

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HMP Highpoint North**

**30 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 **learnirect** 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 Highpoint North is an uncategorised female training prison with an operational capacity of 279 prisoners. It has recently been given local status. It is situated in rural Suffolk, approximately 10 miles from Newmarket and 12 miles from Bury St Edmunds. There are currently 285 prisoners in the prison. The education department provides part-time courses in numeracy, literacy, information technology, hairdressing and art and design. There is training for work in painting and decorating, data processing, tailor's workshop and general assembly workshops. There is also amenity horticulture training. Cleaning carried out at the prison is also allocated as work.

### **Overall judgement**

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Training in hairdressing and art and design is good. Foundation programmes and information technology are satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory, as are equality of opportunity and quality assurance.

### **KEY STRENGTHS**

- good liaison between the education centre and the prison
- good development plans for accreditation of training
- good teaching
- good individual support for learners in education

### **KEY WEAKNESSES**

- insufficient planned training and assessment in the workshops
- no opportunities for progression beyond level 2
- insufficient sharing of good practice

## THE INSPECTION

1. A team of five inspectors spent a total of 15 days at HMP Highpoint North (Highpoint) in October 2002. They visited training workshops, production workshops, the physical education (PE) department, horticultural areas and the education unit. The inspectors interviewed 52 learners, four prison managers and the one subcontracted provider, and 17 other prison staff involved in education, training and work tasks. A wide range of documents was examined, including training programme management files, records of training and assessment, policies and procedures and records of meetings. The self-assessment report and action plan studied by inspectors were produced in August 2002. The inspectors observed and graded 18 learning sessions, all of which were satisfactory or better.

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

2. Highpoint is an uncategorised closed female training prison in rural Suffolk. It opened as a prison in 1977 and now has local status. It is on the opposite side of the main road to HMP Highpoint South, which is a category C male prison. There is an occupational capacity for 279 prisoners. Currently there are 285 prisoners, of whom six are serving life sentences and 72 are on remand. All but 20 prisoners are involved in some training. Thirty-four per cent of prisoners stay in prison for less than six months, 39 per cent stay between six months and four years, 16 per cent stay for four to eight years and three per cent stay for between eight and 10 years. Until recently, all prisoners were sentenced. The prison has recently had more remand prisoners and a new remand wing is being built. In future it will take more local prisoners. Twenty-one per cent of prisoners are from minority ethnic groups and 14 per cent of these are Afro-Caribbean.

3. Highpoint shares some operating systems with HMP Highpoint South. However, the prison is in the process of becoming independent. This will provide greater autonomy for its operations and systems. It will help to identify more clearly its population and the particular needs of the prisoners. Building is currently taking place, as part of this process. It will accommodate the increased number of remand prisoners and improve prisoners' accommodation.

4. Highpoint has been under severe operational pressure for the past six months. This is because of changes, such as a 13 per cent increase in sentenced prisoners, an increase in the number of remand prisoners from 20 to 70, and the closure of one accommodation block with the subsequent transfer of 67 prisoners to other prisons. The closedown arrangements, because of staff shortages and accumulated time off in lieu, has also had a significant effect on prisoners' education and training. For the past year, Highpoint has found it has difficult to recruit teaching staff and is only now appointing a few tutors in appropriate subject.

5. Training is carried out in the production workshops. A small tailor's workshop produces children's clothes for an international charity. One workshop is used for data processing, which services external contracts. One workshop is used for other contract services such as packaging. All prisoners are inducted into the workshops, including health and safety induction where applicable. There is a small horticultural area, including a medium-sized greenhouse, where 15 prisoners are based to maintain the prison grounds and produce some vegetables for the kitchen.

6. The prison contracts with a local college to provide education for Highpoint. The five-year contract began in April 1999. Highpoint's education centre is currently operating at full capacity. There are eight full-time and 19 part-time staff, as well as eight staff who cover holidays and absences. Twenty-two learners attend training part time, in the morning and afternoon, and 34 attend full time. The education department provides

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literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), information technology (IT), art and design, and hairdressing training. Art and design and numeracy and literacy qualifications are accredited at notional levels 1, 2 and 3. The only national vocational qualification (NVQ) training offered is in hairdressing, at level 1 and 2. An external training provider offers prisoner resettlement courses.

