

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HMP Swaleside**

**15 July 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 Swaleside is an adult male category B training prison on the Isle of Sheppey in northeast Kent. Approximately 40 miles from London, it is situated adjacent to HMP Stanford Hill and HMP Elmley. The prison has a certified normal accommodation capacity of 747 and an occupational capacity of 775. Currently there are 774 prisoners and there is some doubling up in cells due to high occupancy. All prisoners are sentenced and come to HMP Swaleside from another prison. The numbers of prisoners serving life sentences has increased to approximately half its population and there are reducing numbers of vulnerable prisoners. The education department offers full-time courses with a focus on literacy, numeracy and key skills up to level 2. A few prisoners are taking Open University and distance learning courses. In addition, it offers English as a second language courses and general preparation for work courses, the general national vocational qualification intermediate in information technology and in art and design and the national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 2 in hairdressing. Vocational qualifications in painting and decorating, industrial cleaning and information technology are offered in the workshops. In addition, there are six production workshops offering training for work, without qualifications. Three of these are operated by external contractors as private finance industries. Prisoners are employed in other work areas of the prison such as kitchens, serveries, gardens, wing cleaning and laundries, where qualifications are not linked to their work.

The areas of learning inspected were painting and decorating, industrial cleaning, information and communications technology, vocational computing, general national vocational qualifications in information technology and key skills information technology and literacy and numeracy basic skills, application of number and communications key skills, general national vocational qualification art and design and English for speakers of other languages.

### Overall judgement

The painting and decorating and industrial cleaning training are good. Foundation, hairdressing and information and communications technology training is satisfactory. Leadership and management of the education and training are unsatisfactory. Equality of opportunity for education and training is satisfactory, although quality assurance is not. The quality of the provision is therefore not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it.

### **KEY STRENGTHS**

- good teaching
- well-equipped vocational workshops
- good standards of work
- good achievement of vocational information technology awards

### **KEY WEAKNESSES**

- ineffective management across prison activities
- insufficient use of data for management decisions
- insufficient vocational qualifications offered
- narrow curriculum in education department
- inadequate quality assurance processes

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- more sharing of good practice

## THE INSPECTION

1. A team of four inspectors spent a total of 17 days at HMP Swaleside in July 2002. They worked with a team of inspectors from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP). They visited A and B wings, the production and the training workshops and the education department. The inspectors interviewed 49 prisoners, 39 prison and contractors' staff and examined 35 portfolios of work. The 15 teaching sessions observed were all graded satisfactory or better. A wide range of documents was examined including assessment and internal verification records and records of meetings.
2. HMP Swaleside completed its first self-assessment report for the ALL pilot inspection in December 2001. Self-assessment reports were produced on activities in painting and decorating, industrial cleaning, information and communications technology (ICT) across the prison, the education department and for leadership and management, just before the inspection in July 2002.

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

3. HMP Swaleside is a category B adult male training prison situated on the Isle of Sheppey. It is one of three prisons on adjacent sites close to the village of Eastchurch, approximately five miles from Sheerness. HMP Swaleside opened in 1988 with four wings, A, B, C and D. The two further wings of E and F are recent additions and include the rehabilitation treatment units. Currently the prison is not operating on full staff numbers. Swaleside is a main prison for those serving life sentences and holds up to 360 first- and second-stage life prisoners, including short-tariff life prisoners. The prison will accept prisoners who are serving four years or more and who have at least 24 months left to serve. The average length of stay is 19 months. Fourteen per cent of the prisoners have mental health problems and approximately 50 per cent of prisoners are foreign nationals. Currently there are 131 full-time and 20 part-time prisoners in the education department. There are 53 prisoners undertaking vocational training and 241 in work with training. There are only 68 prisoners currently unemployed. Prisoners come to HMP Swaleside from other prisons all over the country, although south London is the highest area represented.

4. The prison contracts with Amersham and Wycombe College for the work in the education department. There are eight full-time and eight part-time teachers, a manager and an administrator. The education department provides 13,000 hours of teaching over 50 weeks.

## Education and training in prison

5. The standard of learners' work is good in all areas of education and training. The work produced in the general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) art and design course is particularly good. The learners are motivated and enthusiastic about their studies. Most learners progress well towards the achievement of their qualifications and some gain a full qualification. Achievement is particularly good for vocational information technology (IT) awards. Some qualification programmes take 12 months to complete, which affects the waiting time for a place on the training programme. Information about prior achievements is not routinely passed to trainers to help the planning of individual learning needs. Learners who have additional basic skills needs are prioritised over other learners.

