

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HMP Lewes**

**10 March 2003**



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

Her Majesty's Prison Lewes is a category B local prison for adult males in East Sussex. It is a Victorian prison built in 1853 to hold up to 546 remand and convicted male prisoners from mainly east and west Sussex courts. In the spring of 2002, one wing was changed from young prisoner accommodation to vulnerable adult prisoner accommodation and this increased capacity by over 50 per cent. The prison has certified normal accommodation for 485 and an operational capacity of 546. There are currently 471 prisoners including approximately 150 vulnerable prisoners. The education provision is contracted to a college of further education. The prison is a pilot centre for job point which provides information on employment opportunities. A range of education courses is offered including information and communications technology, social and life skills, basic skills, key skills, art and craft and pottery. Other initiatives include 'family man' courses. There are national vocational qualifications (NVQs) in hospitality and catering. There are production workshops offering basic employment, but there is no formal accredited training provided. Extra employment opportunities are provided, for example, physical education and as domestic cleaners. Only hospitality, sport, leisure and travel and foundation areas of learning were inspected.

### Overall judgement

The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, training in foundation programmes is good and in hospitality, catering, sport and leisure is satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The approach to equality of opportunity is good and arrangements for quality assurance are satisfactory.

### KEY STRENGTHS

- good retention and achievement rates
- good teaching and learning
- good standard of learners' work
- excellent relationships between senior prison managers and other staff
- thorough target-setting process
- good work to support equality of opportunity
- strong commitment to continuous improvement by all staff

**KEY WEAKNESSES**

- inadequate specialist support for NVQ process in catering
- insufficient resources for IT
- insufficient range of education and training courses
- inadequate access to IT for some learners with mobility difficulties
- incomplete quality assurance

**OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

- improved access to library resources
- better access to ICT to support literacy, numeracy and language lessons
- improved target-setting in the progress review process

## THE INSPECTION

1. A team of three inspectors spent a total of 13 days at Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) Lewes in East Sussex in March 2003. They visited production workshops, the library, kitchens, the physical education (PE) department and interviewed 49 learners. Inspectors also carried out 16 interviews with teaching staff, managers and other prison staff. They examined a wide range of documents, including learners' personal files, portfolios of evidence, records of meetings, policies, course management files and correspondence. Thirteen learning sessions were observed. Inspectors also studied the self-assessment report and development plan, which was produced in February 2003.

## THE PROVIDER AS A WHOLE

### Context

2. HMP Lewes, East Sussex is a category B local prison, for adult men. The prison which opened 1853, has certified normal accommodation for 485 and an operational capacity of 546. There are currently 471 prisoners, of which approximately 150 are classed as vulnerable. There are also prisoners on remand.

3. The prison contracts with a college of further education for the education provision. The education department is contracted to provide some 8,400 hours of education each year. The provision includes teaching staff for a workshop where prisoners refurbish information technology (IT) equipment.

4. The prison's head of resettlement is responsible for education, training and work activities, although the deputy governor has direct responsibility for kitchen training. The education department has a full-time education manager, five permanent curriculum staff and 18 part-time session staff. The education department provides education and training in a range of education courses including information and communications technology (ICT), social and life skills, key skills, art and craft and pottery. Other initiatives include 'family man' courses. There are national vocational qualifications (NVQs) offered in hospitality and catering. There are production workshops which are managed by a senior prison officer who is responsible for labour allocation. These offer basic employment, but there is no formal accredited training in the workshops.

## Education and training in prison

5. Most of the education and training is satisfactory or better. Learners produce particularly good practical work especially in catering where they are encouraged to develop skills through creative cooking. Classroom accommodation is satisfactory, but one workshop which is used for computer refurbishment is inappropriate and unfit for the purpose. In many of the education classes learners are able to develop social and personal skills and there are good opportunities to gain a range of key skills. Waiting lists are short and learners are generally placed on their first choice of course. Vulnerable and other prisoners are able to work in production workshops although places are limited. This work is not formally accredited against any nationally recognised award.

6. NVQs were available in the PE section, but are no longer available to learners. There are no evening education classes. The library resources are good, but access is restricted. Vulnerable prisoners can only visit one day a week and a second day is allocated for other prisoners. Access to ICT courses for learners with mobility difficulties is limited to the computer refurbishment workshop.