## Education and training in prison

7. The education department has a thorough system to record prisoners' learning progress. The number of learners who gain awards is increasing, although many are not recognised by national awarding bodies. Targets are set for achievement, retention rates and progression. The education department monitors retention rates and keeps records of the number of learners requesting a transfer out to another activity. There are records to monitor learners' attendance at classes.

8. Education training and work is well planned and efforts are made to co-ordinate prisoners' time between their training activities in difficult circumstances. Education courses are part time and full time, as are some workshops and training activities. Detailed plans ensure that 93 per cent of prisoners are employed in some form activity. The remaining 7 per cent are either completing induction, unable to work or due for release. There are plans to introduce basic and key skills accreditation and NVQs into the production workshops. Prisoners receive some catering skills training as part of the Life Skills programme. Highpoint has recently been given approval to offer NVQs in catering at level 2. It continues to meet its numeracy and literacy targets.

9. The standard of prisoners' work in the production workshops and horticultural areas is particularly good. The quality assurance systems for production are effective, and there is a very good standard of production. Teaching in the education department is satisfactory or good. Of 18 training sessions observed, 71 per cent were good and 29 per cent were satisfactory. Staff are well qualified, experienced and enthusiastic. There is a system to cover absent tutors. There is no training provision beyond level 2 and few opportunities for prisoners to study for external qualifications.

10. There are good resources in the painting and decorating section. Learners can work towards a nationally recognised qualification. Learners have their own room in which to practise their skills. There are several learning modules and some learners do additional modules. The course takes between four and six months to complete and learners can join at any time. There is a good system to monitor learners' progress, which clearly indicates individual unit completion dates. There is no observation of training. The quality of training is not assured. Learners are not encouraged to collect evidence for key skills assessment. The painting and decorating tutor is qualified to teach basic skills in literacy and numeracy but does not use these skills.

11. The library is subcontracted to a local library. Resources are satisfactory, but the room is too small for the current number of prisoners. There is an appropriate range of books, including some specialist materials. The library books and tapes reflect the diversity in the population of the prison, but there are only a few books with large text, audio books and books in different languages. The library is open for two full days and two half days a week. All prisoners have a 30-minute weekly library visit. Learners have good access to the library during their training sessions. They are encouraged to use it and are accompanied by their tutors. A reading tape scheme has been introduced to allow prisoners to record stories and send them to their children, to promote family

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relationships. One of the staff contributed to the development of a new national visual arts prison-based Open College Network (OCN) award, which is now in full use.



## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

12. The leadership and management of Highpoint are satisfactory. The head of activities services is directly responsible to the governor of HMP Highpoint South, but is responsible to the governor of HMP Highpoint North for the education department, prisoners' employment and training, industries and the gym and sports areas. He is supported by the activities education manager, the farm manager and the education manager. The activities education manager is responsible for the PE training programmes. The education department provides induction screening, assessment and interviews for all prisoners. If prisoners attend workshops in the morning and education in the afternoon they receive the higher workshop payment for the whole day. There is an equal opportunities policy for the prisoners in education. There is no education centre quality assurance policy. Current arrangements follow some aspects of the subcontracted colleges policy. The education department was first accredited with the quality mark for basic skills teaching in 1997 and again in 2000. The education centre produced its first self-assessment report in August 2002.

### STRENGTHS

- good liaison between the education centre and the prison
- good celebration of learners' achievements
- good development plans for accreditation of training activities
- effective deployment of minority ethnic groups in work activities

### WEAKNESSES

- insufficient planned training and assessment in workshops
- no opportunities for progression beyond level 2
- insufficient sharing of good practice
- insufficiently demanding targets in education

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- develop an education and training strategy to accommodate changes in prison population
- adopt the education centre's action plan for training
- make better use of data for long-term planning

13. The education manager and the head of services and activities communicate well with each other and have productive working arrangements. The head of activities services meets the manager from the subcontracted college three times a year, as well as on informal visits. He has formal, weekly meetings with the education manager. At short, daily meetings staff confirm the day's tasks and mention any problems. Targets

are discussed and agreed at these meetings. The education department works well with other areas of the prison. It keeps good records of prisoners' learning requirements, which education staff send to sentence planning staff to match with individual sentence plans. However, staff in sentence planning often do not compare the two.

14. There are good plans to widen training opportunities in the prison, to include horticulture, tailoring, and sport and recreation qualifications. The prison has recently been awarded approval to provide catering NVQs. A team of staff is identifying how key skills and basic skills can be integrated with art lessons. Highpoint is currently submitting bids for funding to introduce these plans. The education department works well with the awarding bodies to establish the most appropriate qualifications. But the changing profile of prisoners, such as different lengths of sentences and different minority ethnic groups is not always taken into account.