6. In all areas the teaching and training are good. Teachers and trainers are appropriately qualified and experienced, and vocational trainers teach to industry standards. Vocational workshops are well equipped, except in IT where the computers are outdated. The wood trades workshop has been closed recently as the trainer is on long-term sick leave. Industrial cleaning and painting and decorating training and assessment take place in the workshops. The prison wings offer good opportunities for painting and decorating and cleaning which are not currently being taken. Prisoners in these areas are not involved with the training staff. Qualifications are not offered in the six production workshops. Other work areas of the prison such as the kitchens, serveries, gardens, wing cleaning and laundry also do not offer qualifications for the skills developed and used. Qualifications are currently not offered in the sports department due to staff shortages. Since December 2001, the number of staff has reduced from nine to three. The education department offers a good learning environment but all courses are full time. Currently, there are no evening classes. The library is mainly for recreational purposes and there is a good stock of first-level reading books and some education and training books.

7. Opportunities for qualification progression are poor. There are no NVQs at level 1 or equivalent. There are only distance learning materials and vocational awards. The education department courses are full time and do not allow for an effective mix of education and work activities. Staff and learner relationships are good. There are particularly supportive environments in the education department and the painting and decorating workshop. There is a development plan for 2002-03, which shows the introduction of qualifications to the kitchens and gymnasium by December 2002, the engineering workshop by September 2002 and the production workshops by April 2003.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

8. Leadership and management of the prisoner development area, including education, training workshops and production workshops, are unsatisfactory. Education, training and employment activities are managed by the head of prisoner development. This new post was created in April 2002 and includes the previous roles of head of inmate activities and enterprise manager. The head of prisoner development was previously the enterprise manager. She reports directly to the governor and is a member of the senior management team. The governor started work at the prison in February 2002 and his new senior management team was formed in April 2002. The education department contract is held by Amersham and Wycombe College. The education manager has been in post for three years. The industries area has nine workshops, divided into three different types. The largest area, with employment for approximately 100 men, is in three private financial industries. The workshop space is rented by outside organisations five days a week. All areas are production workshops, with prisoners being paid on the number of items completed. Three further production workshops are supervised by prison staff for approximately 85 men. These six workshops give training for work without qualifications. The three remaining are training workshops for vocational computing, painting and decorating and industrial cleaning. All three workshops offer qualifications and do not have production contracts. All industries activities take place solely in the workshop area. In addition, the head of prisoner development has management responsibility for the prison kitchen, gymnasium, gardens and the library. The library is contracted to the Kent County Library Services. The management of the employment areas of wing serveries, cleaning and maintenance are the responsibility of the head of residence. The responsibility for induction assessment, sentence management and activity allocation is with the head of resettlement. There is a range of wages paid to prisoners covering the different activities. Prisoners participating in treatment programmes are also paid.

9. The number of qualifications offered has recently been reduced. This year the wood trades workshop has closed, although the equipment and some unfinished projects remain. No qualifications have been offered for prisoners in the sports department this year and the number of staff has reduced from nine to three since December 2001. The number of sports activities is greatly reduced and the sports pitch, tennis and the basketball courts can no longer be used by prisoners. Currently there are no evening classes in the education department.

10. Equality of opportunity for education and training lies with the head of resettlement. In the prison, the responsibility for race relations is with the deputy governor, anti-bullying is with the head of residence and equal opportunities is managed by the head of personnel. There are prison policies and procedures for equal opportunities, race relations, anti-bullying and harassment. There are no specific policies relating to education and training, although the equal opportunities and race relations policy are translated into a simple statement for learners and displayed in each training area and classroom. Quality assurance for education and training is unsatisfactory. The head of



prisoner development has responsibility for quality assurance. The prison is subject to a range of external audits and inspections. The education department uses the college's quality assurance policy and procedures. The prison does not have a quality assurance policy and procedures that directly relate to the education and training functions. However, it has carried out two self-assessments in the past 12 months and has produced a brief development plan.

## **STRENGTHS**

- good awareness by senior staff of key development needs
- established use of joint venture partnerships
- good range of training for work areas for equality of opportunity
- detailed and informative course reviews in education department

## **WEAKNESSES**

- ineffective management across prison activities
- poor use of data for management decisions
- insufficient qualifications offered in education and workshops
- lack of contingency planning to cover staff absence
- lack of monitoring of equality of access to education and training activities
- insufficient support for learners with specific learning difficulties
- inadequate quality assurance processes

## **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- more sharing of good practice

11. The leadership and management across the education and training provision at HMP Swaleside are unsatisfactory. However, the recently appointed senior managers have a clear understanding of the key education and training development needs of the prison. They are included in the prison development plan for 2002-03. The development needs of the education and training functions in the prison are being dealt with during a period of significant staff shortages and many other priority needs. The new involvement and support of the prison learning and skills unit's adviser is assisting the process by raising the staff's awareness of opportunities for change and providing some financial support. The development plan states the intention to construct three learning areas in the workshop for a reference library, classroom and IT workshop by August 2002.

