

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Littlehey

02 December 2002



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Adult Learning Inspectorate

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

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

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

Overall judgement

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

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

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

SUMMARY

The provider

HMP Littlehey is an adult category C training prison for men, near Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. The prison has certified normal accommodation capacity of 624 and an occupational capacity of 648. Currently, there are 646 prisoners, of whom a few are category D status. All prisoners are sentenced and come to HMP Littlehey from another prison. Since October 2000, Littlehey has been increasing its numbers of vulnerable prisoners and currently these make up approximately 36 per cent of its population. In addition, there are 66 prisoners serving life sentences. The education department offers mostly full-time courses with a focus on literacy and numeracy and key skills up to level 2 and English for speakers of other languages courses. A variety of other subjects are offered and a few prisoners are taking Open University and distance learning courses. Education department staff also teach in the care and separation unit and offer support with literacy and numeracy in some workshops. Vocational qualifications are offered in four training workshops, for brickwork, carpentry and joinery, light vehicle body repair and motor mechanics. There is training for work without qualifications in the seven production workshops, general maintenance, gardening, prison kitchens and other areas around the prison. The prison's physical education department offers a few qualifications as well as recreational activities.

Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. The areas of learning of construction, hospitality, sport leisure and travel, information and communication technology and foundation programmes are good. Engineering, technology and manufacturing is satisfactory. The leadership and management of education and training at HMP Littlehey are satisfactory. The approach to equality of opportunity is good, but quality assurance is unsatisfactory.

KEY STRENGTHS

- dynamic management driving improvements
- good promotion of, and focus on, equality of opportunity
- good teaching and training
- good standard of work by learners
- good skills development
- extremely good working relationships between learners and staff

KEY WEAKNESSES

- ineffective co-ordination of activities
- missed opportunities for accreditation
- incomplete quality assurance

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more use of data in making management decisions

THE INSPECTION

1. A team of seven inspectors spent a total of 27 inspection days at HMP Littlehey (Littlehey) in December 2002. They worked with a team of inspectors from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP). They visited the education and physical education (PE) departments, industry workshops and prison work areas inside and outside the prison walls. The inspectors interviewed 93 prisoners and had 45 interviews with prison and subcontractors' staff. The 22 teaching sessions observed were mostly graded very good or good. A wide range of documents was examined including contracts, self-assessment reports, verification reports, records of meetings and learners' individual learning plans, their portfolios and work.
2. Littlehey completed its first self-assessment report in preparation for this inspection. It consists of self-assessment reports from the education department, the vocational training workshops, the PE department, the kitchens and a brief section for leadership and management.

THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

Context

3. Littlehey is a category C training prison situated seven miles west of Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. It opened in 1988 on the site of Gaynes Hall Youth Custody Centre. It is a purpose-built prison comprising seven residential units, one of which is a Ready To Use unit (RTU), which was added in 1997. The present governing governor joined Littlehey in December 2000, when the prison had an estimated agreed over-spend of £202k. There have been high rates of staff sickness absences and problems with new staff working patterns. In the past two years there have been three deputy governors and three heads of personnel, the most recent two post-holders starting in May 2002. The head of operations and regimes was appointed in March 2002 and has since added prison security to his role. Littlehey offers sex offender treatment programmes and currently 36 per cent of its population are serving sentences for sex-related offences. In 2000, Littlehey had more non-sex offenders than was appropriate and this was dealt with in October 2001 by many prisoners being transferred to other prisons. There is a totally integrated regime and 66 prisoners are serving life sentences. Currently, 20 per cent of the prisoners are not allocated to activities. Of these prisoners, 12 are unfit for work, 10 are too old to work, 19 are unemployed, 60 are currently unassigned and 28 are on the two-week induction programme. The education department has 50 full-time, 14 part-time and 13 job-share prisoners. The PE department has 26 prisoners on sports courses and there are 53 prisoners in the four vocational training workshops. There are 331 prisoners in work, which includes 198 in production workshops, 20 gardeners, nine on the works party and 20 in the kitchens. Other prisoners work as orderlies in the healthcare centre, reception, chapel, library, education department, gymnasium, administration and general areas. The wings employ prisoners on their food services and as barbers, cleaners, painters and orderlies.