15. The activities services team and the education department manager manage a situation in which there are a number of key prison tasks that disturb prisoners' training and education. There are many sudden, short-term changes to the prison regime, which severely affect prisoners' training. There are breaks in learning and training sessions can be disjointed. Tutors are forced to be reactive and changes affect prisoners' achievements. When prisoners are moved to other tasks or out of the prison at short notice, they cannot complete work. Attendance levels are often poor, and prisoners may be taken out of class without warning.

16. There is insufficient training and assessment of training in the workshops. Prisoners are frustrated about the lack of opportunity to gain qualifications while working. There are not enough qualified staff to carry out assessment of training. The staff and tutors understand this problem and are enthusiastic about introducing formal qualifications. Appropriate qualifications have been identified, but actions are slow and, to date, little has been achieved. This is particularly frustrating in horticulture where 15 prisoners are employed. There are good standards of tailoring in the charity link tailor's workshop where more than 12 prisoners are employed, but there is no assessment of training.

17. There is no training or education beyond level 2. There is no strategy to gain programme accreditation beyond this level. Many prisoners have good general certificates of secondary education (GCSE) grades but there is little to offer them other than a few distance learning or Open University courses.

### **Equality of opportunity**

18. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Minority ethnic groups currently represent 21 per cent of the total prison population. There is effective deployment of prisoners to ensure that they can work and train in the areas they have requested and that they are allocated to a number of different and appropriate areas of work. Prisoners from minority ethnic groups are encouraged to work in different areas of the prison to integrate them into prison life. There is good support from staff and peer groups for prisoners for whom English is an additional language. Attendance at ESOL classes is good and prisoners are encouraged to attend. This helps them to mix with other prisoners and improves their English language abilities.

19. A new complaints procedure has recently been introduced. Prisoners understand how to make a complaint and the number of complaints has increased significantly since its introduction. Complaints are dealt with thoroughly and sensitively, although it is too early to judge how decisions will affect prisoners.

20. During induction to the prison, tutors from the education department explain fully to prisoners the education and training opportunities that are available. They meet prisoners and record their education and training requirements. Prisoners complete basic skills tests, but these are not always sent on to the education centre from the prison. The education centre has its own initial assessment test and keeps full records of the results and of the discussions with prisoners. If prisoners' needs cannot be met because classes are full, there is a waiting list. Prisoners appreciate this procedure. In most cases prisoners do not have to wait for more than two weeks.

21. The race relations and equal opportunities policy in prisoners' induction packs is re-emphasised during training sessions. Tutors use their knowledge and skills effectively to help prisoners understand how to apply these principles in practice. Prisoners are represented on the race relations committee. The head of activities services keeps good records of the minority ethnic group work and education placements. However, the race relations committee has only recently begun to monitor the proportion of minority ethnic prisoners on each task to ensure equality of opportunity.

22. Staff training in equal opportunities is recorded in the education department. The education staff also receive training to help them manage situations such as challenging behaviour and enhanced thinking skills. Education staff are offered the same training as prison staff and attendance at training is a representative mix of prison staff and tutors.

23. Awards ceremonies are held for learners who achieve formal and prison qualifications. The governor and a representative from the external awarding body attend the ceremony. These initiatives raise prisoners' self-esteem and confidence. Clothes produced in the charity link tailor's workshop are sent to children in Africa, and photographs of the children wearing them are displayed in the workshop.

24. The chapel is used for a range of multicultural activities, which is well managed by the prison chaplaincy. Although there is no separate room for Muslim prayer, a wing is made

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available for prayer each Friday. The new building arrangements will provide appropriate accommodation.

25. ESOL and basic skills support is available to learners. Eighty per cent of prisoners need basic spelling and punctuation support and 60 per cent need numeracy and reading support. Twenty per cent of prisoners require dyslexia support, compared with 12 per cent nationally. However, some learners choose not to take up the support. There are insufficient data to record trends in minority ethnic groups and there are no action plans to identify the problems or the action that the prison intends to take. There is no clear system to collect these data. The available data are not used to identify trends in minority ethnic groups as a basis for individual learning needs.

