

# HMP Buckley Hall

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**Inspection date**

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300811

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## Background information

### Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

#### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

### Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Preparation for life and work programmes

## Description of the provider

1. HMP Buckley Hall is located in Greater Manchester. The status of the prison is a male category C training prison, with a capacity of 385. The prison has undergone a period of significant change, having re-roled from a female closed prison in December 2005. There are no remand offenders and approximately 40 foreign nationals. Offenders' length of stay varies widely from two months to life sentences. The education contract allocated to preparation for life and work is 21,195 hours. City College Manchester delivers the education contract.
2. The prison provides education and training for approximately 234 offenders, each morning and afternoon. Family learning provision is offered on alternate Saturdays. There are no evening classes. Accredited vocational training is offered in industrial cleaning, barbering and very recently in window fabrication, waste management and construction multi-skills. The education contractor delivers a recently introduced pre-release course. A small number of offenders are taking open learning courses through the Open University or other distance learning programmes. Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council provides the library services.

## Summary of grades awarded

<b>Effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Satisfactory: Grade 3</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Satisfactory: Grade 3</b>
<b>Achievement and standards</b>	<b>Good: Grade 2</b>
Employability training	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Personal development and social integration	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>Satisfactory: Grade 3</b>
Employability training	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2
Personal development and social integration	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Satisfactory: Grade 3</b>
<b>Equality of opportunity</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3</b>

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

#### Satisfactory: Grade 3

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. More specifically, the quality of provision including employability training and personal development and social integration is satisfactory. The quality of provision in literacy, numeracy and ESOL is good. Leadership and management are satisfactory, as is the prison's approach to equality of opportunity.

### Capacity to improve

#### Satisfactory: Grade 3

4. The prison has demonstrated that it is in a satisfactory position to make improvements. The overall strategies for improving and developing the prison are well developed and understood by staff. The prison has agreed plans to extend the provision and introduce more opportunities for vocational training to improve offenders' employability prospects. During the significant changes to the prison during the last year, the prison has continued to improve the overall provision to reflect the needs of the prison population.
5. The self-assessment process is broadly effective. It links well to the overall strategic objectives for learning and skills within the prison. Staff understand the self-assessment process and can identify its importance in driving continuous improvement. The self-assessment process covers all areas of the prison. However, not all prison staff have contributed to the most recent report. Staff training has taken place to enable them to contribute to future reports more fully. The prison has satisfactorily addressed some of the weaknesses in the current report. The self-assessment report is generally sufficiently critical. It includes many of the strengths identified by inspectors but omitted some of the weaknesses.

## Key strengths

- Much good achievement in accredited provision
- Good development of practical and personal skills
- Comprehensive and clear strategic planning
- Innovative project work to promote equality of opportunity

## Key areas for improvement

- The weak emphasis on target-setting to support learning
- The insufficient attention to record-keeping about learners progress and achievement
- The development of effective external links to promote employability
- The availability of sufficient education and vocational training

## Main findings

## Employability training

### Achievement and standards

**Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3**

6. Achievement of qualifications is good in industrial cleaning, first aid at work and the part qualification in manual handling at foundation level. Between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007, nearly 80% of learners who started the industrial cleaning course and 91% of first aid at work learners achieved. All 536 learners who started the part qualification in manual handling at foundation level achieved. Many more learners participate in other qualifications and non-accredited training where achievement is satisfactory and the majority make satisfactory progress.
7. Learners develop good barbering skills and quickly gain confidence in their work. They are able to complete a wide range of different haircutting techniques to a good commercial standard. Learners' have a good understanding of health and safety and effectively link background knowledge to their practical work. The completion of haircuts is to a commercially acceptable time and shows skill in both contemporary and traditional haircuts. Hair colouring techniques are to a good standard.
8. Most learners deal effectively with classroom and workshop tasks. Those on the Firm Start programme are able to apply appropriate business terminology to a range of self-employment situations. The application of theoretical concepts learned on the programme to employability aims on release is generally satisfactory. In information technology classes, learners adequately analyse and evaluate their work before correction. Procedures for recognising and managing attendance are satisfactory.