4. The prison contracts with a further education college in Birmingham for the work of the education department. There are 16 part-time sessional staff, two fractional lecturing posts, three full-time lecturers and a full-time education manager. The education department opens weekdays, offering 6.5 hours a day for three days and nine hours a day for two days, with classes throughout the year. Education department staff also teach in the care and separation unit and industrial workshops. The library provision is contracted to the country libraries service. It is situated adjacent to the education classrooms. It has one librarian and opens for 20 hours a week, comprising three daytime weekday sessions, three weekday evenings and two hours on Saturday mornings.

Education and training in prison

5. The standard of learners' work is good in all areas of education, vocational training and training for work. The prison's education key performance targets for literacy and numeracy were exceeded for 2001-02. The prison key work skills targets have also been exceeded. There is particularly innovative work in one of the production workshops, where speaking household equipment and gadgets, such as microwave ovens and tape measures are made for blind and visually impaired people. These are exported throughout the world.

6. Teaching and training is good throughout the prison. Tutors and trainers are appropriately qualified and experienced. The vocational training and resources in the light vehicle body repair workshop are particularly good. Here, there is a very effective partnership with a national specialist paint company, which allows the learners to work with extremely good resources and be assessed by external industry assessors. Once they have gained a qualification, they can be added to a national employment register, ready for employment on release. Basic skills awards are starting to be offered in production workshops. In the six production workshops and many prison work areas, qualifications are not currently taken. Recently secured funding for 2003 will increase the vocational, basic and key skills qualifications across the prison. The successful bid is providing finance for developments in horticulture, including poly-tunnels, greenhouses, equipment and tools. The gardens and kitchen work areas will then be offering national vocational qualifications (NVQs), as the acquired finances cover the provision of classrooms for the kitchen and workshop areas. The library has a good stock of materials for learners with literacy, numeracy and language needs. Extra funding has been found to support prisoners who wish to tape stories for their children. This facility is been available to prisoners in the resettlement block who will shortly be rejoining their families. Access to the library is by wing and the limited opening hours, both for use in daytime teaching time and in prisoners' evening and weekend association hours, reduce its usage. Computer hardware and software are poor. This is recognised by Littlehey, which has made a successful bid for a new multi-purpose learning facility, which from 2003 will be situated in a large area adjacent to the library, and will provide modern computers and supervised Internet access.

7. Managers are aware that the overall co-ordination of prison activities is ineffective. There is a lack of effective sentence planning to organise prisoners' time well. Unfilled spaces are left on qualification courses when prisoners are transferred at short notice to specialist treatment programmes. Managers collect much data and information, all of which is not used to its potential to help managers make decisions. Quality assurance arrangements in the education department are good, but information is not shared with Littlehey's senior managers. Quality assurance of prison staff training activities does not have sufficient arrangements to make it effective. Equality of opportunity is good across the prison. It is well promoted and has systematic monitoring to maintain integrated provision. Staff and learners' working relationships are particularly good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

8. The leadership and management of education and training at the prison are satisfactory. The governor head of operations, regimes and security is responsible for managing the activities of the education department, vocational training courses and the gymnasium. He was appointed to the prison in March 2002. The head of works services and industries is responsible for employment in the kitchens, gardens and industries workshops. He was on sick leave at the time of inspection. The post holders report directly to the governing governor of the prison. Education is contracted to a college of further education. The prison library is subcontracted to the county libraries services. Some of the industries' workshops hold external contracts for prisoners to manufacture products.

STRENGTHS

- dynamic management driving improvements
- good management awareness of development needs
- good training for work in prison employment areas
- particularly good standard of prisoners' work
- good range of training and training for work meeting prisoners' needs
- good promotion and focus on equality of opportunity

WEAKNESSES

- many missed opportunities to accredit prisoners' skills
- ineffective co-ordination of activities
- insufficient incentives to increase participation in education and training
- incomplete quality assurance

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- reference information for prisoners to help them choose activities
- better monitoring of education and training waiting lists
- greater range of library resources to support learners
- more use of data to inform management decisions
- more opportunities for staff to update skills and knowledge
- inclusion of leadership and management in self-assessment

9. Dynamic management has recently been driving improvements in education, vocational training and training for work. These include the acquisition of significant funding for developments in 2003, such as the provision of specialist horticulture facilities to introduce NVQs in the gardens, NVQ and assessor training for staff to

introduce NVQs in the kitchen and mess, classrooms for the kitchen and workshop areas and new specialist equipment for building training. In addition, funding has been secured to create a new multi-purpose learning resource facility for the library, with computers and supervised Internet access.