12. Three workshops are devoted to production activities through joint venture partnerships with local employers. The companies rent work space, provide raw materials and equipment and provide work for prisoners. Staff from the companies supervise the prisoners alongside the prison staff. The prisoners are well paid against

agreed performance targets. Only prisoners who have met the criteria for enhanced status may work in these workshops. Prisoners are well motivated and gain good production skills as well as developing a regular work ethic. There are no qualifications or recording of either the production skills or personal development achieved. The development plan has a target date of April 2003 for introducing accreditation into the production workshops. However, three prisoners have recently gained employment after release as a direct result of their involvement with the workshops.

13. There is ineffective management across prison activities. The various activities are managed by different senior staff. In addition, the role of the personal officer is also not working effectively to help co-ordinate each prisoner's activities at HMP Swaleside. Prisoners are withdrawn from education, training or work activities to attend treatment programmes and this can leave vacancies in classes which remain unfilled, even for the 10-week, half-day courses. Prisoners who join drug treatment programmes or the multi-faith treatment programmes are withdrawn from their education, training or work activities. Sentence planning was identified as being very effective in the ALI pilot inspection. Sentence planning is now in significant arrears with 252 sentence plans currently outstanding from the 487 prisoners who are not serving a life sentence. The sentence planning for life prisoners is up to date. The sentence plans are completed on the wings by personal officers.

14. Poor use is made of data for management decisions. In the past, the prison has used a computerised system to record learner activities over a three-year cycle. However, due to prison changes the system currently being used only records the current week's education, training and work allocations to inform prison staff of the movement of prisoners to their allocated activities. The following week's information is entered in preparation. Only the information for these two weeks can be easily accessed at any one time. Archived information is very difficult to use. A waiting list for education is kept in the education department by education staff. All other waiting list information is retained and managed by the resettlement function. Managers do not receive the information in a systematic way for use when making decisions about the training. Retention and achievement data for learners on education and vocational training courses is kept by the teachers and trainers. Achievement data are reported to managers against prison key performance targets, but the data are not used to measure success against potential. The achievement and accreditation of individual units are not promoted or widely used and early leavers have no recognition of their success. Data on learners who leave courses and reasons for leaving are kept by some teachers and trainers, but this is not routinely used by managers to make decisions.

15. There is insufficient accredited training at HMP Swaleside. Currently there are 53 learners on vocational training, 131 full time and 20 part time based in the education department. There are approximately 100 prisoners in the private finance industries and 85 in the industry workshops who are trained for work, but have no formal recognition of their work. In addition, there are 194 prisoners working in the prison without training or recognition of their skills. There are currently 149 prisoners participating in full-time treatment programmes who are not able to take part in education, training or work

activities for the duration of their programmes.

16. There are prison staff shortages, but no contingency planning to cover staff absences for holidays or sickness. When staff are absent, the classes are closed and learners are returned to the wings. At the time of inspection, there was no training in IT key skills as the teacher had been ill for five weeks. The sports qualifications has been withdrawn after the number of staff dropped from nine to three.

### **Equality of opportunity**

17. Equal opportunities in education and training is satisfactory. There are statements and guidelines on equal opportunities, discrimination and bullying. Learners are given information on equal opportunities during their induction in the education department. However, the information is not well presented and is not reinforced. Some learners do not remember many aspects of the induction. The library books and tapes reflect the diversity in the population of the prison. There are books with large text, audio books and a good supply of books in five languages.

18. There are 71 activities available at HMP Swaleside. They offer good opportunities for learners who have a diverse range of needs including ability, mobility, mental health, language, behavioural and developmental. Learners can work as part of a team to enhance their social skills as well as learning new work skills. Learners who need basic skills teaching are prioritised for a place in the education department. However, the opportunities are not effectively used by management as very few of the activities have training and assessment that lead to accreditation.

19. There is no system to monitor the way in which prisoners join the education and training activities. The allocation of prisoners to activities and waiting lists is centrally co-ordinated, but the way prisoners are accepted into vacant positions is not. For some courses prisoners are interviewed by the teacher/trainer. Security clearance is not systematically sought for participation in activities until a vacancy becomes available. This means that some prisoners can be on a waiting list for many months with no possibility of being eligible. The central co-ordinator does not have a current copy of the waiting lists as these are kept with individual teacher/trainers. Equal opportunities data are not used to monitor the achievement and progress of the learners. In ICT, this problem has been identified and strategies for the monitoring the prisoners' progress have recently been developed.

20. There is no process for identifying those with additional learning needs. Teachers and trainers are unaware of the methods to identify and support learners and there is little use of well-spaced, large font text, visual images and coloured paper to help learners, especially those who are dyslexic. Learners who have learning difficulties are not given additional support unless they are attending a basic skills course.