26. The prison has had significant changes in the number of prisoners, particularly during the past six months. Other promotional changes include minority ethnic groups, age range and length of remand or sentence. The education department responds with enthusiasm and energy. However, there is insufficient planning for these changes in population.

27. The education department cannot support all prisoners' needs because of the current lack of space. Highpoint accepts prisoners with a range of disabilities, but realises that it cannot offer facilities for prisoners with restricted mobility. It has issued a statement that clearly says that it is unable to accommodate these prisoners.

## Quality assurance

28. Self-assessment is now established across all work activities in the prison. The education department has a thorough action plan to deal with strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report. The prison action plan has a different format. The education department uses the subcontracted college's quality assurance arrangements, as well as specific procedures for training in prisons. The self-assessment report is a full and detailed document which involved staff views at the report and action planning stages.

29. There is good observation of training in education. All teaching staff are observed and they receive constructive verbal feedback which is recorded. A new system is being introduced to include teaching, learning and attainment.

30. There is insufficient sharing of good practice in education and training. Within Highpoint, good practice is not recognised sufficiently to ensure continuous improvement. There is a good system for representatives from each curriculum area in all prisons in the region to share good practice, but this does not include sharing good practice to improve training or monitoring systems. There are not enough arrangements for this quality assurance of training.

31. The education department collects learners' feedback about their training, but does not collect feedback from learners in the workshop. Internal verification in education is satisfactory. Where training centre approval is being sought or has been achieved, the prison ensures that there is a range of assessors and internal verifiers.

32. The education department is on target to meet the prison's key performance indicators for numeracy and literacy. But target-setting in education is not thorough enough. Although targets are set for achievement and retention rates and progression in education, many of the targets are not demanding. For example, the agreed target for improvement to retention figures is only 1 per cent. General targets relating to the education contract and future curriculum plans are discussed, but there is insufficient target-setting for specific training programmes. There is no allowance for frequent monitoring and reviews as the basis of improvements, or to set standards for training. There is a wide range of data, but it is not used sufficiently for long-term planning or to establish trends in learning.

### Good Practice

*The prison has good links with a health and weight organisation who visit the prison twice a week. The prisoner who has lost the most weight is invited to a lunch. They receive an official invitation and have to write their reply, which helps to build their literacy skills and can be used as evidence in their portfolios. Prisoners on the life skills course prepare and serve the lunch, which helps to motivate them. They are also given a small cash bonus.*

## **AREAS OF LEARNING**

### **Information & communications technology**

33. The training provision for information and communications technology (ICT) is satisfactory. ICT training programmes are managed by the education department. It provides a basic computer literacy qualification and key skills IT qualifications at level 1 and 2 for 15 hours a week. It also provides information business technology (IBT) at level 2, although no learners are currently working on this training programme. Learners in the data processing workshops also work towards IT qualifications. There are currently 11 learners on training programmes in the education department. Eight are working towards a basic computer literacy qualification at level 1 and three are working towards key skills qualifications at level 2. Five learners in the data processing workshops are working towards IT qualifications. Learners can join the courses at any time and the length of the course is adapted to the learners' stay in prison. All learners are given a basic skills assessment during their induction to the prison. Tutors interview and assess them to determine the most appropriate IT qualification. One full-time member of staff manages the training programmes. Of five part-time staff, four have, or are working towards, teaching qualifications.

### **STRENGTHS**

- good individual support for learners
- good monitoring of learners' progress
- good resources in data processing workshops

### **WEAKNESSES**

- poor ICT resources in education department
- inadequate induction to IT programmes
- no opportunities for progression

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better use of training session plans
- better use of individual learning plans

34. Staff support learners well. Learners receive frequent individual coaching and advice, which builds their confidence, gives them an effective working relationship with their tutor, and allows them to work steadily through their training programme. Staff have good experience and work well as a team. They encourage the more able

prisoners to help others and to work together. Learners make good progress towards their target qualifications, enjoy the training sessions and are well-motivated. Tutors use training session plans to teach all classes, but the aims and objectives recorded are sometimes vague and are not standardised.

35. Attendance has been affected recently by the movement of learners to other prisons and to different training programmes. Tutors are committed to help learners achieve their full qualifications in these difficult circumstances. During the past year, 36 per cent of these learners achieved the level 1 qualification. Learners value and appreciate these qualifications and are motivated to work productively and make good use of their time.