10. Senior prison managers and the education manager are aware of the changes needed to activities and have taken action to bring these about. Since October 2002, changes have been made to the way data are collected, to give managers better information on which to base their decisions. They also drew on the knowledge of education department staff regarding self-assessment, in order to introduce a self-assessment process into the vocational training areas and PE department in preparation for inspection.

11. There is good training for work in the employment areas of the prison. The standard of prisoners' work is particularly good. Many production workshops hold external contracts for the products made by the prisoners. These require consistently high standards of work and the meeting of production deadlines. There are good quality control procedures to assure the standards of work.

12. There is a good range of training and work activities to meet prisoners' needs. The profile of the prison's population has been changing since 2000. This has been planned and the implications recognised by senior managers. The prison activities offer a variety of tasks with different skill and knowledge requirements, at different levels. These vary from repetitive production work through to higher levels of electronic and computer programming tasks. The range of activities offers scope for all prisoners. There is physical work such as grounds maintenance and brickwork and more sedentary assembly work for the less physically able.

13. Many opportunities to accredit prisoners' skills and knowledge in work areas of the prison are missed. This has been recognised by the senior prison managers and the education manager. Education staff are now going into the workshops to offer basic skills teaching. The new funding acquired will enable the prison to offer more qualifications in these work areas and allow more prisoners to become involved in gaining nationally recognised awards, including some in horticulture, catering, information technology (IT) and key skills.

14. The co-ordination of prison activities is ineffective. Poor sentence planning contributes to the problems. The key role of personal officer is not working effectively. There is disruption to prisoners' education and training and prisoners are changed suddenly to behavioural treatment programmes, leaving vacancies unfilled. Waiting lists for activities are mostly between one and eight weeks, although one production workshop has a waiting list of 26 weeks.

15. The prison induction programmes give new prisoners information about the activities at Littlehey. However, this is not backed up by sufficient reference material to remind prisoners about the choices they have. There are too few leaflets and posters

with photographs of workshops and education areas, information about the training and qualifications in each and the personal, security and ability pre-requisites.

16. The library stocks vocational books, but library staff and teaching and training staff liaise too little in choosing the library stock, which include professional and trade journals. The current library stock does not fully promote the activities on offer to potential learners, or give maximum support to the teaching and training given.

17. The prison collects much data, however they are not currently used to their full potential to help managers make decisions. In addition, the way that data and information are to be used are not sufficiently considered before decisions about how to collect data are made.

18. Staff training to update their skills and knowledge can be quite disruptive to training and learners cannot always participate in alternative activities at these times.

Equality of opportunity

19. Equality of opportunity is good. There is a strong focus on equality of opportunity in the prison and it is well promoted. There is a good range of policies and procedures displayed throughout the prison and prisoners have a good understanding of them. Equality of opportunity is promoted to prisoners on induction to the prison. Learning materials in the education department reflect cultural diversity. Staff have regular training on diversity issues. There is a prisoner representative on the race relations committee that meets monthly. There is a strong focus on the prevention of bullying and prisoners' safety. The Samaritans visit the prison regularly and there are several free-phones around the prison for confidential contact with the Samaritans when they are not available in person. There is a system by which prisoners can talk in confidence to other trained prisoners and discuss problems in complete confidence. A variety of dietary needs are adequately catered for. The kitchen food training programme reflects the promotion of equal opportunities in its learning materials, which include good visual images, as well as in the food content.

20. Data are collected in a wide range of areas including employment and education. The system effectively identifies areas where minority ethnic learners are not proportionally represented and reports are routinely produced for prison managers. There are opportunities for prisoners from many faiths to worship in the prison. Cultural diversity is celebrated. The prison recently put on an appropriate cultural event for Ramadan, which was attended by approximately 25 per cent of the prisoners' population.

21. Workshops activities, especially those with external contracts, offer higher pay than education and vocational training. Although prison managers recognise this, there are few incentives to encourage prisoners to choose education and training. Prisoners achieving qualifications from long programmes of study are given a £10 bonus for each award. However, pay for attending full-time education has not increased since 1999. Education and vocational training waiting lists are usually less than eight weeks.

Quality assurance

22. Quality assurance is unsatisfactory. There is no overall framework of arrangements across education, vocational training and training for work. The information currently collected focuses on the time prisoners spend in activities, rather than monitoring the quality and outcomes of training. The education department activities are quality assured and are operated within the requirements of the contracted college. These arrangements include teaching observations, course reviews, data monitoring and self-assessment processes. Quality assurance arrangements are not yet fully applied to activities in the vocational training and training for work areas. No observation of vocational workshop or training for work activities takes place and there are no formal methods for gathering feedback from learners or staff. Some data have been collected on achievement rates of units and full awards. However, the different data collection formats in the training sections do not allow accurate analysis of trends. The production workshops with external contracts have good quality control procedures to ensure products meet with their contract compliance standards.