## Quality assurance

21. Quality assurance of the education and training provision is unsatisfactory. The education department adheres to the education services' contract which is held by the further education college. It uses the contracting college's quality assurance framework. There is a detailed course review carried out three times a year. Most of the courses have recently undergone a second review. Reports are produced by the course leader and are enhanced by well-constructed feedback from the education manager. Course leaders are encouraged to comment on a range of topics including external verifier reports, resources, staffing, timetabling, staff development, data on retention rates and learner questionnaires. In most cases, the actions taken to improve these areas are designed to improve the learners' experience. For example, proposed actions include induction, assessment, schemes of work, monitoring sheets and individual learning plans. The course review process is used as a basis for the department's self-assessment report and development plan.

22. Quality assurance systems are inadequate. Systems are not in place to ensure that all aspects of the training are managed and monitored effectively. There is a lack of internal prison policies and procedures relating to quality assurance and an over-reliance on external agencies' monitoring. Key training processes such as induction, initial assessment, progress reviews and internal verification are not quality assured.

23. Quality assurance arrangements for vocational training have recently been developed. For example, observations of teaching and learning have now been implemented. The observation checklists which are completed by the observer contain good detail, and grades are awarded to instructional staff. The observations of training are now linked to the appraisal system. The course review process has recently started in the ICT vocational training programme, although an evaluation of the process is yet to be undertaken. Many of the assessors and internal verifiers work either on their own or in pairs and there is little opportunity for them to meet with other staff to share ideas, concerns and good practice.

24. Learners complete questionnaires on the quality of the training three times a year. The process has recently started for the vocational training and is currently being evaluated. An annual questionnaire is sent to all prisoners and includes questions on what education and training prisoners would like and the level of support needed for the evening classes.

25. Self-assessment, particularly in vocational training, is not an integral part of the quality assurance framework. While staff have participated in the self-assessment process, they do not fully understand its importance in supporting continuous improvement. The self-assessment report produced for the inspection was descriptive rather than judgmental and there was no summary of overall judgements. No grades were given by the prison. While data on the retention rates were presented, the achievement rates were not produced for the self-assessment report. There is a very general and brief development plan which relates to the leadership and management for 2002-03.

26. Good practice in education and training is beginning to be shared, for quality assurance arrangements and course development. However, tutors and instructors continue to work primarily in isolation in their area of learning.

**Good Practice**

*To help communication between the hairdressing learners and their clients who speak very little English, a portfolio of hairstyles and useful consultation phrases has been developed. The content has been researched by the learners and their peers. The portfolio has very good sketches which show different hairstyle features and supportive text in five languages.*

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Construction

27. The construction training at HMP Swaleside is good. There are 17 learners undertaking an intermediate construction qualification in painting and decorating. The training centre still has accreditation to offer the NVQ at level 2, but because of the requirement to gain evidence from a real work environment, the full NVQ is no longer possible to achieve. Learners are expected to achieve the intermediate construction qualification within 12 months. Learners spend approximately 20 hours a week in training and this includes basic skills training. A training contract is agreed with each learner after an initial assessment. There is one instructor who has occupational and assessor qualifications. The instructor undertakes all training and assessment. An appropriately qualified former member of staff carries out the internal verification. The construction course is good and effectively meets the expectations and needs of all participating learners.

### STRENGTHS

- particularly good and supportive environment
- effective course induction
- good standard of practical work
- well-planned and recorded assessments

### WEAKNESSES

- ineffective progress reviews
- inadequate facilities for background knowledge training
- no arrangements for unit accreditation

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more use of prison areas for application of skills in work environment

28. The painting and decoration workshop is a particularly supportive environment for learners. Prisoners who have a history of problems are often referred to the painting and decorating workshop by the board of visitors. The instructor works hard to integrate these learners into the positive learning environment. All existing learners are keen to maintain the supportive environment in the workshop and actively support the instructor in achieving this aim. When learners start the course, they are encouraged to create and achieve quickly, for example, in stencilling or signwriting. This gives the learners a sense

of achievement and is very motivational. In many cases, peer learning supports this process. There is an excellent rapport between the instructor and the learners and learners show great respect towards the instructor. They value his experience and range of skills, which he readily shares.

29. The well-structured induction effectively prepares learners for the course. A tour of the workshop is undertaken to introduce learners to the layout of the workshop and to identify potential hazards. Great importance is placed on health and safety and the instructor interviews each learner to identify their level of understanding. Learners are quickly integrated into the workshop and can decorate the front of a painting booth in their own design. In addition to motivating learners, the task also allows the instructor to initially assess the learners' vocational skills.

30. Learners' practical work is good. The work is well structured with a logical progression of tasks, from stripping walls to applying final finishes. Real work such as signwriting is brought into the workshop. Learners enjoy working for customers, such as local community groups and local football clubs. Good industrial standards are being achieved in the workshop. Learners gain a variety of experiences working on different surfaces, and can work on wood graining, marbling and artexing to broaden their skills. Examples of complex signwriting and stencilling are visible around the workshop and the instructor uses them to motivate others. A digital camera is used to record the learners' practical work. There are wall displays to celebrate the good work achieved.

