

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HMP Bullingdon**

**02 September 2002**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based training within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based training for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- the University for Industry's **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

## Overall judgement

In those cases where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, or
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

## SUMMARY

### The provider

HMP Bullington is a Category C training prison for men, situated on the outskirts of Bicester, in Oxfordshire. At the time of the inspection, 929 prisoners were held at the prison, which has an operating capacity of 933. The prison education unit offers a range of courses including basic literacy, numeracy and information technology. There are also courses in art, music, humanities and social sciences, some of which are offered on the prison's residential wings. The prison has workshops for textile manufacture, packing, and light assembly. Prisoners also work in the kitchens, laundry and gardens. No accredited training is offered in these workshops. Training leading to qualifications is offered in industrial cleaning, and in physical education. Inspectors visited the prison as part of an unannounced inspection by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons. They inspected the training in education, physical education, and industrial cleaning.

### Overall judgement

The quality of education and training is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training is satisfactory in physical education and good in industrial cleaning. Education is sound, but the leadership and management of education and training at the prison are poor. Many courses and workshop sessions are cancelled due to a shortage of prison officers to escort prisoners from their cells and supervise the activities. The progress of learners is seriously affected by this disruption, and there is a considerable waste of physical and human resources. The range of accredited vocational training opportunities is very limited. There are few links between education and training, and the education department is not meaningfully involved in the planning of prisoners' sentences. Quality assurance arrangements for the education provision are well developed, and include observations of teaching, analysis of retention and achievement data, and regular self-assessment. However, these arrangements do not apply to workshops and training.

### KEY STRENGTHS

- good accommodation and resources for education and training
- good range of education programmes
- good teaching in basic skills and key skills
- good personal support for learners

**KEY WEAKNESSES**

- very poor access to education and training
- very little accredited vocational training
- weak links between education, work and training
- no quality assurance of training

## THE INSPECTION

1. Three inspectors spent a total of 11 days at HMP Bullingdon in September 2002, as part of an unannounced inspection carried out by the prisons' inspectorate. They visited all prison workshops, the physical education (PE) unit, and education and training facilities, including the library. They observed 13 learning sessions and interviewed 19 learners and 18 members of staff. Inspectors examined a range of documents, including 20 individual learning plans, minutes of meetings, verifier reports, schemes of work, the student handbook, the education manager's reports and the most recent self-assessment report for education, which was produced in February 2002.

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

2. HMP Bullingdon is a Category C training prison for men, situated on the outskirts of Bicester, in Oxfordshire. Education at the prison is through a contract with a local college, which also holds contracts at two other prisons. The contractor is required to offer 22,000 hours of teaching each year. Education is managed by a full-time head of education, with a full-time administrator. There is a full-time information technology (IT) co-ordinator who manages the IT workshop, which is well equipped with approximately 50 up-to-date computers and a print shop. In addition, there are nine part-time staff on permanent contracts and 35 associate lecturers. There are four workshops, offering tailoring, light assembly, and sewing tasks. Another workshop offers training in industrial cleaning. Prisoners also work in the prison laundry, kitchen, and in the grounds carrying out garden maintenance. In each of these facilities, there are one or two supervisory staff. There is no accredited training in any of the work facilities except industrial cleaning. Plans have been made to offer national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in amenity horticulture to garden workers, and the supervisors are about to undertake training in assessment. The prison also has a 'custody to work' programme, which includes funding for some education and training aimed at prisoners approaching their release date. This training is supplied by the education contractor. New facilities for 'custody to work' have been constructed and there are plans for a more extensive programme to reduce re-offending, but this is not yet operational. The total number of places available on all education courses is 434. This includes 74 places in the IT workshop and 52 in the 'custody to work' programme. Work and training offer 257 places altogether. In practice, the number of prisoners attending education and training is far less than this, due to problems with access to the facilities. Approximately a third of the basic skills provision is taught in classrooms on the residential wings, providing those who are unable or unwilling to attend the education centre with the opportunity to learn.