23. Self assessment was carried out by individual workshop and training sections, after discussion with the more experienced education department staff. These assessments were largely accurate in their identification of strengths and weaknesses, although the report did not have a section about leadership and management, equality of opportunity and quality assurance. A brief report on these areas was submitted separately, which did identify many key points. The prison monitors the performance of the college contracted to give the education provision. The monitoring is, however, limited to contractual compliance for teaching hours and number of prisoners in sessions, and does not extend to the quality of the provision. The quality assurance activities carried out in the education department for its parent college are not shared with Littlehey's senior managers. In addition, the prison's senior managers do not routinely receive copies of the education department's other external monitoring reports such as external verifiers' reports.

Good Practice

The education department displays the results of learners' surveys on its walls. Presentation is good. Clear messages such as, 'you said this' and 'we have done this as a result' help learners to appreciate that surveys are valuable and that they can influence change. The visual impact of the charts is helped by bold graphical images such as coloured pie charts.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

24. The construction provision is good. Littlehey offers vocational training in carpentry and joinery and in brickwork. Twenty-one learners in carpentry and joinery are working towards externally accredited awards, and 10 learners are working towards an accredited skills test. The average time to achieve the awards in both workshops is six months. Two members of staff in carpentry and joinery, and one in brickwork give practical and knowledge training. Staff are experienced, but do not all hold teaching and assessing qualifications. Brickwork has one prisoner orderly and carpentry, two prisoner orderlies who help to distribute tools and materials, and assist with general workshop upkeep. Learners attend vocational training workshops which are open five days a week. Some receive additional support for literacy and numeracy. This can be given by education staff in the practical workshops, or by attending sessions in the general education section on a Friday afternoon. Additional needs are identified through a basic skills assessment during the prison's induction programme. Prisoners apply for positions in the training workshops, and are interviewed by instructors before security clearance. The prison has recently begun collecting information to monitor achievement, but does not yet have data for a full year.

STRENGTHS

- good development of skills
- good accreditation of achievements
- good resources for learning

WEAKNESSES

- ineffective planning of course provision
- weak checking of assessment practice

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better development of portfolios

25. Learners develop good skills in construction workshops. The standard of work is good and learners are proud of their achievements. Emphasis has recently moved from craft and hobby activities towards focused training for nationally recognised construction skills. Learners from both disciplines can gain experience on projects around the prison. For instance, brickwork learners built a classroom and office in one of the commercial

industry workshops. Excellent relationships exist between learners and staff. Instructors use their experience of industry to maintain the relevance of practical work and use photographs of building developments to illustrate how techniques learned in workshops are used in industry. Learners are extremely well motivated and many wish to pursue careers in construction or attend further training on release. Learners do not, however, compile a portfolio or have any records of their practical work. Many have completed small and large pieces of work to a high standard, but have no photographs or written description of the processes. They cannot show potential employers, training providers or relatives, visible records of their achievements.

26. Good methods of accrediting achievement have been developed in the carpentry and joinery section. The main qualification aim is an institute exam which is assessed by practical and knowledge examinations. No record of achievement is possible for learners who leave before the end of the course. A parallel course has now been developed where nationally recognised unit achievement is acknowledged. Learners gain accreditation for their work during the course, taking the examination if they complete the six-month period. These learners then benefit from two qualifications. There is good monitoring of achievement in both workshops. Displays on workshop walls show progress towards qualifications and good records are kept by instructors.

27. Resources for learning are good. Both workshops are large, well-lit and benefit from a good supply of tools and industry-standard equipment. Each workshop has a good classroom with an overhead projector and a video playback facility. Drawing equipment is available and is well used by learners. Consumable materials such as timber and bricks are also in good supply. The prison orderlies provide a good extra resource to help the prison trainers prepare training materials and equipment.

28. Attendance at workshops is poorly planned. Several learners remain in workshops after completing their qualification, despite a waiting list for places. Other learners have their course interrupted by needing to attend behavioural treatment prison programmes. These take priority for prisoners as they are part of their sentence plan and waiting lists are long. However, when places on these specialist courses become available, learners are removed from training workshops at short notice. Learners' half-completed work takes up space in workshops and instructors are not always sure when, or if, learners will return. Vocational training places can be left unfilled when prisoners attend specialist courses.