31. Assessment is well planned and available on demand to learners. Learners can assess themselves and can select their own sequence of assessment work. Learners are well prepared, and put together a job sheet which identifies the tools and equipment required for assessment. The learner also carries out a risk assessment before the assessment. Assessment plans are well designed and contain comments and a description of the assessment. They are cross-referenced to individual learning packs which are kept by learners, and practical assignments for training purposes. Learners sign the assessment plan to confirm that they agree that the assessment has been negotiated.

32. Progress reviews are ineffective. There is no ongoing monitoring of the learners' progress through the components of their course. Timescales for the completion of reviews are missed in most cases. Reviews do not include objective target-setting for the completion of the construction award and make no reference to the development of personal effectiveness in timekeeping, attendance and attitude. They do not result in targets being set.

33. Facilities for teaching background knowledge are inadequate. There is no area near the workshop to allow the instructor to reinforce practical demonstrations using a whiteboard, transparencies, television or video.

34. There are no arrangements for accrediting individual units of the construction qualification. For learners who leave the course early, there is no system in place for



accrediting their achievement.

35. Retention rates in painting and decorating are poor. Of the 39 learners who started the programme between April 2001 and June 2002, 25 have left early without any accredited achievement. However, the directive to transfer 23 of these learners has been made by other parties, not by the instructor, or by the learners themselves. Two learners have achieved the qualification, and 12 remain on the training programme.

36. Currently, there is little opportunity for learners to apply their skills in the prison. There is insufficient emphasis and planning by prison management to allow learners to further develop their skills in a real work environment. Currently the wings are being painted by prisoners who are not involved in training or assessment activities.

## **Information & communications technology**

37. Training and education in ICT is satisfactory. The full time GNVQ ICT and IT key skills courses are taught in the education department. The full-time short vocational IT training takes place in the industries workshop area. There are 15 learners studying on GNVQ intermediate and 27 learners studying for first and second stage IT. The duration of these courses is adjusted to suit the ability of the learners. However, the learners are encouraged to complete the GNVQ intermediate in 12 months and the IT courses in blocks of 10 weeks. The 10-week vocational training is offered six times a year. Learners usually start with the first stage IT course unless they have previous IT skills.

### **STRENGTHS**

- very effective planning of individual learning on vocational IT courses
- good vocational IT learning materials
- good achievement of vocational IT awards

### **WEAKNESSES**

- ineffective co-ordination of ICT training across the prison
- outdated computer hardware and software

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- more up-to-date skills training for staff

38. For vocational courses the individual learning plans are detailed and give challenging targets for the learners. At the start of the courses, learners are interviewed and their IT knowledge is assessed. The more able learners are set earlier target dates and after achievement they help other learners. This peer group support reinforces the learners' knowledge, and develops their communication and interaction skills. The progress recording and monitoring is routine. The learners are encouraged to monitor their own progress and learning. They produce charts which illustrate the number of mistakes in each of their assignments and their improvement trend. The learners are also expected to evaluate their own work through proofreading and, on some occasions, check their work using a software programme. Relationships between the trainers and the learners on the vocational courses are particularly good.

39. There are good learning materials which include appropriate language and images. The learning materials have appropriate examples within the context of the learners' life

in prison.

40. The achievement rates on vocational courses are good. Recent achievement rates on first stage IT courses are approximately 70 per cent and on the second stage IT course approximately 85 per cent. The achievement rate of the GNVQ intermediate course within the 12 months is unsatisfactory at 50 per cent. However 45 per cent of the remaining learners gained a number of GNVQ units. Staff are aware of the learners' discipline and behavioural problems and have developed effective class management strategies based on mutual respect and trust.

41. The teaching, planning, recording and progress monitoring of IT key skills at level 2 and 3 are weak. This has affected the progress of the learners during staff changeover, as the continuity of the education process cannot be maintained effectively. Most learners are not aware of their assessment plan, the assessment criteria and their target dates. The learners are given different information by different tutors and their attainment is poor. This has demotivated and discouraged a number of new learners when planning for further studies. The learners do not use these sessions for effective learning, but the department is aware of this weakness and has developed strategies to rectify the situation. Prior to the current staff difficulties, the achievement rate of IT key skills at level 2 in 2001, was good at 89 per cent.