### Quality of provision

**Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3**

9. The rapport between learners and staff in the workshops and education department is usually good. Most teaching is at least satisfactory. In the better classes, learners are fully engaged in clearly defined tasks undertaken at an appropriate pace. Well-planned sessions benefit from enthusiastic and knowledgeable tutors. Learners receive useful feedback on their progress and relevant guidance on how to improve performance. However, while learners' preferred learning style is assessed there is little use of this information to inform lesson planning. The less effective classes do not reinforce and test learners understanding enough. Learners spend too much time waiting for guidance from the tutor. The range of teaching strategies is narrow.
10. Accommodation is generally satisfactory. However, the recently established vocational workshops are only partially furnished or equipped and vocational workshops do not all have appropriate classroom accommodation. Storage facilities in one information technology classroom prevent adequate classroom supervision. The gym classroom used for theory and practical classes does not include adequate facilities to support learning. Facilities for industrial cleaning are satisfactory. However, learners do not benefit from being able to practice their skills on the range of floor surfaces found in the prison.
11. All learners participate in a satisfactory induction process. They receive an appropriate range of information on education, training and work opportunities. The outcome of the assessment of literacy and numeracy needs informs effective support within the workshops and education classes. The quality of information, advice and guidance on

available courses and employment opportunities is satisfactory. There are adequate links for referral and support, including to colleges and the voluntary and statutory sector. All training and education staff give learners satisfactory personal support. Many learners speak highly of the individual help they have received. Learners receive suitable guidance on health and safety issues. However, there is not enough reinforcement about correct posture and the need to take breaks with learners on information technology programmes.

12. The use of short-term target-setting to monitor learners' progress is weak. Precise and detailed learning targets are not systematically set or monitored. Some short-term targets are not meaningful to learners. Targets are often the same for a group of learners and not always appropriate for each individual. In some cases, the recording of information on individual learning plans is poor.
13. The range of accredited programmes in the education department is adequate, but all programmes have waiting lists. The delay for learners starting information technology and business 'start-up' programmes is significant. There are no accredited information technology courses of a design or technical nature. Learners have very limited access to data storage devices and are not able to use web-based facilities.
14. There is insufficient accredited vocational training in the workshops. The prison has 128 places in workshops and most learners have to wait to be able to work. Two of the six workshops provide non-accredited assembly and packaging activities. Learners work to an acceptable commercial standard, but there is insufficient recognition of the skills learners have developed. Following a review of offender training needs there have been very recent initiatives to improve the number and range of available accredited programmes in the other four workshops. New bathroom and kitchen fitting and window fabrication workshops are in use and painting, decorating, and waste management workshops are planned. The prison intends to re-introduce accredited training in both catering and horticulture. Learners can participate in industrial cleaning up to level 1 but they are not able to practice their skills in areas outside the training workshop.
15. There are few links with external organisations to enhance the development of learners' employability skills. Wider links with the education department are underdeveloped and use of external links to enrich the curriculum is insufficient. The limited external links of workshops are primarily commercial rather than developing training and employment opportunities.

## **Literacy, numeracy and ESOL**

### **Achievement and standards**

**Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2**

16. ESOL success rates are particularly good. Of 17 learners who started the qualification, eight have achieved it, and another six are still in learning.
17. Learners progress well from one qualification to another, moving flexibly between literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Some have moved from being non-readers to level 3 distance-learning programmes during their time in education. Learners grow in confidence as they acquire more skills and gain qualifications.



18. Achievement rates for skills for life and key skills are satisfactory. They have improved since a change in policy. Only those learners who wish to take the qualification are now registered.