## Education and training in prison

3. HMP Bullington has very good facilities for education and training. However, access to education and training for prisoners is very poor. A shortage of uniformed staff to escort and supervise prisoners causes frequent cancellation of courses, training and work. The IT centre, one of the first areas to be cancelled when there is a staff shortage, was used for classes on less than 20 occasions in the eight months before the inspection. The education department plans to offer nine teaching sessions each week, but, over the past 12 months, has generally only been able to offer three to five. In the week of the inspection, only three sessions were taught and prisoners arrived between 30 minutes and one hour late, due to problems in releasing them from the wings and escorting them to the centre. These factors severely reduce the quality of prisoners' learning opportunities. Disruption of the programme means that few are able to achieve a level 2 qualification, so some learners take qualifications at a lower level than their capability so that they can complete a qualification. Education staff make considerable effort to overcome the problems caused by poor access. In the year to March 2002, 132 learners undertook level 2 key skills training and achieved 200 successes in national tests in mathematics and English. The target for this period was 254 accreditations. In addition, 565 unit accreditations were achieved in other courses, including basic skills, art, music, barbering, and social and life skills.

4. The quality of teaching in the education department is good, with clear and detailed learning plans for each learner. Tutors are well qualified and maintain a good rapport with learners. They use a variety of teaching methods to take account of the diversity of abilities within groups, and offer effective support for learners. Accommodation for education is good. The education centre has 10 well-decorated and fully equipped classrooms, including good specialist resources for music and barbering. There are also classrooms on the residential wings, where outreach training effectively widens participation in education. Thirty-seven per cent of education hours are taught in this way. Tutors also visit wings to offer individual basic skills teaching to learners who are not currently in education, or to those unable to attend the centre. Access to IT facilities is very poor. There are no computer resources in the education unit and the IT workshop is very often closed.

5. The lack of vocational qualifications is a serious weakness at HMP Bullington. Prisoners who work in areas such as the kitchens, laundry, gardens, textiles and tailoring workshops have no opportunity to have their skills accredited. Accreditation is offered in industrial cleaning and the facilities are good. On- and off-the-job training are also good, and 77 learners have achieved at level 1 and 2 in the past 11 months. Some learners have successfully gained employment after release. However, links are not made with education to support the learners' basic skills requirements.

6. The library is located in the education unit of the prison, in an attractive room with good decoration and furnishings. The bookstock has approximately 7,500 volumes but the stock of books for learners with reading difficulties is very limited. There is a small collection of foreign language books and large-print titles. The library also has a small

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collection of audio books. Small library collections are maintained in other parts of the prison, including the health care unit, the segregation unit, the vulnerable prisoner wing, and the remand wing. Users of the main library have access to the catalogue of Oxfordshire library service on microfiche, and can request any book in the system. There are no periodicals or newspapers in the library.

7. Access to the library for prisoners is sometimes difficult, although it has improved significantly in the past six months. The library is open every weekday for approximately four hours, but is closed in the evenings and at weekends. There is a library timetable which would, if adhered to, allow access for all prisoners for at least 20 minutes each week. However, until February 2002, access was regularly denied because no prison officer was available to staff the library during opening hours. Between August 2001 and January 2002, 55 per cent of the total scheduled library sessions were cancelled because of this. Library staff have agreed to open without an officer present and the number of cancelled sessions has dropped dramatically, averaging less than 12 per cent between March and July 2002. However, many prisoners still experience problems gaining access to the library. Library staff can only cope with eight prisoners at a time, which means that the time allocated to each wing is insufficient. In July 2002, 754 prisoner visits were made to the library, the highest figure achieved in recent years, and loans for the period between February and July 2002 were 28 per cent higher than for the same period in 2001. Library staff operate an application system for prisoners who have an urgent need to use the library. They also run a reading group and a creative writing group to stimulate prisoners' interest in literature.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

8. The leadership and management of education and training are poor. Education and training are managed by a head of activities, who took over this responsibility in the week of the inspection. Training is managed by an industrial manager who was on sick leave at the time of the inspection. Education is offered by a college subcontractor. At the time of the inspection, 434 prisoners were involved in some form of education, and there were 180 places available in workshops. There are written policies and procedures for quality assurance in education, but not in work or training. The education contractor produces a self-assessment report each year. The prison has a policy for equality of opportunity, and associated procedures for anti-bullying, harassment, and complaints. Prisoners are paid if they attend either work or education.