42. The IT hardware and software are outdated and are very slow. These points were reported in the ALI pilot inspection report in December 2001. All of the software is not available on all of the computers and the learners have to wait for a number of sessions to use the relevant packages to progress their work. Some learners are not able to complete the assignments that require the use of a number of software packages at the same time. Due to the limited memory of the computers, it is not possible to complete the assignments. The computers are networked, but they are too slow and this has limited the learners' ability to produce work which reflects their ability. Due to the operational requirements of the prison, learners cannot use the computer facilities after the teaching sessions and this has limited the progress of some learners who want to progress to more advanced studies through distance learning. Also, the learners cannot use the computer facilities after the completion of their courses and it is not possible to develop or maintain their skills. The staff are well qualified and experienced and two have recently gained a teaching qualification. However, there are insufficient opportunities for staff to upgrade their skills.

43. The co-ordination of the areas offering IT across the prison is ineffective. There are no links between staff to enable progression planning and the recognition of learners' prior achievements. This weakness is identified in the self-assessment report and recently joint working teams have been established.

**Good Practice**

*Three learners are using their new IT skills to produce a newsletter for all prisoners. Other prisoners who wish to submit articles have also recognised the value of basic literacy skills.*

## **Hairdressing & beauty therapy**

44. The hairdressing training is satisfactory. The prison salon is situated in the education department and currently there is one hairdressing trainer who is also the assessor. She is currently working full time instead of one day a week. The course leader, who is a trainer, assessor and internal verifier, is on long-term sick leave. There are 12 learners working towards the NVQ at level 2 in hairdressing. All learners are taking the barbering and colouring optional units in order to gain the full NVQ. The targeted time to gain the full NVQ is 12 months. Each NVQ unit has an time allocation and learners usually take them in a prescribed order. All learners are required to take key skills as well as the NVQ unless they have proxy qualifications. Learners have to be at level 1 in basic skills to be eligible for the prison course in hairdressing as there is no basic skills support. Learners attend the hairdressing course for a maximum of seven sessions a week, but some only attend five sessions as they also attend the key skills classes. All learners have a four-week trial when they start the hairdressing course and they can join at any time. Entry is by waiting list, gaining security clearance and passing an interview with the course trainer. All sessions have clients booked except for Wednesday mornings which are reserved for background knowledge, and the afternoon when there are no education and vocational training sessions.

### **STRENGTHS**

- well-resourced salon
- good standards of practical work
- clear monitoring of learners' achievements

### **WEAKNESSES**

- inadequate internal verification
- insufficient recording of individualised learning
- insufficient detail in progress reviews and action- planning

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better presentation of learning materials
- enhanced evidence base of learners' achievements

45. The prison salon is well resourced with modern equipment. There is a commercial atmosphere, with music playing in a lively busy salon. The other prisoners are the clients and they book into the salon a week in advance. Hair types and styles are varied, giving a good selection for the NVQ. There is a good range of consumables, including practise

head blocks. Tools are kept locked in wall cupboards when not in use. They are well maintained and scissors are replaced systematically every six months. There is a whiteboard, overhead projector, television, video and a selection of appropriate videos. The reception desk has a computer. However, some of the chairs are worn and the washing machine and tumbler dryer are noisy and distracting. The salon has a few hairdressing course books and learners also borrow copies from the prison library. In addition, learners can read about current products, trends and business information in professional hairdressing journals which are kept in the salon. The salon is well lit, but the ventilation is not suitable for hot weather. The hairdressing trainer is well qualified and experienced in practical work and background knowledge and relates the NVQ topics to the learners' experiences. In addition, two qualified prisoners work alongside the trainer to give support. Currently there is no way for learners to maintain their hairdressing skills after completion of the course. There are no wing barber jobs at HMP Swaleside.

46. The standard of practical work is good. Cutting is the main skill used and learners handle the tools professionally. They understand the choice of cutting tools and attachments. A variety of styles are created, following fashion and traditional trends. Colouring work includes advanced techniques. There are photographs of learners' work from a few years ago in a salon style book. However the learners' NVQ portfolios do not have photographic evidence to illustrate their good levels of practical skills. Neither are there any wall displays of learners' work to advertise to prospective clients.

47. The trainer keeps a variety of paper-based monitoring systems for learners' achievements. Of the 38 learners who have started the hairdressing course since January 2001, 11 have achieved the full NVQ and 12 are currently training. Of the 15 who left, six resigned during the trial period, two were sacked, six transferred and one withdrew from the course. The monitoring systems include assessments of the cuts on the practise block heads, NVQ background knowledge and practical assessments. The recording systems are maintained to ensure that learners' progress can be identified. Coloured wall charts are also used. Learners start throughout the year and usually take the NVQ units in the same set order. In addition, each learner has an assessment record book which is kept with the NVQ portfolio in the salon. Learners can work on background knowledge in their cells. Library books and packs of learning materials are used for independent learning. However, the presentation of the learning materials is poor.

48. Internal verification is inadequate. The internal verifier is on long-term sick leave and while she continues to verify portfolios, she has not observed practical assessments since December 2001, and does not meet with the learners. A new internal verifier has been appointed to start at the end of July 2002. The week before inspection the decision was made for the assessor to assess each unit as it is completed rather than waiting until the qualification is finished. The assessor does not have regular contact with other assessors to share ideas and keep up to date with developments. There are two portfolios awaiting verification.