29. There is no formal checking of assessment practice in construction. External verifiers from the awarding body have not visited the brickwork shop for over two years and there is no internal verifier or moderator to check assessment standards.

Good Practice

Learners in carpentry and joinery have good-quality learning plans to help maximise their time in training. Staff in the section find out the results of the basic skills tests, and after a thorough interview, set detailed targets for each learner. The individual plans are updated and adjusted regularly, and after each session both the learner and the trainer complete an evaluation record for what has been achieved.

Engineering, technology & manufacturing

30. The automotive engineering provision is satisfactory. Littlehey offers training and qualifications in motor mechanics and light vehicle body repair. There are 12 learners on the motor mechanics programme working towards a nationally accredited qualification in motor vehicle repair and maintenance skills. There are four learners at level 1 and eight at level 2. The light vehicle body repair programme has 12 learners working towards qualifications in vehicle body repair and refinishing up to level 3. A motor-industry paint manufacturer, awards certificates of competence. Learners attend the training workshops five days each week. Motor vehicle learners are given related knowledge sessions in the workshop two mornings each week. Each programme has a full-time instructional officer. Both instructors are qualified assessors and hold relevant technical qualifications in their respective occupational areas. The motor mechanics instructor is also a qualified teacher and has a qualification as a basic skills tutor.

STRENGTHS

- particularly effective partnerships with industry in light vehicle body repair
- good development of vocational skills

WEAKNESSES

- little planning of motor mechanics training programme
- some poor health and safety practices
- inappropriate facilities for motor mechanics knowledge teaching

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better reviews and target-setting for learners
- integration of additional work experiences into motor mechanics training programme

31. There are effective partnerships with the vehicle body industry. A major motor-industry paint manufacturer sponsors the light vehicle body repair programme. The manufacturer has provided an industry-standard spray oven and the latest paint-mixing equipment, as well as good-quality teaching handouts and video tapes. A technical training representative from the company visits regularly to give additional training to learners in the latest techniques and updates on paint products. The company trainer also carries out an assessment of a learner's competence at level 3. Successful learners can have their name added to the company's employment register. Employers use this register to find suitable employees in their locality. Some learners have found

employment through this process. The paint manufacturer also provides continuing professional development for the vehicle body instructor at its own training department. Learners have the opportunity to work on a wide range of good-quality cars and motorcycles. These come from sources such as used car and motorcycle dealers, a motorcycle club, and a company that restores classic and veteran cars. Learners produce work of a good quality. There are good visual displays of learners' work. Photographs of completed work are displayed in the workshop to show new learners the standard of work which can be achieved.

32. There are good opportunities for learners to develop effectively and improve their skills, using a wide range of vehicles and equipment. Learners receive good training from qualified instructors who have many years' experience in the motor industry. Instructors encourage and motivate learners to carry out complex tasks with minimum supervision. Learners on these programmes have a good understanding of vehicle maintenance or body repairs and demonstrate competence by producing good-quality work and practical assignments. Learners in motor mechanics have the opportunity to learn additional skills such as tyre fitting, repair, and wheel balancing. They are also receive training in welding techniques using gas and arc welding equipment. However, although it may improve their chances of getting a job on release, this additional training slows learners' progress in achieving the main target qualification. In 2001, there were two level 1 motor mechanics qualifications and 18 units awarded. In 2002, three level 1 qualifications and 25 units were awarded, and two level 2 units. Each successful learner receives a certificate of competence from the prison. Over the past year, there have been seven tyre fitting and repair, and 15 welding techniques certificates awarded. For the motor industry paint manufacturer awards in 2001, there were 18 achievements at level 1, 14 at level 2 and seven at level 3. In 2002, there were 12 level 1 qualifications awarded, 10 at level 2 and 12 at level 3.

33. There is little structure and planning of the motor vehicle training programme. Practical and knowledge sessions are not effectively linked with clear aims and objectives. Most knowledge sessions progress at the pace of the slowest learner, with little differentiation for individual learners. Learners do not know what is to be covered at each stage of their training programme. Skills development activities, such as tyre fitting and welding, are not integrated with the rest of the training programme. It is anticipated that learners will complete their programme within 12 months, but some learners on both motor vehicle and body repair have remained on the programme for nearly two years, and are still working towards level 2 qualifications. Most learning plans are the same and not specific to individual learner's needs. They do not identify preferred learning styles. Some learning plans do not give individual targets dates for the achievement of practical tasks or knowledge units.