36. Learners' progress is monitored effectively and in detail. All learners have individual monthly progress reviews with tutors, who record details of their progress and targets achieved since the previous meeting. The progress reviews are thorough and identify tasks and skills relating to particular word processing, database or spreadsheet tasks that learners have to achieve before the next meeting. All learners have a copy of their progress reviews in their work file and understand what they are doing and what they have to do to achieve units towards their qualification. Tutors also keep comprehensive daily records of progress that show each learner's tasks and outcomes. Targets on individual learning plans relate to long-term aims, but do not always include short-term targets to help learners to achieve manageable learning goals.

37. The data processing workshops are spacious and well equipped, with good, up-to-date networked computers. Learners can transcribe data and use their skills in a realistic working environment. All work is assessed and verified for quality assurance purposes. Learners receive a good induction to using IT equipment, health and safety and the characteristics of well-designed workstations. Staff and learners work well as a team. Five learners are currently studying computer literacy and IT courses to achieve recognised qualifications. There are plans to develop more training programmes to help learners build an appropriate range of recognised qualifications.

38. The ICT resources in the education department are poor. Software and hardware are out of date. There are different versions of software currently in use. It is difficult to adapt quickly to using different functions and screen instructions when editing, saving and transferring data to different software. Learners using desktop publishing software have particular problems when producing leaflets, newsletters and advertisements. There are no industry standard networked computers. There is also a variety of printers. There is currently no access to the Internet. The reprographic quality of some learning materials used for databases, charts and graphs is poor. Materials are difficult to read and learners sometimes cannot read software instructions correctly. There is also some poor teaching accommodation. The computer room is spacious, but some teaching rooms are cramped and hot. This was recognised in the self-assessment report.

39. Learners receive a brief induction to IT with a list of the units they need to achieve for their IT qualification. However, they do not receive comprehensive information on health and safety, IT qualifications, key skills training, or prisoners' rights and

responsibilities in the IT department. Learners are not always aware of the content of their training programmes and their health and safety responsibilities.

40. There are no opportunities for progression for learners. This factor was identified in the self-assessment report. There is no entry level programme for prisoners with no previous experience of using computers and for whom the level 1 is inappropriate. Learners who achieve level 2 cannot access IT courses at a higher level. The training provision is aimed primarily at the level 1 qualification in basic computer literacy. Few prisoners achieve key skills at level 2. Although key skills for IT are provided at level 2 they are taught in isolation and are not linked with other key skills areas in the training programmes. Learners find it difficult to understand the relevance of this qualification.



## **Hairdressing & beauty therapy**

41. Hairdressing training is good. There are currently two learners working towards NVQs at level 1 and four working towards NVQs at level 2 in hairdressing. Additional qualifications include health and safety, manicure and key skills communication, application of number and IT, up to level 2. The training programme is available full time or part time. The full-time course operates for 25 hours a week. Part-time provision operates for 10 to 15 hours a week. Practical and background knowledge training is carried out in the prison salon. All prisoners receive an initial assessment before training. The results are used to plan their individual learning programmes. Key skills training and assessment are carried out in separate workshops. Two part-time staff provide hairdressing training and assessment. Both are vocationally qualified and experienced. There are separate tutors for each of the three key skills. All assessments are recorded.

### **STRENGTHS**

- good practical skills demonstrated by prisoners
- good training support for prisoners
- good additional learning opportunities
- effective progress reviews

### **WEAKNESSES**

- slow completion of NVQ units
- insufficient use of photographs in portfolios of evidence
- limited facilities in the realistic working environment

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better links between key skills and hairdressing training and assessment
- better induction arrangements

42. Learners demonstrate good practical skills in the salon, and the work on salon clients is to good commercial standards. The planning of training and assessments is completed on an individual basis for each learner. Learners work quickly, tidily and safely. Good levels of dexterity are demonstrated when they work on salon clients and when they practise new techniques on practise blocks. Learners are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Many have achieved a good standard in practical assessments. Tutors use a range of teaching methods to take account of the different abilities of learners in the groups. They use their knowledge and expertise well to help learners build new skills.

43. There is good training support for learners. Initial assessment effectively identifies whether prisoners need extra support in basic skills. Learners can have individual hairdressing support if they need it. Some learning packs have been updated recently and are clear and well illustrated. They are useful to learners when they are not in the salon and help them to understand the topics that are covered. All learners are given clear, detailed schemes of work which they complete, and are then signed by tutors. Learners understand what they have to do to achieve the qualification.