7. There is jobsearch support from external agencies for those learners who are within a few weeks of release. Prison staff make contact on behalf of prisoners for employment interviews. There is also a job point facility in the prison which is staffed by an enthusiastic and motivated prison officer who provides learners with information about job opportunities. However, at the time of inspection, only one of the two terminals was working.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

8. The head of resettlement manages education and training and production work at HMP Lewes and also has responsibility for managing the contract for education with a further education college and for library services from the local county council. The education contract is for approximately 8,400 hours a year. Teaching in one workshop is over 42 weeks, but other education provision is over 50 weeks. There are separate education arrangements for vulnerable prisoners. Teaching staff have the responsibility for curriculum co-ordination. There are five full-time or part-time staff and 18 additional session staff. There are no evening or weekend classes. The teaching of literacy, numeracy and language is carried out by the college. NVQs are offered in catering, but this is not managed by the education department. The education provision includes basic and key skills, social and life skills, ICT courses and arts and craft programmes. Additional courses include peer mentoring. The prison operates employment workshops where prisoners carry out tasks such as light assembly and packing work. However, training is not accredited in these workshops. Some prisoners are also employed in other areas of the prison such as the laundry, on the wings as cleaners and in the kitchen. No external qualifications are offered in these areas although prisoners working in the kitchen complete a basic food hygiene qualification. The prisoners' wage structure ensures that those attending education and training are not disadvantaged compared with those working in workshops or other areas of the prison. The prison obtained the basic skills agency quality mark in March 2003. The prison has an equal opportunities policy and the further education college also has a policy which applies to the education department in the prison. The deputy governor and head of personnel have joint responsibility for equal opportunities in the prison. There is no overall prison quality assurance policy. Quality assurance processes have been established but have not yet been fully implemented. The prison has a quality improvement group which was formed in October 2002 and carried out self-assessment of the prison education and training provision. The self-assessment report was prepared before the inspection. It was self-critical and constructive and contained an action plan for improvement. Many of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors were also identified in the self-assessment report.

### STRENGTHS

- excellent relationships between senior prison managers and other staff
- thorough target-setting process
- good links with external agencies
- good work to support equality of opportunity
- strong commitment by all staff to continuous improvement
- effective involvement of all staff in the self-assessment process



## WEAKNESSES

- insufficient range of education and training opportunities
- poor access to some education courses for learners with restricted mobility
- incomplete quality assurance

## OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better access to library resources

9. HMP Lewes is primarily a local prison and supports a large vulnerable prisoner unit in addition to remand and those serving sentences. The prison is fully occupied and there are many occasions when prisoners transfer out at very short notice. The senior management team fully understands where the prison needs to focus in terms of education and training and training for work opportunities, and shares the vision with the education manager. There are good and effective communication links between senior prison staff and the education manager. There is a detailed computer programme which contains information about education and training, particularly progress against key performance targets. This is readily accessible and effectively used by all senior staff. The head of resettlement visits the education centres on most days and teaching staff are kept informed by memos and a monthly meeting. The staff development and appraisal systems are satisfactory and results are used to identify annual training needs.

10. The prison has a clear and comprehensive business plan which sets out targets for education and training which are matched with the education contract. The process for the review of targets by senior managers is particularly well developed. There are regular meetings between senior prison staff and the education contractor. In addition to key performance targets there are a number of other targets such as learners' attendance, behaviour and domestic aspects such as access to classes. The targets are reviewed every month and action is taken to deal with areas of concern. The results are then revisited at the next meeting and targets are reset where appropriate. Monitoring of attendance is thorough. In addition to records of non-attendance, the reasons for non-attendance are kept and reviewed regularly. Data are collected on ethnicity and are reviewed at education and prison race relations meeting to ensure that the prison is providing adequate training for speakers of other languages and other personal support.

11. There are strong links with external organisations including other prisons. When learners transfer to other prisons, staff ensure that records of achievements and progress are transferred. This ensures that learners are kept motivated and prevents them from having to duplicate work. There is an effective preparation for release initiative called 'For a Change' which helps learners find accommodation and employment on release. Learners are put in contact with organisations which can give real support for writing a curriculum vitae and job applications. Links with funding agencies such as Jobcentre Plus are established and work is progressing to bring these agencies into the prison on a regular basis. College links are particularly well established. Most learners who are released from HMP Lewes are released in the east Sussex region and benefit from good

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links. Other initiatives include a job point network point which identifies national and international employment opportunities. Staff support learners well with free telephone calls and advice on disclosure issues. Only one terminal is currently working, but there have been a few successes with prisoners getting job interviews.