34. There is poor health and safety practice in the motor mechanics and body repair workshops. The motor mechanics workshop is untidy. The motor vehicle workshop is too small for the number of learners, vehicles and equipment. There is minimal clearance between motor vehicles, equipment and workbenches, for safe working conditions. There is poor management of learners' responsibilities for housekeeping and

tidiness. There are no safety guards on the drilling machines or on lathe equipment in the body repair workshop. During one practical training session in the motor mechanics workshop, access to the fire exit was blocked by mobile lifting equipment. The welding area is cluttered and untidy. Learners using the equipment do not always use the fume extractor. The instructor did not correct this poor practice. Learners welding a vehicle frame in the workshop failed to use sufficient screening to protect other learners working close to them from ultra-violet rays.

35. The accommodation for knowledge sessions for both programmes is unsatisfactory. The knowledge training is carried out in the workshop area, with inadequate facilities and often dusty environments. However, senior managers recognise the poor facilities and have secured funding to construct a purpose-built classroom adjacent to the workshops.

36. Learners' reviews are not carried out regularly throughout the training programme. Many learners have not had interim reviews. For example, a learner on the programme for 10 weeks had not had a formal review of his progress. Most review records do not set targets for learners to achieve in the next period before the next review.

37. The useful work-experience opportunities of repairing the prison's gardening equipment are not integrated with the training programme. The current informal arrangements to carry out this work quickly are disruptive to the learners' training programme.

Information & communications technology

38. Information and communications technology (ICT) provision in the education department is good. In addition to daytime classes, there are voluntary, unpaid computer sessions which are available two evenings a week. There are currently 35 learners working towards computer and IT qualifications at levels 1 and 2. There are currently 23 learners on business studies courses, mostly taking the business or finance units of the general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) intermediate level in business. Some learners are taking an accredited business skills course, which is available at level 1 and level 2 and is aimed at learners who would like to start their own businesses. In addition, there is a nationally recognised award at level 2 in computerised accounts. Learners can join courses throughout the year, when places become available. Induction to the courses is part of the main prison induction programme, which includes a basic skills assessment test followed by an individual interview.

STRENGTHS

- good development of skills
- effective individual planning and monitoring of learners' progress
- good confidence-building support and progression onto other courses

WEAKNESSES

- outdated computer resources

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- increase the range of courses

39. There is good skills development on ICT and business courses. Learners are progressing well and are gaining confidence in computing and obtaining valuable business skills. In addition, they are encouraged to develop their communication skills by writing letters to obtain information from a variety of sources. Tutors are well qualified and very supportive to their learners. The teaching is mostly good. The teaching atmosphere is relaxed but purposeful. Learners are given a good range of supplementary learning materials. These include books and worksheets which allow learners to practise their skills and progress at their own pace. Tutors also draw on relevant Internet information, to provide additional resources. IT key skills are either integrated with the business studies course or taught on a 'fast track' education department course. The standard of business studies' portfolios is good and reflects the

learners' pride and interest in their work.

40. There is good planning and monitoring of progress. Most courses can be joined at any time during the year. The tutors spend considerable time with new learners, developing individual learning plans and agreeing target dates for work. Tutors carefully record learners' progress and achievement on their individual learning plans. Plans are monitored regularly and are usually updated at the end of each session. Learners also receive good help with portfolio-building. This also enables tutors to monitor learners' progress.

41. There is good progression to other programmes in the education department. Many learners who join courses have low confidence, because of negative experiences of education in the past. The ICT courses are popular with new learners, as this is their first experience of education for some time. The relationship between learners and tutors is good and effectively promotes confidence and aids progress. There are many displays of learners' work. Good individual support is given by tutors, and learners are encouraged to support each other.