**Quality of provision****Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2**

19. The quality of teaching and learning is good in most classes. Tutors plan their lessons well, building in flexibility to meet the needs of any new learners, and providing a variety of activities as many have short attention spans. Tutors effectively use well-designed handouts and worksheets. In the best lessons, skilled, experienced and enthusiastic tutors set a purposeful pace and involve everyone.
20. The education department provides effective outreach literacy and numeracy support in all parts of the prison. Literacy and numeracy tutors attend most of the workshops, to help with literacy, numeracy or information technology as required. Tutors work sensitively with learners to identify what they need. The take-up of help is good. Many learners progress from having some help with literacy in the workshop to attending classes in the education department. In the recycling workshop and the information technology class, contextualised literacy support fits with the qualification aim. There are some missed opportunities to contextualise numeracy, particularly in information technology. There are plans to extend key skills work to all the new workshop activities as they are developed.
21. The prison has improved on the original 'Story Book Dads' concept by arranging for readers to be videoed while they read stories for their children. Participants improve their reading and communication skills significantly. Fathers make the most of illustrations in the book, showing them to the camera and talking about them. The story is produced as a DVD, rather than a tape. This provides more learning opportunities, a more robust format and has the advantage that children can see their fathers as well as hear them. DVD production is to a professional quality. Good coaching enables fathers to appear confident and relaxed to their families. Forty-three learners have made use of this facility over the last year, and it is so popular that at the time of inspection, there was a five-week waiting list.
22. The prison uses the Toe-By-Toe mentoring system well to teach people to read. Learners referred to the scheme receive support from a peer mentor in one of the workshops. However, there are not enough mentors. Mentors do not have the time for the short and frequent sessions the programme needs. Eight more mentors are waiting for training and the recruitment of a new learning support assistant is in progress.
23. An event to celebrate learners' success and present certificates takes place during Adult Learners' Week. Seventy learners attended last year's event. For many, this was the first certificate they had ever had.
24. Target-setting and monitoring is weak. There is no clear approach to target-setting. Learners are not involved in setting or monitoring short-term targets for their learning. There is not enough opportunity for learners to take more responsibility for their own learning, or to be more aware of their progress.
25. Records of learning and progress are poor. Most individual learning plans are incomplete. Very few have references to learning, or include plans to meet identified learning needs.

Reviews are not systematic or not recorded. When learners transfer to other jails or to the community, the poorly kept records which accompany them do not demonstrate the good quality of the learning they may well have experienced at Buckley Hall.

26. At the time of inspection, there was not enough ESOL provision to meet learners' needs. Managers expected the number of foreign nationals in the prison to fall but they have risen dramatically. ESOL learners dominate literacy classes, marginalising others trying to work towards literacy qualifications. There are plans to introduce another ESOL class in the next few weeks.
27. There is no specialist support available for learners with dyslexia. The prisons self-assessment report identified this as an area for improvement. Most of the tutors in the education department have completed a level 2 programme in dyslexia awareness. A recently introduced protocol ensures that learners receive dyslexia screening and where necessary, undergo a diagnostic test.

## **Personal development and social integration**

### **Achievement and standards**

**Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2**

28. Achievements in accredited programmes are good. Most learners complete their courses, and almost all who complete achieve their accreditation. Prison data indicates that since the re-role, 95% of social and life skills and 71% of art learners achieved their accreditation. All 76 learners who completed open college network accredited offending behaviour programmes achieved and were awaiting certification at the time of the inspection. Attendance in observed classes was good.
29. Learners develop good social and creative skills. Programmes available through the chaplaincy, family learning, and social and life skills programmes promote many transferable personal and interpersonal skills. Learners demonstrate good discussion and listening skills through class contributions. Family learning has so far effectively supported 32 families to maintain good family bonds. Fathers are able to put good parenting skills into practice, helping their children with homework or craftwork. In art, learners make very good progress. New learners produce good standards of work within a short space of time. More experienced learners develop good research skills and achieve high standards of creative and technical skills. The best work shows excellent development of imagery from primary source materials. Learners show a clear sense of pride in their work and speak confidently about their ideas and inspirations. Learners from offending behaviour courses report changes in attitude and heightened levels of self-awareness. Most learners in classes concentrate well and contribute well to discussions and activities.

