers and trainers, to plan detailed support strategies for prisoners. Teachers and trainers use these strategies to enable prisoners to manage their learning and make better progress. Prisoners with complex needs are now supported appropriately by specialists who ensure that prisoners benefit from one-to-one teaching and using adaptive technology, such as reading pens, as required.

Teachers and trainers use classroom-based peer mentors effectively in supporting prisoners' development needs. Peer mentors work closely with fellow prisoners. They help prisoners to consider different ways of completing tasks and develop their understanding by reflecting on what they could do to improve. For example, in the gastro kitchen, the peer mentor helps prisoners calculate measurements and develop their fine motor skills.

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