12. While the management of education and training is satisfactory, the range of education courses is limited. The production workshops provide some work, but it is menial and there are no opportunities for the development of employment skills. NVQs are offered in catering and are managed by experienced staff. However, there is limited specialist support for the assessor. NVQs were offered in PE, but this has stopped due to staff shortages. There are few opportunities for learners to take higher level courses in mathematics or English. Progress onto ICT courses above level 2 is also restricted due to the capacity of some of the IT equipment. Although the library is well stocked, it is only open two days a week.

### **Equality of opportunity**

13. The prison's approach to equality of opportunity is good. HMP Lewes has a comprehensive and effective equal opportunities policy and procedures. The education provision is subcontracted to a local college which also has policies and procedures for ensuring equality of opportunity. The policies are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The prison has many active groups and committees to resolve problems, including quarterly race relations, suicide awareness, anti-bullying, resettlement and health and safety. All staff attend equal opportunities training at their induction. In addition there are two courses currently being held at the prison which college staff are able to attend. One is a diversity awareness course and the other is for staff and learners, called 'pro social modelling'. Its objective is to challenge the different types of offensive behaviour and the use of inappropriate language. Both courses are proving to be successful in increasing awareness.

14. The prison has recently introduced a training programme called the 'family man', which has been extremely successful and has generated some very positive results in attracting learners into education. It uses interesting and interactive drama techniques involving learners re-enacting situations from their home life. The objective is to equip learners with skills to integrate them back into family life. Learners who took part were very positive about the difference it has made in their relationships with their partners and children.

15. The prison is using many effective ways to promote equality of opportunity. Some good examples include a register of officers and learners who speak foreign languages, phrase books being given to staff to help them with learners who do not speak English, a good range of books in large print, foreign languages, adult stories written for different reading abilities and books with stories relative to the readers' culture and background.

16. Specialist external agencies offer good support and learners are trained to become listeners. A consultative committee, which includes representatives from the learners, meets monthly and this has been successful in resolving problems before they impact on learners. The prison has a comprehensive and effective complaints procedure. The college also has a good complaints procedure, which includes an appeals procedure for disagreements on assessment decisions. Learners feel that problems or complaints are dealt with immediately.

17. There are menus produced on a daily basis for vegetarians, pork-free diets and vegan, and any other dietary requests are dealt with by application. All festivals and religious diets are catered for respectfully and there is a multi-faith room. The relationship between staff and learners is extremely respectful. Staff are supportive and the atmosphere is relaxed and safe.

18. There is inadequate access to ICT programmes for learners other than vulnerable prisoners who have restricted mobility. Learners can only access the computer refurbishment workshop which is not ideally suited for the purpose and is only open for three days a week. Also, the development of ICT programmes is severely restricted as the

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emphasis is on computer restoration. The main education centre is situated on the first floor. The education classrooms on the vulnerable prisoners' wing are on the ground floor and are therefore more accessible.

19. There is insufficient access to the library. Due to staff sickness, the library is only open two days a week. On these days it is only open during the day so learners in education have to forego their lessons or work to visit the library. There is limited access to craft classes. However, there is some good outreach work for learners in healthcare and in the vulnerable learner unit.

## Quality assurance

20. The quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. There is a strong focus on quality assurance and continuous improvement in education and training. Course times have been rearranged to suit learners' needs and many of the courses run on a flexible start basis to meet the needs of the changing population. Other improvements include outreach education in healthcare. There is a quality improvement group, which was initially established to work on the prison's self-assessment report. This group is chaired by the head of resettlement and the group collectively prepared the self-assessment report before inspection. The provision managed by the further education college has good systems for ensuring quality of education and training. The head of resettlement has regular meetings with the education manager to discuss performance and areas of development. There are observations of lessons, and findings are recorded and fed back to teachers. This information contributes to the teacher's annual appraisal. Staff development needs are identified and when appropriate, met. All courses and programmes are subject to annual review which is carried out through a learner survey. Staff from all areas of education and training contributed to the self-assessment report and the resulting action plan. The report is very constructive and self-critical. The action plan is detailed and contains realistic target and review dates as well as identifying the staff responsible for each action.