42. The outdated computer resources are known about by the prison and recognised in the self-assessment report. They are barely adequate for the IT courses currently offered. The business studies learners use the ICT workshop resources during their lessons or at other times, as the resources in their own room are insufficient. The computer network facilities are managed on a daily basis by some of the experienced learners, who are also used for peer support. The furniture does not meet current commercial requirements, such as fully adjustable chairs, anti-glare screens or large monitors. However, Littlehey has secured significant funding to set up a new multi-purpose learning facility with modern computers and software and supervised Internet access. The prison plans to increase the ICT courses during 2003 when the new computer facilities are available.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

43. Training in hospitality and sport is good. There are nine learners working towards NVQs in sport and recreation and 17 learners taking a community sports leadership award. Training takes place in the gymnasium and sports hall and is provided by prison staff. A recreational physical education programme takes place on mid-week afternoons, evenings and at certain times at the weekend. There is a senior officer and three physical education instructors who organise and run the physical education activities. Facilities for sport include a sports hall, gymnasium and outdoor playing areas. A small classroom is used for knowledge lessons. Over 340 learners use the sports facilities each week, representing over 55 per cent of the prison population. All learners receive an induction to the physical education programme to ensure safe participation. There are 12 learners working towards four units of the intermediate GNVQ in hospitality. Classes are offered for two days each week. Learners on a Life Skills programme work towards a level 1 in cooking as part of this course. Training takes place in the education department, in a small kitchen and classrooms. There are no vocational qualifications offered in the kitchens. Prisoners working in the kitchens and on food service complete a basic food safety qualification. There are no qualified assessors or internal verifiers for hospitality.

STRENGTHS

- good pass rates on vocational sports courses
- very good teaching
- well-structured food safety training
- excellent working relationships between staff and learners

WEAKNESSES

- poor achievement on GNVQ catering courses
- narrow range of vocational courses

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better target-setting for GNVQ learners
- wider range of physical education provision for less-physically able prisoners

44. There is good achievement on the vocational sport and recreation courses. For the level 2 NVQ in gym instruction, the achievement rate is 88 per cent. Learners follow a detailed and comprehensive training programme and produce a high standard of work. There is good-quality diverse evidence in learners' portfolios. The achievement rate for

the community sports leadership award is 68 per cent. On this course, learners often start with little previous experience and make significant progress in developing skills, as well as confidence and self-esteem. This is enhanced by learners organising and leading activity sessions and providing practical sports coaching for members of community groups who have learning disabilities.

45. There is good very teaching on both the catering and sports courses. Tutors are well qualified and experienced, displaying good competence. Lessons are well prepared and structured, with detailed lesson plans. On the GNVQ catering course, the tutor uses well-presented and imaginative assignments. Learners have a good balance of practical and knowledge lessons. Every opportunity is taken to allow learners to prepare and cook for others. Learners taste each other's food and are encouraged to comment constructively about the dishes. Portfolios contain a variety of well-presented evidence. The sports courses are taught in an informative and motivational style, at a level highly appropriate to the needs of the learners.

46. There is a well-structured food safety training scheme operating in the prison. All kitchen staff and servers on the wings have food safety training before being allowed to handle food. Learners on the life skills programme and the GNVQ programme also receive the food safety training. All food handlers follow a structured programme and those who are capable go on to take a nationally recognised qualification. The training follows the prison service's information booklets and testing programme. The information booklets are well presented, using good non-stereotypical images, and are geared to the target audience.

47. There are excellent working relationships between staff and learners. Staff show great commitment and enthusiasm in providing good-quality training focused on the needs of the individual. Learners respond by working hard and displaying a positive and co-operative attitude to each other. Staff are respected by learners. The environment is orderly and conducive to learning. Learners comment favourably on the support and guidance that they receive from staff. They believe that staff show a genuine concern for learners' welfare and treat them with respect.

48. Achievement rates on the GNVQ catering programme are poor. No learners have achieved all four of the targeted units. The course used to be run only one day each week and this has only recently been increased to two days. Progress towards achieving the qualification has improved recently, but it is too soon to see the effect of the increased time allowed for the course. Individual learning plans have been introduced recently, but long-term target-setting is not driving achievement forward adequately. Learners' progress is well recorded and there is good short-term target-setting.

49. There is a narrow range of vocational courses available for learners. Many learners would like vocational training leading to other relevant and valued qualifications. However, the curriculum is narrow and does not satisfy the demands for learning or the demands for progression routes for those on existing courses. NVQs are not offered in the kitchen, although they are planned to be offered in the future. The GNVQ in

hospitality is offered at intermediate level and learners would like to progress to the advanced level. The recreational physical education sessions provide good and varied opportunities for learners to develop sports skills and physical fitness. However, participation by learners who are likely to require introductory or less energetic physical activity is quite low.