**Quality of provision****Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3**

30. Learners receive much good personal support from a wide range of sources. The chaplaincy provides a specialist well-used counselling service, and encourages learners to develop a sense self-worth and recognise their place within the wider community. There is a specialist chaplain for hearing impaired offenders. Volunteers are well-used to support preparation for confidently presented stories for Storybook Dad participants. In-class support from tutors is good. All art learners receive their own kit box, portfolio and sketchbooks. A tutor voluntarily provides an additional session for expressive artwork on a Saturday morning. Learners receive helpful support from library staff to find funding for courses and specialist books for high level distance and open learning programmes. Information, advice and guidance from qualified staff is available each morning and afternoon every day of the week. However, support arrangements for flexible learning are not yet fully established. Learners following distance-learning programmes do not have access to laptops for private study undertaken on the prison wings.
31. Responsive programmes meet learners' needs and interests. The chaplaincy provides a range of courses for people of different faiths and lunchtime sessions support good social interaction over a meal. The family learning programme enables families to spend productive time together, something not possible in visiting times. The Storybook Dads project enables men to give something of value to their children. Learners in art classes are proud of their work and often send work home. The range of art is good, and the prison is active in promoting artwork through external exhibitions and challenging competitions. Planning within some programme is very responsive to individual needs. In art and family learning, learners are actively involved in planning activities. One learner is starting his national diploma in graphics course in prison. The college course starts before his release day. The extended family learning course over three weeks enables the development of good relationships with and between families. The prison has recently introduced a social and life skills and pre-release programme. However, some distance-learning programmes are inappropriate for the type of learning indicated. Distance-learning programmes in counselling and anger management do not provide the opportunity for learners to interact with others to practice and develop the intended skills and attributes.
32. All teaching is satisfactory or better. Enthusiastic tutors work well with groups and individuals. Mostly well-planned sessions encourage many learners to contribute well to discussion and activities. Art classes use effective team teaching. Resources and accommodation are generally satisfactory. In better sessions, well-managed lively discussion makes effective use of humour. Learners talk confidently about their work using appropriate terminology. In weaker sessions there is too much teacher led activity that does not sufficiently recognise the low levels of concentration of some participants.
33. There is not enough provision to meet demand. Most areas have substantial waiting lists. Family learning can only take eight families at a time. It has a two-month waiting list before new applicants can start. Offending behaviour programmes have significantly greater waiting lists and can be well over a year in extreme cases.
34. The use of individual learning plans for target-setting and monitoring learning is weak. Target-setting is generally the full qualification or completion of the activity. There are no

short-term targets or clear involvement of learners in setting their own targets. Recording progress is inconsistent. Sometimes progress and achievement is recorded, but only as tick against assessment criteria. There are few qualitative judgements about work and progress. In many learning plans there is no indication of progress review. The use of individual learning plans to inform planning for future learning is not clear.

35. Record-keeping is poor. Learning plans are often incomplete and not updated to maintain an up to date record of learning and progress. In many cases there is little recorded other than the learners name, initial assessment score and target qualification. For example, an Open University learner was shown to be at level entry 3 in literacy and level 1 in numeracy. In fact, he had achieved level 2 in both some time ago. Many learning plans do not indicate the learners starting point. It is not clear that tutors understand the purpose of the plans or how to complete them.

## **Leadership and management**

**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

### **Equality of opportunity**

**Contributory grade: Satisfactory Grade 3**

36. The prison has developed a very comprehensive and clear strategic plan for learning and skills that links to the overall prison strategy. Senior staff have a clear vision for the way learning and skills are to be developed to meet individual learners' needs and extend the range of vocational opportunities available. The learning and skills strategy has clear links to the resettlement objectives of the prison and the reducing re-offending strategy. Learning and skills is seen as central to helping the prison achieve its overall objectives. The head of learning and skills (HOLS) and the education manager are both members of the senior management team. The strategic plan is linked to the self-assessment report and the resulting development plan which acts as an operation improvement plan. The well-developed operational plan has clear targets and performance indicators to help judge progress. A quarterly review of the plan assesses progress being made.
37. Good internal links exist between the education provider and the prison. The prison has undergone significant changes to the prison population during the last 12 months. The education provider and the prison have worked hard to identify the changing needs of the prison and to plan a curriculum, which better meets the needs of the current prison population. The curriculum continues to be improved. Additional vocational workshops are due. Plans for further social and personal development courses such as domestic violence will complement the behaviour programmes already running within the prison. The education provider and the prison share good practice. For example, the prison has effectively used the education provider for prison staff development. The HOLs and education manager meet frequently on an informal and planned formal basis. Tripartite meetings between the education provider, prison and the LSC have a strong focus on developing the curriculum within the prison.
38. A recently developed data system gives clear information on learners' progress, retention, achievement and attendance. Data is not yet sufficiently mature to enable a clear analysis to inform trends for planning and curriculum development. However, some analysis has begun to take place.