21. The prison's overall quality assurance framework has recently been established but has not been fully implemented. Although communications are good, there is an over-reliance on the quality assurance arrangements of external agencies. The quality assurance arrangements are concerned mainly with contract compliance and monitoring of the prison's key performance targets. Although there is good informal support for the kitchen staff, some of the management of NVQs in catering, such as roles and responsibilities have not been clearly identified. Self-assessment is new to some areas of the prison.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

22. Meals for approximately 500 prisoners are prepared in a kitchen which is also used for training learners. At the time of inspection, the separate kitchen which is designed for teaching cookery as part of the social and life skills programme was not in use. There are six staff in the main kitchen, two prison staff and four civilian instructors. There are 13 learners working in the kitchen, two of whom are working towards an NVQ level 1 in food preparation and cooking. The two prison staff are internal verifiers and one member of civilian staff is a qualified assessor. The kitchen is large and equipped to industry standards. The menu is on a two-week cycle and covers a range of dishes using fresh produce. All learners who are working in the kitchen receive an induction into the kitchen. This involves the development of a training plan based on past experience and also ambitions of the learner. Records of achievement are kept for all learners while working in the kitchen. All assessments take place in the kitchen. Background knowledge classes and basic food hygiene training are carried out in classrooms in the education block. However, these lessons can be delayed due to restricted access to classrooms or staffing constraints preventing the staff from leaving the kitchen. There is no training leading to NVQs in the PE department.

### STRENGTHS

- good retention and achievement rates
- good practical training
- good standard of learners' work

### WEAKNESSES

- insufficient specialist support for the NVQ process
- insufficient support for literacy and numeracy

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- extend initial assessment
- better progress review process

23. The retention and achievement rates are good. In the past 12 months, 17 learners have registered on an NVQ in food preparation and cooking at level 1. Of these, 73 per cent have been retained, and so far 60 per cent have achieved the qualification. Thirteen per cent are still in learning. The achievement of the basic food hygiene

qualification is 100 per cent.

24. Learners who choose to work in the kitchen have a thorough and effective induction which includes the development of an individual learning plan. The plan includes the learner's preferred method of learning, their ambitions and aims. Clear targets are set for completion. All learners are given a record of achievement to be completed whether they are on an accredited course or not. It is a record of all the training and skills they are able to develop while in the kitchen and can be taken with them when they leave. Staff are extremely competent and well qualified. They have a good knowledge of the NVQ system and are constantly developing new ways to enhance the learning experience. The level of practical training is good and covers a wide range of activities. Learners are given the opportunity each week to choose a dish or product they would like to make. If it can be cross-referenced with the qualification they use it as evidence. The main purpose of the activity is to develop the learners' own creativity and to have some fun.

25. The training is well planned and learners are clear about what they have to achieve. Learners are highly motivated and complete much of their written work in their cell after work, often researching subjects over and above what is required. Kitchen staff carry out the basic food hygiene training and learners are awarded a certificate. Health, safety and hygiene training is carried out in great detail. Learners demonstrate a high level of competency in the kitchen and have in-depth knowledge of health and hygiene. Learners make good progress. The longest it has taken to complete a level 1 NVQ is five months. However, due to long-term sickness, current learners have experienced a three-month delay in the training. Assessments are planned and carried out regularly. Reviews take place at least monthly, but do not have specific short-term targets.

26. The standard of learners' work is good. Portfolios contain evidence which is over and above that required for an NVQ at level 1. The tasks and questions are individualised according to the learners' abilities. They are given challenging but achievable tasks to complete and demonstrate good practical skills. Learners are enthusiastic and have a sound knowledge of the theory of cooking.

27. There is no specialist support for the NVQ process. It is unclear who is responsible for the NVQ system and staff working and training in the kitchen are given very little support in the development of the NVQ programme. The kitchen is not an accredited centre and therefore is not always subject to visits from the external verifier. The prison is currently using a college of further education as its accredited centre. However, the college is not contractually required to manage the catering NVQs, but kitchen staff believe the college is responsible for the management. There is no systematic quality assurance of the training in the kitchen. Staff have worked extremely hard to develop the programme and have had little specialist assistance.

28. There is insufficient support for literacy and numeracy in the vocational training areas. All learners are given an initial assessment when first entering the prison, but the results are not routinely passed onto the work areas. The initial assessment identifies

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literacy and numeracy difficulties, but does not take into account prior experience or learning. In most cases, learners have some problems with reading, writing or numbers. Learners have to choose between literacy and numeracy lessons or work. If they choose to work, the responsibility for improving their basic skills falls to the kitchen staff. The staff give support whenever they can by marking assignments, correcting spellings and giving feedback and guidance. They support learning needs by developing individual plans and acting as scribes or readers for those learners who have severe difficulties. However, staff do not have the confidence to train effectively.