44. Good additional learning opportunities are available on the hairdressing programme. Manufacturers and hairdressing product companies provide extra training in hair colouring, hair treatments and products. A local employer provides demonstrations and training in nail art. This training motivates learners and keeps them up to date with the latest techniques. All learners are encouraged to participate in the annual hairdressing competition. It encourages them to experiment with colour and style. Learners can take additional qualifications in health and safety, key skills training and, for learners on the level 2 training programme, manicure. Learners are given appropriate advice and guidance on which additional qualifications to take.

45. Progress reviews are frequent and effective. Tutors meet individual learners monthly to review their progress. Progress reviews are detailed and action plans are agreed which record specific targets. The targets are monitored at each meeting and any outstanding points are carried forward. Prisoners receive detailed, relevant verbal feedback after practical tasks in the salon and after revision assignments and tests. Assessments are well planned and result from discussions between the learner and the tutor during progress reviews. Learners cover the training programme at an appropriate rate, which takes account of their previous experience and ability. For example, one learner who had some previous hairdressing experience, was trained and assessed in shampooing and hair treatments within three weeks of starting her training programme. Internal verification is carried out by well-qualified staff and is well documented.

46. All learners have key skills training in communication, application of number and IT. However the training materials and assignments are not specifically aimed at hairdressing and some learners do not understand the relevance of key skills to their hairdressing qualification.

47. Many learners are slow to complete their NVQ units. One learner, who has been on a level 2 NVQ programme for seven months, has only completed one unit. Another learner, who has been on a level 2 training programme for almost 10 months, has only completed two units. Learners make good progress with their practical training, but do not complete the written work within the deadlines, which means that they cannot achieve the whole unit. Learners who leave early are accredited for their practical skills, but cannot be accredited with whole units because they did not finish their written work in time. Eight of the 20 learners who have left the training programme in the past two years have achieved their target qualification. The remaining 12 learners were accredited for the units that they completed.

48. There is insufficient use of photographs of learners' work, even though there is a photographer in the prison. All learners' portfolios are standardised. Before and after photographs of salon clients are not used to demonstrate learners' work. They do not have photographs of their work to show employers when applying for jobs.

49. Some facilities in the realistic working environment are poor. There are no retail facilities or salon client waiting area with style books and magazines. Learners cannot gain experience in customer service, or the sale of retail products, which is required in a commercial salon. Learners are not prepared for commercial salons. There are tables in the centre of the salon which are used for background knowledge training and paperwork. New learners receive their hairdressing induction at these tables, which is distracting.

#### Poor Practice

*One learner who had arranged a final assessment for her NVQ at level 2 in hairdressing, was suddenly transferred to another prison. The tutors did not receive notice of her transferral. There is no hairdressing facility at her new prison and she will be unable to achieve her qualification.*

## Visual & performing arts & media

50. The visual art training provision is good. There are currently 23 learners working towards the national Open College Network (OCN) qualifications in visual arts at level 1, 2 or 3. These training programmes are specifically written for learners in prisons. There are classes every morning and afternoon in the art room in the education department. Four sessional tutors and one full-time member of staff are all employed by the subcontracted college. Learners can spend a few weeks or several years on the art course. There are waiting lists for the art training provision. Over the past year, three OCN qualifications have been awarded at level 1, 18 at level 2 and one at level 3. All learners receive a basic skills assessment test during their induction to the prison. Learners have a further induction to the rules and practices of the art room. All learners receive a four- to six-weekly progress review with a tutor. Tutors carry out assessments of learners' work. Internal verification is carried out by a qualified art tutor. Tutors check and verify each other's assessment practice.

### STRENGTHS

- good teaching
- good range of progression opportunities
- thorough and challenging individual learning plans
- good range of additional activities

### WEAKNESSES

- no systematic co-ordination with sentence planning
- poor integration of key skills training and vocational training
- poor achievement rates

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better integration of art and ICT

51. There is good teaching on the creative arts training programme. It is well planned, with detailed schemes of work and clear handouts. Staff have a variety of useful materials to support learning. They use their skills and expertise well to help prisoners with different learning abilities. Staff are well qualified and have good contacts with current art practice and keep up with developments in the industry. The ratio of staff to learners is good. Individual learning plans and learners' ambitions are emphasised. Staff have good art, teaching and assessor qualifications. The learners produce good work. There is good peer support and evaluation.