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39. Staff development is satisfactory. All prison staff receive an appraisal, which is clearly documented and well understood. All staff have a personal development plan, which uses findings from appraisals to identify development needs. The education contractor has its own appraisal system linked to a staff development program.
  40. Accommodation is broadly satisfactory. However, accommodation for individual support in workshops is poor. Rooms are cramped and do not create a positive learning environment. In some workshops, individual learner support is frequently interrupted. Accommodation for background knowledge in the barbering shop is too small for the size of the group following this programme. Workshops are generally of a satisfactory commercial standard.
  41. The prison's approach to continuous improvement is satisfactory. Progress in addressing the weaknesses from the previous inspection is satisfactory. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. The education department produce their own self-assessment, which forms the basis of the prison's report. The self-assessment includes all staff within the education department. They have a good understanding of how the process links to quality improvement. Prison staff have recently received staff training and development on self-assessment but have not contributed to the current report.
  42. The education contractor has a satisfactory quality assurance process. However, there is inconsistent use of individual learning plans and course reviews. A well-established process is in place for the observation of teaching and learning. Observations are graded and externally moderated. Staff receive training on teaching observations and have a clear understanding of how the system works. Training needs identified at observations inform the appraisal process and the resulting staff development plan.
  43. The prison has few external links with employers. Little use is made of learners who would be eligible under release on temporary licence to work in the community and gain valuable experience to enhance their employability skills. There are insufficient links between learning and skills and sentence planning. Information about prior learning is not used enough to inform and plan learning. A new project with Impact offers skills for life courses to help prepare learners for release. Currently, courses in budgeting and money management are not available before release. Department for Work & Pensions visits the prison two days a week to provide guidance on job skills. No job club is currently available and little help is provided in accessing employment on release. The prison has been very effective at identifying skills shortages in areas where learners are due for release, and planned curriculum development focuses on increasing employability skills to meet the needs of employers.
  44. The prison has insufficient vocational training opportunities to support the development of employability skills for the current prison population. The vocational training that is available in the production workshops is not sufficiently structured to enable learners to increase their employability skills. Accredited courses are available in industrial cleaning, and very recently window fabrication, waste management and construction multi-skills. Plans are at an advanced stage to introduce additional workshops to increase the type and volume of vocational work available. In education, most of the courses in personal and social development have waiting lists. ESOL provision is insufficient for the number of learners who require this support.

45. There have been some exciting projects to promote understanding of equality of opportunity. The Anne Frank exhibition and associated activities gave offenders a chance to think about prejudice and persecution. A play about release from prison, 'Homeward Bound', helped learners see that their families were also victims and suffered from their imprisonment. ESOL learners produced a powerful DVD about bullying, used to promote diversity. There has been considerable staff training on equal opportunities issues, including dyslexia awareness training delivered by Dyslexia Action. All offenders can access literacy and numeracy support, whether or not they wish to work towards a qualification, anywhere in the prison. A signed DVD produced for the induction programme is to be used for learners with hearing impairments.
46. Although learners have the opportunity to understand the importance of equality of opportunity through these activities, many do not perceive that they are treated fairly. Managers work hard to ensure that allocations are fair but learners do not understand the system and do not see it as fair. There is not enough provision for Muslim offenders to consult an Imam about faith issues of personal hygiene. The Imam visits every Friday, but only for an hour to conduct prayers. Male Muslims do not feel comfortable discussing personal matters with the female chaplain. Offenders could be vulnerable to bullying in some areas. One of the three gym instructors is female and staffing rotas sometimes prevent effective supervision in the showers. The prison is not able to take offenders with restricted mobility because of the nature of the site.

### **What learners like:**

- 'I've liked it all up to now, it's all about getting a job isn't it?'
- 'If it wasn't for my tutor, I'd never have got this far'
- 'The computer course is really helpful'

- The relaxed environment in education department'
- 'The chance to learn. I never went to school and can now read and write'
- 'Staff have turned my life around'
- 'I see things differently now and am much calmer'
- Good access to information, advice and guidance in the education department
- Help in arranging a college course on release

### **What learners think could improve:**

- The allocation process – 'there should be more jobs for basic offenders.'
- The workshop work – 'Packing tea bags won't help me to get a job outside.'
- The availability of job-related courses – 'I only agreed to come here because they said I could do welding, and there isn't any' – 'I want to be trained in construction skills, and there are no places'
- Record-keeping - 'I'm going out soon and have applied twice for the multi-skills workshop, but they say they've no record of my application'
- The long waiting lists - 'I can't get re-categorised until I've done my enhanced thinking skills course. I've been waiting two years now and still don't know when I'm going to do it'
- Access to laptops on the wings for personal use