Foundation programmes

50. Overall, foundation provision is good. The education department provision is subcontracted to a further education college. It is managed at the prison by a full-time manager supported by three full-time staff, two staff on fractional contracts and 16 part-time staff. The department operates for five days and two evenings a week. Staff also teach literacy numeracy and language skills in the industry workshops and in the care and separation unit (previously the segregation unit). There are 50 full-time learners and 27 part-time learners. Sixty-three per cent of the learners are attending literacy, numeracy or English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes. Other foundation classes include computing, pottery, art and languages. Information about the education department is given during the prison induction and all new prisoners are assessed to identify any basic skills needs. The education department gained the Basic Skills Agency quality mark in February 2002. The education department's programmes operate under the equal opportunities and quality assurance policies of the college. These cover, among other things, observations of teaching, course reviews, internal and external verification, data monitoring and self-assessment procedures.

STRENGTHS

- good teaching
- good standard of learners' work
- good progression opportunities between education courses
- effective basic skills outreach work

WEAKNESSES

- lack of computer software to support teaching

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- more access to the library during lessons and association time
- better sharing of learners' basic skills initial assessment results with workshop staff
- staff training in dyslexia support skills

51. Teaching is good. Sessions are well planned and learners have good support from staff. Learners have individual learning plans which are regularly reviewed and records of their work are kept for every session. Good, topical and relevant learning materials are used which motivate learners and stimulate discussion. Materials used reflect cultural diversity. However, there is no computer software to support independent

learning and to aid progression. Staff are well qualified and most staff have attended updating on the new national curricula for literacy and numeracy. Some vocational staff have been trained to give basic skills support in the workshops. Staff development is given a high profile. A training audit is carried out regularly in the education department, as are class observations. Learners clearly value their tutors. They are highly motivated in their work and keen to tell others about the good teaching that they receive.

52. The good standard of learners' achievement is in evidence throughout the prison. Excellent art work is displayed in the form of sculpture in the prison grounds and paintings on the walls of the education department and visits hall. Learners produce a variety of objects in the pottery class, some of which are presents for their families. There are good key skills portfolios, including some excellent project work which had been prepared for a talk on native Americans. There is good assessment practice with regular sampling of portfolios and good internal verification reports.

53. There are good progression opportunities between existing courses for three levels. Learners are extremely proud of their accreditation achievements. There are many accreditation opportunities. For some learners, the achievement is to learn to read and write, for others it is an opportunity to study for a general certificate of education (GCE) advanced A level or an Open University (OU) course. Last year, six learners followed or completed an OU course and this year 12 learners have started on OU courses. Recently, two 10-week courses have been started. These are fast-track key skills and nationally accredited social and Life Skills courses. The new adult core curriculum has been fully integrated with the education department's provision. There is a good retention rate of 80 per cent for basic skills learners. The prison targets for level 2 literacy and numeracy achievements during the year 2001-02 were exceeded. Prison targets for key skills work were significantly exceeded, as 552 were achieved against a target of 60. Examination results for 2001-02 show 494 entries, with 538 units achieved and 310 learners achieving the full qualification. It is recognised in the department that the prison needs to record achievement data against learners' start dates and since October 2002, this information is being collected.

54. There is effective basic skills outreach work. A tutor visits the workshops to offer weekly sessions to support learners with literacy and/or numeracy skills needs. Tutors also visit the care and separation unit. In addition, there is good key skills teaching by education department staff for learners on sports courses. This is provided as outreach work in the PE department. The significant funding recently acquired by prison managers will enable an increase in basic skills support in the workplace, in the new classrooms planned for 2003 in the workshops.

55. The library is open for 20 hours each week. It is open three evenings a week, two hours on Saturday morning and for three weekday sessions. It has a good stock of basic skills and second language readers. Extra funding has been found to support prisoners who wish to tape stories for their children. This facility is available to prisoners in the resettlement block who will shortly be rejoining their families. A survey of users has shown the popularity of the library, with approximately 25 per cent of the prison

population using the facility, but access is limited by wing and regime restrictions. The limited opening hours, both for use in daytime teaching time and in prisoners' evening and weekend association hours, also restricts use of the library.

56. A Basic Skills Agency initial assessment is carried out with all prisoners during induction. This assessment is used to inform tutors of the prisoners' English and mathematics skills and ensure that they are placed in appropriate classes. This information is not routinely shared with workshop staff to ensure that prisoners in the workshop have appropriate support. Education department staff have not been trained to support learners who are dyslexic.

Good Practice

An 80 year old learner was encouraged to write stories about his memories of childhood. He learned how to use a computer to word process his stories.