52. Staff and learners have good working relationships, with effective and supportive communication. Learners appreciate the encouragement and recognise their own progress. Tutors know the details of work produced daily by learners. This ensures that problems are reported quickly and clearly and that learners are confident of continuing support from staff. There are frequent education department team meetings, which are well attended, with clear action points.

53. Most learners are working towards the visual arts OCN award at level 1 and 2 and one learner is working towards a level 3. All learners are taught together, which means that all the work they produce, including sketchbooks and development work, can be used in their portfolios of evidence. Distance learning courses are available to learners who want to progress to a higher qualification. Small incentives are offered when learners complete units of study. Tutors encourage progression to different training programmes and different levels. A basic arts training programme is available and learners are encouraged to sign up for an award, although it is not mandatory. There is no ceramics or photography training provision because of security and health and safety problems. Learners can do screen printing, wood carving, craft and textile work, and collage and papier maché work. Learners do not have access to the Internet and have poor access to computers. Some learners can sometimes use the computers to create labels for their portfolio work, but there is no planned use of graphics or design programs to improve or broaden the art training provision. There is no specialist art software.

54. Progress reviews are thorough and useful, with clear, challenging targets. The learning goals relate to what learners have achieved and take into account learners' ambitions. Learners can clearly see a continuous learning pathway. Individual learning plans are accurate and record learners' enquiries, for example, involving a particular artist or technique. Tutors discuss this with learners and record it on their individual learning plans. Tutors give learners constructive feedback. Targets on individual learning plans are frequently updated. Learners have copies of their individual learning plans and have access to their portfolio work and their progress review records. Attendance registers are accurate.

55. The art department provides many additional activities that improve the arts training provision. This includes submissions to the Koestler competition, a dance residency, occasional drama, poetry, story-telling and writing workshops by visiting artists, co-ordinated activities with the Aldeburgh festival, visits from an Afro-Caribbean art historian and a signwriting initiative. Learners' work is displayed throughout the prison. The art programme is a good way to reintroduce some learners to education and encourages learners who have previously had poor academic success.

56. There are no links between the education department and the sentence planning staff. Information from the education department on learners' progress, unit completion and achievement is not used as the basis for the sentence planning reviews. Education staff do not have easy access to the sentence plans. Learners' information is sent to the

sentence planning department from the education department, but the process is not reciprocated. Sharing of information between the two departments is rare.

57. Key skills training is not an integral part of the arts training programme. Most learners work on key skills separately, in a block, at the beginning or end of training. Sometimes the art training provision is used as an incentive, once learners have completed the key skills requirements. The art induction contains useful information about the training programme, unit choices and details of the rules and practices in the art room. There is insufficient reference to key skills training and assessment. Learners find the induction useful and memorable.

58. Achievement rates are poor, as learners have to move between prisons at short notice. Of the 57 learners who started the training programmes between 2001-02, none has achieved a full qualification and only 10 have achieved part of their qualification. Learners can be moved without notice to another task, or may be transferred to another prison at short notice. One learner had only a few days' of work to complete to achieve a level 2 qualification, but was transferred to a prison without art training provision. Learners find this uncertainty frustrating. The prison has recently changed to a new system which should help learners to achieve qualifications more frequently.

#### Good Practice

*The prison allows learners to use photographs to record their work for in portfolios. The art department arranges for a professional photographer to record learners' artwork and makes an extra copy for them. This helps learners to develop self-esteem and provides them with good evidence for future work.*

## Foundation programmes

59. Foundation training provision is satisfactory. There are currently 28 learners on various foundation programmes, 20 on full-time courses. Of these, eight learners are on various English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programmes. Three learners are on a pre-entry basic skills course. Another 10 learners are working towards qualifications in communications at levels 1 and 2. There are also four learners in the Life Skills and numeracy programmes at levels 1 and 2. All training programmes are carried out in the education department and learners can join at any time. Three learners receive additional individual coaching in the education department. Another 25 learners have coaching in various other parts of the prison. All learners who are serving sentences that exceed six weeks are given a basic skills assessment on entry into prison. ESOL provision is offered to all learners with an identified need. In addition, remand prisoners are also offered a basic skills assessment. When prisoners enter the education department they all receive a further diagnostic assessment that identifies any need for an additional test for dyslexia. There are three part-time tutoring posts and five other sessional tutors. There are also some qualified volunteer one-to-one tutors. All staff are appropriately qualified. Currently, many learners are being moved to other prisons and, as a result, session numbers are falling on a daily basis.