49. The four-week trial is used for learners to decide if hairdressing is the right course for them. During this time, the trainer assesses the learners' practical abilities, interpersonal skills, team-working approach and aptitude for hairdressing. Some learners have prior hairdressing knowledge and skills. While the trainer uses this information to discuss the course, individual learning plans are not produced. Accreditation of prior learning is only used when learners have evidence of completed units. There is no formal recording of the information learned from the trial period and individual targets are not set.

50. There are monthly progress reviews. All learners are seen on the same day and the records are kept in the learners' portfolios. An overall record is kept by the trainer on a group sheet. Targets are very poor and some learners have the same targets for two or three consecutive months. The records do not show what the learner needs to focus on to achieve the unit. Target dates are not given, although the learners understand that the work has to be completed for the next review. Regular discussion takes place as the learners and the trainer meet each day, but the lack of detail in the records does not help the learners to focus on the different aspects of the NVQ unit.

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

51. Industrial cleaning training at HMP Swaleside is good. Currently there are 16 learners working towards a cleaning operators proficiency certificate at stages 1, 2 and 3. Two learners have also been trained in bio-cleaning by an external company and both are involved in specialist cleaning activities in the prison. One member of staff manages and teaches the training course and has vocational and assessor qualifications. Unit accreditation is available. Learners are given a vocational induction which is based primarily on health and safety. Cleaning equipment is to commercial standards. Once trained, prisoners can find employment in prison departments.

### **STRENGTHS**

- particularly good training
- well-equipped training workshop
- good planning and recording of training activities

### **WEAKNESSES**

- lack of written review and feedback to learners

### **OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- better ventilation and fume extraction in training workshop
- additional areas for application of skills

52. The instructor makes good use of industrial contexts to support the practical sessions. Clear, well-presented demonstrations enable learners to understand methods of work and demonstrate the importance of working safely. Existing learners, who in turn are observed by the instructor, coach new learners. Feedback is then given to both learners on the accuracy of the instruction given. All learners are attentive and keen to learn.

53. A wide range of learning resources is available. Up-to-date trade publications are available to all learners for referencing purposes. They contain information on new products in the cleaning sector, and list relevant companies. Learners are able to record contact details of these companies for potential employment opportunities.

54. A training manual containing task sheets is used by learners to help them identify tools and equipment. The sheets also clearly describe the sequence of activities required and learners refer to the sheets to plan their own work. Learning materials include



diagrams which enable all learners to understand key messages, regardless of their reading abilities. Visual learning aids in the workshop include a television and video, an overhead projector and two whiteboards. Good laminated notices and information sheets are displayed throughout the workshop. They include dilution charts, safe systems of work, and guidelines on machine and brush selection. Learners refer to these on an ongoing basis.

55. Training is well planned and recorded. Practical activities on each of the floor surfaces are planned to ensure learners' progress is not held up. Learners understand when assessment will take place, the activity being assessed and the standards required for successful completion. The instructor maintains a course file which contains details on each learner. The information includes start and finish dates and when certificates are issued and presented. In addition, a record is kept to highlight key areas or concerns relating to individual learners.

56. Retention rates in industrial cleaning are satisfactory. Of the 67 learners who started between April 2001 and June 2002, 23 have left the programme early. Of those who have left, seven achieved the stage 1, and one learner achieved stages 1 and 2. The remaining 15 leavers left without any accredited achievement. However, the directive to transfer eight of these learners was made by other parties. Achievement rates are satisfactory. Forty-six per cent of learners have achieved all three stages of the training programme. Sixteen learners remain in training.

57. Learners' reviews do not record progress and further actions needed. In addition, there is no recording of improvements in personal effectiveness, such as timekeeping, attendance and attitude. Also, there is no use of written feedback to help learners remember the improvements they need to make.

58. The training workshop has mobile cooling fans which are used to remove odours from the cleaning agents. However, there is no extraction system and the workshop can be an uncomfortable environment in which to train, particularly when a combination of cleaning agents are used.

59. Currently, two learners who have received training in bio-cleaning apply their skills in the prison, but this opportunity is not always available to other learners. There is insufficient planning by prison management to allow learners to further develop their cleaning skills in a real work environment.

## **Foundation programmes**

60. Overall, education at HMP Swaleside is satisfactory, and some aspects are good. The training is contracted to Amersham and Wycombe College. One hundred and thirty-one learners attend full-time education and a further 20 learners are in part-time education. Additionally, an outreach teacher works with 33 learners on Open University or other distance learning courses. The teacher also offers support on an individual basis to men in health care and the segregation units.