### STRENGTHS

- good range of education programmes
- good accommodation for education and training
- good staff development and appraisal procedures in education

### WEAKNESSES

- poor use of resources
- inadequate quality assurance arrangements in training
- very poor access to education and training
- no links between education, work and training
- little vocational education
- little accreditation of vocational training

9. There is a good range of education programmes. Courses for prisoners' basic skills needs are offered in the 'custody to work' programme and on the wings, as well as in the education unit. This improves participation by those who would be reluctant to come to the education unit. There is a dedicated classroom in the remand wing, to enable these prisoners to attend education and it allows individual training programmes for learners with a range of prior attainment. In the education unit, learners can choose to develop their skills in music, art, and social and life skills, and there are also short courses in geography, history, and earth science. Support is also given to learners undertaking some higher level study. The prison has been selected to be a pilot centre for the Open University's new access to higher education programme. The barbering course has a recognised vocational award, but there are few education courses which offer vocational qualifications.

10. Accommodation for education and training is good. Workshops are modern, large, and in good decorative order. They are also well equipped. For example, the tailoring

workshop has over 30 modern sewing machines and the IT centre has over 50 up-to-date computers, many equipped with software for desktop publishing. The education unit has a well-equipped music suite with facilities for producing, editing, and recording music electronically. There is a small recording studio and also a radio station, which broadcasts to the prison and the local area. There are dedicated rooms for art and for barber training. The quality of general classrooms and furniture is also good. Facilities are clean and well maintained but the vocational education facilities have recently been reduced, with the closure of a wood-skills workshop and a teaching kitchen.

11. Education staff have good access to development training. All are appraised each year. In the past year, four teachers have completed initial certificates in teaching basic skills, 10 have undertaken the stage one teaching certificate, and two have completed certificates in education. There is some good staff development in industrial cleaning and sport and recreation. The industrial cleaning co-ordinator has recently achieved a recognised adult education certificate, which the prison paid for. The PE team has a wide range of qualifications, which allow them to teach and coach a wide variety of sports. Qualifications in coaching, first aid and manual handling are kept up to date and staff regularly add to their qualifications. One team member has just completed the first stage of a recognised adult education certificate.

12. Access to education and training resources is very poor. A shortage of uniformed staff to escort and supervise prisoners has led to cancellation of courses, training and work. In the week of the inspection, only three sessions were taught. Prisoners and teachers become demoralised when most of their training cannot take place. The prisoners' overall educational attainment suffers as many cannot achieve the qualifications of which they are capable. Officers who manage the workshops have identified that their sources of contract work reduce because they are unable to meet their production targets.

13. There is no overall management of education and training, and links between the two are limited. No attempt has yet been made to match key skills to the tasks undertaken in the workshops. However, education staff are involved in offering literacy and numeracy tuition in the workplace to a small number of prisoners. Education and training are not meaningfully involved in the sentence planning.

14. The range of vocational training is poor, and there is no strategy for the development of work-based learning. All areas of work, except industrial cleaning, lack formal training, and do not offer accreditation of the learners' skills. However, some structured training is taking place. Workers in the gardens are given an induction covering health and safety and manual handling, and are trained and tested on the operation of each machine before they are allowed to use it. Similar training is given in textiles, where learners who have developed skills on particular sewing machines are given a certificate of competence, which is produced by the supervisory staff. While these certificates are appreciated by learners, they have little currency outside the prison. Individual officers in the workshops are aware that the work and training offered are poor preparation for learners who want to gain employment after their release.

Discussions about bids for centre accreditation for NVQs have taken place, but little progress has been made. Work has been carried out towards gaining centre accreditation in amenity horticulture, although it is not available as yet. The prison has ambitious plans for its 'custody to work' programme. New training facilities have been built and staff have been employed to give additional support to prisoners who are approaching release. This support will include the development of links with employers, and an enhanced range of vocational training through collaboration with education and training departments. At present, there are few links with employers outside the prison, and insufficient links between training facilities such as industrial cleaning and the education department. Learners cannot take basic skills or key skills qualifications. The education department is currently developing a system to assess learners' basic skills in the workshops, but it has not been implemented as yet. Although several learners aim to set up their own cleaning businesses, there are no links with the self-employment course in the education department.

### **Equality of opportunity**

15. The management of equality of opportunity in education and training is unsatisfactory. The prison has good policies for tackling discrimination, and these are effectively monitored and implemented. Staff have good awareness of the policies and procedures for preventing bullying and follow them through. They treat learners with respect. The education department has strategies for basic skills and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). In the PE department, staff promote equality of opportunity. A range of courses is offered to suit the needs and abilities of a wide range of prisoners. Gym orderlies are representative of the age range and minority ethnic make up of the prison.