### STRENGTHS

- good teaching
- detailed and progressive learning plans
- effective additional learning support

### WEAKNESSES

- reduced time for training sessions
- insufficient opportunities for progression
- poor take-up of foundation courses

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better resources for pre-entry basic skills learners in the library

60. There is good teaching across the foundation programmes. Learners feel very positive about their learning experiences and the support they receive from their tutors. Many learners have poor academic records, and have often left full-time education early. Many learners have additional personal pressures that make learning difficult. There is clear evidence of learner progression. Learners' writing skills improve

dramatically, often within weeks, and other prisoners who could speak no English on arrival can speak basic English after a few months. There is constant checking of learning. Learners feel valued and speak highly of their teachers. Learners are on courses that are appropriately challenging and meet their learning needs. Staff are appropriately qualified.

61. Individual learning plans are detailed and progressive. A personal profile of the learner and family is attached to each individual learning plan. Learners meet their tutors to agree long-term learning goals. First they discuss short-term objectives and long-term ambitions. They agree five short-term learning tasks which are reviewed about every four weeks before they agree another five tasks. There is an emphasis on short-term planning because learners are transferred to other prisons so often that longer-term planning is not feasible. The progress review and task setting processes are clearly linked.

62. Tutors provide good additional learning support. As well as discussing learners' additional learning needs with them individually, they also provide appropriate learning support during training sessions in all foundation and vocational training programmes. There are two tutors in many of the training sessions, to ensure that each learner benefits from the support. This additional support helps learners generally with their work, and tutors link it effectively to any external examinations learners are taking.

63. Achievement rates are satisfactory. Thirty per cent of learners are transferred to other prisons during their training programmes. Some other learners are released early through the tagging scheme and others join the therapeutic community within the prison, which precludes them from education. During 2001-02, 43 per cent of learners on literacy programmes completed their learning plans and 42 per cent achieved one or more qualifications. In Life Skills programmes, 39 per cent achieved one or more qualifications and 20 per cent gained additional qualifications. In numeracy, 55 per cent of learners completed the course and 44 per cent achieved at least one qualification. At basic skills entry level, 50 per cent were retained and 28 per cent achieved a qualification. In ESOL, 25 per cent were retained and achieved at least one qualification, often gaining two or more. The ESOL learners have had the most transfers out to other prisons.

64. Learning time is constantly eroded. Learners are allocated 25 hours a week, but two afternoon training sessions have been cancelled, reducing the week by five hours. One afternoon training session is about to be restored. Learners have to try to make up lost time in their rooms, which are often shared and noisy. Because there are no evening activities, various other activities take place during training session times. For example, there is the Alpha course, Narcotics Anonymous, Listener courses and hairdressing appointments. Overall these closedowns and absences create a 23 per cent time loss. In addition, most classes start half an hour late, because learners are not unlocked in time. This reduces the 20-hour week by three and a half hours. More time is lost because of sickness and visits to lawyers and counsellors which are mostly unavoidable. Nearly every training session begins with revision of the previous training session for



learners who missed it. Learners are also transferred to other prisons at short notice, which makes planning difficult.

65. There are insufficient opportunities for progression. Once learners have achieved their foundation qualifications, the only training programmes available to them are art at levels 1, 2 and 3 and IT at level 2. The emphasis is on achieving the prison's key performance indicators. Learners with the potential to achieve more have few options. Some are referred to the library, which keeps a list of distance learning courses funded by charities. If learners do this, they have to study in their cells. The library has some easy-read books, Afro-Caribbean literature and some books in other languages, but there are insufficient books for pre-entry basic skills learners.

66. There is a poor take-up of foundation courses across the prison. Of the current 210 prisoners on roll, only 13 per cent attend foundation programmes. All prisoners are screened on entry and 62 per cent are at level 1 or below. Thirteen per cent are below foundation level and 27 per cent are at foundation level. The education department recognises this in its action plans and is establishing strategies to involve prisoners who are not currently interested. The plans include awareness training for prison staff and an education room in the therapeutic community.

#### Good Practice

*A prisoner who has never written home before is being helped to write a first letter. This was completed within the first few weeks of her sentence. The occasion is being used to instill the rules of spelling and grammar. This exercise has given her a sense of pride.*

#### Poor Practice

*A prisoner due to complete her sentence in a few weeks was discussing her work in progress, but was transferred to another prison the next day. No warning was given to her tutors to help them plan for her to complete her qualification.*