61. After the initial assessment, all men meet with education staff. They describe the range of opportunities available in the department and arrange for the men to tour the facilities and to meet with individual course tutors. In the same week, after the results of the initial assessment are known, prisoners have discussions with staff and applications for courses can be made. Prisoners with identified basic skill needs are strongly encouraged to join an education course. There are waiting lists, typically of three to four months, for those prisoners wishing to follow a basic skills programme. An exception to this is for prisoners who have been referred to education by the labour board who are fast-tracked onto courses. Sixty-seven per cent of the training is in basic or key skills and English for speakers of other languages. There is a short full-time preparation for work course and a GNVQ intermediate course in art and design. Very limited evening classes have been available for part of the year on a Monday evening but were not running during inspection. There are eight full-time and eight sessionally paid staff as well as a full-time manager and a full-time administrator.

## **STRENGTHS**

- good environment for learning
- very good work by learners
- well-planned and managed teaching sessions
- effective use of peer support

## **WEAKNESSES**

- insufficient co-ordination of basic skills and key skills training
- very limited use of IT to support learning
- narrow range of training
- too few part-time courses

## OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better presentation of learning materials

62. There is a good learning environment which supports purposeful activity. The education department is situated in an enclosed area just off the main concourse. It is on two floors, with wide landings and a spacious main hallway. There are good-sized classrooms. Impressive artwork, which is created by learners in the department, decorates the walls. Classrooms have modern furniture, are well decorated with good displays of learners' work and relevant posters. The library is accessible from within the department but few course leaders use this resource in their curriculum. The education department and the library have good stocks of first-level reading books.

63. All courses have appropriate accreditation and there is a good rate of success for learners who complete their course. For example, of the 91 learners who completed the course between November 2001 and April 2002, the achievement rate was 89 per cent. Retention rates are above 90 per cent in all cases except art and design, where it is 88 per cent. The good standard of work in student portfolios is confirmed by very good external verification reports. Learners on the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) course are progressing well and expressed confidence in their oral and written skills. The quality of work of most learners in art and design is exceptionally good and well above the requirements of the qualification.

64. The teaching is at least satisfactory and in most cases very good. It is well planned and meets the individual needs of learners. On most courses, learners have a copy of the scheme of work and the assessment criteria and they are discussed with the learners. Learners can join the courses at any time throughout the year. They follow individual learning plans, with the whole group regularly being drawn together for input. There is good use of questioning to involve all learners. The pace of group teaching is lively with positive staff/learner relationships being demonstrated throughout. However, the presentation of learning materials is poor. Photocopying is of variable quality, and some of the materials are copies from textbooks, some in a variety of text fonts and sizes and some handwritten. There is no house style and this gives the portfolios a disjointed and unco-ordinated presentation which does not reflect the quality of their content.

65. An innovative peer mentor scheme supports learners who have very severe literacy needs. Seven prisoners who have English skills at or above level 2 have been trained to work with other learners on an individual basis. All learners and peer tutors come together for two hours a week to monitor progress, to update individual learning plans and targets, and to be observed and supported by the staff. After this class, the peer tutors meet with the member of staff to discuss any matters of concern and to receive ongoing training. The learners are clearly benefiting from this regular individual support and, in most cases, are progressing towards entry-level literacy qualifications.

66. There is insufficient integration of basic skills and key skills with the training and

work environments outside education. This weakness is recognised by the management and is mentioned in the development plan. Currently, prisoners who are working in the industrial workshops or undergoing vocational training cannot have basic skills support without attending formal classes in the education department. Only 18 men attend adult basic education classes in education on a part-time basis despite over 40 per cent of new prisoners being assessed at induction as having literacy skills below level 1. There are insufficient opportunities for prisoners to deal with their basic skill needs in the familiar vocational environment and by using the everyday tasks. In the education department, long-term staff illness has affected the planning to make key skills an integral part of the training. Learners follow separate training programmes in communication, application of number and IT, although for the past five weeks, IT key skills have not been taught or assessed.

67. There is very limited use of IT to support learning and there are very few computers. In the classrooms where there are computers, there are too few to enable teachers to make IT an integral part of the lesson. The comprehensive range of IT available to support the new basic skills national curriculum cannot be used by most of the learners. There is no IT facility in the art and design studio, which limits the learning that can be undertaken.

68. The range of training courses is too narrow and the learners have few progression routes. The training is mainly adult basic education, ESOL and key skills up to level 2. There is no opportunity to study other subjects such as parenting skills, cookery, health education, money management or business studies. Most of the full-time students study their main subject all week. Although 12 learners study distance learning courses in other subjects such as counselling and bookkeeping, and 21 learners are studying Open University units, there is very little training available except for basic skills. This is not helped by the difficulty of attending education other than in a full-time capacity. It is not possible to study basic skills or IT in the evening, and this excludes the men in full-time industrial work. There are no courses specifically designed to be part time.