16. The access to education and training is very poor. The prison has an induction programme for all new entrants, which incorporates testing for basic skills and opportunities for advice and guidance on education and training opportunities. Unfortunately this programme has been suspended since March 2002, so new prisoners have received no induction since then. Some prisoners were poorly informed about the opportunities available, and most did not have their basic skills tested unless they joined an education class. The staff shortages have led to the suspension of ESOL classes, although they are planned to restart shortly after the inspection. The education department is not involved in the sentence-planning process, so insufficient account is taken of prisoners' learning needs when planning their activities in the prison.

## Quality assurance

17. Quality assurance arrangements are unsatisfactory. There are good systems covering the education department, but work and training functions are not covered by the quality assurance arrangements. The education department implements the quality assurance arrangements of the contracting college, which are thorough. There are clear, recently updated and comprehensive internal verification procedures and the internal verifiers are qualified. The head of department observes all teachers in the classroom at least once a year, and gives feedback on strengths and areas for improvement. In addition, the college carries out an internal audit of its training each year, including lesson observations. Action plans are drawn up as a result of these audits and are monitored by the head of education. In the past year the internal audits were disrupted as cancelled classes meant that observations could not take place. Subject teams meet regularly to discuss verifiers' reports and plan improvements to courses. There is an annual questionnaire to prisoners which is used to plan future training. The education unit has produced self-assessment reports and action plans over several years. In August 2002, a quality improvement group was set up with representation from the education department, physical education, and training and work departments. The aim of the group is to develop the self-assessment practice with a view to producing a prison-wide report. However, this has not had time to affect the prisoners' experiences.

18. Quality assurance arrangements are weak in work and training workshops. There are no formal systems for monitoring or reporting on the effectiveness of the training or the views of the learners. No data are collected on the achievements or progress of prisoners in these areas. Although achievement data are available on request, there is no systematic collection, analysis or evaluation of data in industrial cleaning. The PE department produces monthly reports, which include the achievement of local and accredited awards, but they are not analysed for trends. Good practice is not always shared among the teams. In industrial cleaning, there is insufficient focus on raising standards. There has been no internal verification of the completed NVQ portfolios. Procedures for internal verification are unclear and an internal verifier has not been allocated.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

19. The PE at HMP Bullingdon is satisfactory. There are 15 learners following an amateur weightlifting leaders' course, which lasts for three weeks. One learner has just completed the NVQ in sport, recreation and allied occupations at level 1. Other nationally accredited awards include a community sports leaders award, first aid and kinetic lifting. A range of local awards, lasting one or two weeks, is also offered. Sport and recreation qualifications are offered by the PE team, which consists of one senior PE officer and five PE officers. There are three gym orderlies who learn how to clean, prepare and maintain the facilities.

### STRENGTHS

- good range of local awards
- some good teamworking

### WEAKNESSES

- insufficient accreditation of skills
- insufficient preparation for employment

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better achievement rates
- better handouts
- more course information to be produced

20. A good range of local awards is offered, which encourage learners to develop new skills and acquire knowledge. The PE team has a wide range of qualifications which allow them to teach local awards. Some of the awards, such as in gymnastics, basketball, weighttraining and badminton, are designed by national governing bodies. The PE team has also developed courses in areas that are of interest to learners, for example, in anatomy and physiology, warm up and stretching. Local awards are made widely available and are also run for vulnerable prisoners. Courses are popular and teaching is satisfactory.

21. There is good teamworking in the PE department and between the PE department and education department. All PE staff contribute ideas to the development of their department and respect each other's views. Sport and recreation learners who are on

accredited courses, benefit from being able to take key skills tests through the education department. The education department initially assess the basic skills of sport and recreation learners. One physical education officer is taking a qualification in teaching adults, through the education department. The education department help the PE department with the preparation of lesson plans and resources if requested.

22. Facilities are satisfactory. Learners have access to a sports hall, a classroom, a weights room and a combined cardiovascular and weights room. There are outside sports pitches, but they are not used. Achievements are satisfactory. Of 12 learners who started the last community sport leaders course, eight achieved. There is poor take up of NVQs, but the one learner who is working towards an NVQ has just completed his portfolio. On previous community sport leaders courses, learners who achieved the award also achieved the key skills in communication. Learners who have completed the most recent course, will soon take the key skills test.

23. Some learners and gym orderlies have good skill levels. They plan and coach sessions and are able to accommodate individuals with different fitness levels in their sessions. Most of them work well with individuals who have learning difficulties, some of whom also have restricted physical mobility. There are some good examples of learners being given responsibility. The PE department has recently given one learner with severe behaviour problems the opportunity to work as an orderly. Some of the learners' work is above the standard required for their qualifications, but there is no additional accreditation. Level 2 qualifications in coaching, teaching, instructing and activity leadership are not offered to learners. There is insufficient initial assessment of learners' skills and knowledge. Individual learning plans are not developed and there is insufficient recording of learners' progress and achievements.

24. There is insufficient preparation for employment. Learners are not taking courses that are valued by employers, and the PE department has insufficient links with employers. Learners are not given adequate advice on careers in the leisure, sport and recreation industry. One learner who worked as a gym orderly and has just been released from prison, did not prepare a curriculum vitae before he left. The full communication key skills unit is no longer offered. Learners are now only able to take the external test, although they generate most of the necessary portfolio evidence.

### Good Practice

*One learner used evidence from his community sport leaders award for his NVQ. He planned the session and then taught it for his NVQ. He was then invited to teach the session to the next group.*

## **Health, social care & public services**

25. Training in industrial cleaning is good. There are seven learners working in cleaning operations. Four are working towards a general cleaning qualification at level 1 and 2, and three are working towards assessor qualifications. Learners who successfully achieve the general cleaning qualifications can also take food premises cleaning at level 1, 2 and 3. A motor cycle valeting qualification is also offered. Non-accredited training is available in bio-hazards. General level 1 and 2 training is available for four and a half days a week and a maximum of 18 learners can follow this training. Courses in food premises cleaning are offered twice a year, to six learners at a time. Some learners also take a qualification which allows them to assess level 1 and 2 qualifications. The programme is run by an industrial cleaning co-ordinator, who holds relevant industrial qualifications and holds stage one and two of an adult education qualification. Three prison officers who are qualified cleaning assessors support him.

### **STRENGTHS**

- good facilities
- good training and coaching
- effective use of learners as trainers
- good achievement rates

### **WEAKNESSES**

- insufficient written resources
- insufficient initial assessment

26. Training in industrial cleaning takes place in well-equipped facilities. There are several different rooms which are all fitted with different types of flooring. There is also mobile scaffolding, which enables learners to complete an additional unit. Magazines are available for learners to find up-to-date professional information on the cleaning industry. Some learners have gained employment through applying for jobs which are advertised in these magazines.

27. There is good on- and off-the-job training. Learners can start their training at any time and they progress through their qualifications at their own pace. Most learners achieve their level 1 and 2 qualifications in four to six months. There are good ratios of trainer/assessors to learners. Off-the-job training is often carried out individually and at other times there is a maximum of three learners to one trainer. Learners apply and develop their skills by working in prison cleaning teams. All learners have individual learning plans and their progress is clearly recorded and monitored by their assessors. The units learners have achieved and still need to achieve are clearly displayed on a



board in the training area. Clear and constructive oral feedback is given to learners. The industrial cleaning co-ordinator is very motivated and all staff have good relationships with learners.

28. Learners who have achieved level 1 and 2 qualification benefit from being able to train and assess other learners and to take the assessor qualification. Learners who have taken the assessor award have found employment as assessors in industry after release. The learners working as trainers and assessors benefit from being given extra responsibility and the opportunity to extend their skills. The learners they work with benefit from being taught and assessed by peers who empathise with them.

29. There are good achievement rates. In the past 11 months, 77 learners have achieved the level 1 and 2 general certificates. All six learners who started the food premises cleaning course have achieved the qualifications at levels 1, 2 and 3.

30. Trainers have a useful manual which shows how to carry out cleaning tasks. However, learners are not given any manuals, books, task sheets or other handouts to reinforce their learning. A book they used to be given is no longer available because of costs. Learners do not have a copy of their assessment records or learning plans. There are no library resources to support the background knowledge for cleaning.

31. There is insufficient initial assessment. When learners start their training they have a discussion with the co-ordinator, but there is no assessment of their skills or capabilities. Links are not made with education to support basic skills requirements.

#### Good Practice

*When a damaged floor needed repairing, learners were fully involved in pricing and replacing it. The learners and the co-ordinator worked evenings and weekends to complete the job. Learners gained valuable real work experience.*

## **Foundation programmes**

32. Foundation training is satisfactory. It is managed by a full-time co-ordinator and there are three main grade lecturers and 14 hourly paid members of staff. There are training sessions in the morning and the afternoon and there are between two and 14 learners in each session. There are 87 learners who attend the education centre for up to four sessions each week and 32 learners who receive training on the wings. Certificated courses include basic skills, mathematics, English, social and life studies and preparation for work. The department plans five ESOL classes each week, but they have not operated recently due to staffing difficulties. However, they are due to restart when new staff start employment. All new learners are given an induction to the education centre and undertake an assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills. Induction covers the learners' agreement, health questionnaires, completing documents related to prior achievement, and a student handbook. An individual learning plan is agreed with all learners. The training centre has achieved a basic skills quality mark, which is valid until 2004. There is a strategy for basic skills and ESOL training. In 2001-02, the training centre achieved 80 per cent of its targets at level 2.

### **STRENGTHS**

- good teaching in basic skills
- effective learner support
- good planning of individual learning

### **WEAKNESSES**

- no IT facilities in basic skills
- inadequate methods to monitor retention and ongoing achievement rates
- restricted progression opportunities

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better systems for carrying out consistent assessments of basic skills
- increased opportunities to update learners on their progress

33. The basic skills training is good. There are clear and detailed learning plans for each learner, and tutors use a variety of teaching methods which fully engage learners. Much use is made of group work, which motivates learners and makes learning an enjoyable activity. Tutors have a good rapport with learners and the learning environment is conducive to learning. Accommodation is spacious and attractively furnished. Account is taken of a diverse range of ability levels and attitudes to learning. Teaching staff are

well qualified and most have a specialist teaching qualifications for this area of work. Many hold assessor qualifications. Internal verifiers are appropriately qualified.

34. There is effective support for learners. Tutors are very flexible and rapidly integrate new learners into the existing groups. Sessions are designed to take account of the diversity of groups and a variety of resources are used to meet individual learning needs. Tutors are able to motivate learners who have wide-ranging problems and additional support needs. After each session, tutors complete handover reports, which detail the activities of each learner and of the group. This system works well and ensures continuity between different teachers. Tutors offer individual assistance to learners who experience difficulties. They visit residential wings to offer basic skills learning support to learners who are not currently in education, but who may be either working or unemployed. This widens basic skills training beyond the education centre. Currently, 37 per cent of education is carried out on the wings. There is effective use of peer tutors who act as classroom assistants in basic skills groups. They give valuable individual support to other learners in mathematics and English sessions. Peer tutors can take qualifications in teaching basic skills if they have sufficient time in the education centre. One peer tutor gained employment as a tutor on leaving prison. There are small financial bonuses as an incentive for learners to achieve their qualifications.

35. Each learner has a detailed individual learning plan that is agreed between the learner and the tutor. It takes account of the results of literacy and numeracy tests, and of further diagnostic testing in classes. Learners agree five learning objectives which are renegotiated at subsequent reviews. Learners are encouraged to complete daily diary sheets. Progress reviews are planned for every eight weeks, but class cancellations disrupt this schedule. Review records accurately detail the content of the training, the progress towards qualifications, and the work completed. Feedback from tutors on marked assignments is constructive and clearly identifies what learners have achieved and how they can progress.

36. There are no computer resources in the education unit to help with the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Learners are unable to develop their skills in a way that would increase their employability chances. Currently, all computer resources are based in a different area where learners do not have access. Bids for additional funding for computers in the foundation learning area have not been successful. There has recently been a gap in ESOL training due to staff changes. However, a qualified person has now been recruited and classes are planned to restart shortly.

37. Systems to monitor the achievement and retention rates of learners are currently weak. There are no mechanisms in place to identify ongoing achievements, or to identify reasons for early leavers. Records of achievement of whole qualifications are maintained, but they cannot be measured against groups of starters to make comparisons between classes. A recently created database attempts to resolve this but it is not fully implemented.

38. Many prisoners do not progress as far as they could. There are restricted progression opportunities to higher level qualifications at level 2. There is a focus on achieving external tests without building portfolios at the appropriate level for the full certificate. The problems of access to education affects prisoners' choice of training programme. Some learners take qualifications at a lower level than their capability, in order to ensure that they achieve at least some accreditation in the time available.

**Good Practice**

*Annual poetry days encourage learners to submit work for a prison-wide competition. Prize money is awarded for first and second awards. Poems are to be published by in-house professional printing services.*