## Foundation programmes

29. The foundation provision is good. There is an average of 135 learners on courses each week. The annual roll is 750 with a weekly average of 12 starters and 12 leavers. Qualifications are offered in literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) at entry level and at levels 1 and 2. All key skills are offered at levels 1, 2 and 3. Social and life skills courses in healthy living, drug and alcohol awareness, citizenship, practical craft, reading together, budgeting and money management and art are accredited by the open college network. Outreach courses are available for learners who are in healthcare and the segregation unit. The department is run by an education manager who is supported by five full-time or part-time co-ordinators and 18 part-time teachers. One of the co-ordinators manages the provision for vulnerable prisoners. There is one full-time administrator and a part-time member of staff responsible for guidance. Training takes place in a main education block and in a separate suite of rooms in the vulnerable prisoners' wing, which also has a small IT room. There is a group induction to education every Monday when literacy and numeracy needs are assessed. Each learner has an action plan which details courses and agreed targets. Progress is reviewed every six weeks. The education department achieved the basic skills agency quality mark in March 2003.

### STRENGTHS

- good retention rates
- good and improving achievement rates
- good teaching and learning
- good standards of learners' work
- very supportive relationships between staff and learners

### WEAKNESSES

- inadequate resources in some areas
- insufficient opportunities to progress to higher level courses

### OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

- better access to ICT to support literacy, numeracy and language lessons
- better handouts

30. The retention rates are good on foundation courses. After excluding learners who have been released, bailed or transferred, retention rates average out at 79 per cent

each week. Attendance on all courses is satisfactory and is thoroughly monitored by the department manager every week. Achievement rates are good and have steadily improved over the past two years. For example, during 2000, only one entry-level qualification was achieved in basic or key skills. This has steadily increased to a current total of 49 with one more month of the contract year remaining. Level 1 achievements have increased from four to 47 and level 2 from four to 68. Single-subject IT achievements have increased from 14 to 38 and social and life skills achievements from three to 66. Forty per cent of learners have achieved one or more literacy, numeracy or key skills award and 30 per cent of learners on open college network courses have achieved two or more qualifications. The education department is also meeting or exceeding its prison key performance targets in all areas. For example, the key performance targets for entry level is 36 and achievement to date is 49, the targets for level 2 achievement is 13 and the total to date is 68.

31. The standard of teaching and learning is good. Of the sessions observed, 92 per cent were satisfactory or better. Group sessions are lively, interesting and fun and the subject matter is often stimulating and challenging. Teachers allow a certain amount of freedom of ideas and expression, but keep good discipline and control. There are detailed, thorough lesson plans and schemes of work. Lesson plans are referenced to the relevant qualification and allow for the different levels of ability in each group. Sessions are run flexibly. Initial assessment and progress reviews are satisfactory. The quality of some handouts and learning materials is poor. Some information is out of date and copies are faded and some are difficult to read.

32. Learners' work is good. Examples of work are displayed in classrooms, corridors and throughout the prison. Seventeen learners have had pieces of their work submitted to a foundation for awards for high standards of artistic work produced in prisons. From these, four prizes were awarded to three learners for pottery and one for prose. A book of poems was also published.

33. Relationships between staff and learners are very supportive. Staff are extremely dedicated and committed to education as part of sentence planning and resettlement. There is mutual respect in sessions between group members. Ground rules for behaviour are established and agreed by learners and teachers and these are regularly reinforced. Teachers lend books and language tapes to interested learners. Volunteers who are also prisoners have trained as peer mentors to support learners during basic literacy and numeracy sessions. For example, a 55 year old lorry driver, who was a non-reader, has learned to read with the regular support and help of his mentor. Another has developed reading skills to enable him to cope with interpreting written questions. The support has been so successful that another group of volunteers is in training.

34. There are inadequate resources in some areas. The ICT education block has a variety of equipment of different ages, specifications, memory capacity and quality of software. Approximately 70 per cent of machines are running on out-of-date software, have no CD drives and one is broken. In addition, the scanner is broken and one printer is out of order. Machines are not networked. This limits the scope and levels of

qualifications on offer. The teaching staff make the best use of the available resources, but learners may have to frequently move from one machine to another to use specific software programmes which cannot run on some machines. The ICT equipment in the vulnerable prisoners' unit is of a much better standard, but is still very slow when running modern software. There are three computer workstations in the basic skills classrooms while groups of up to 12 learners may be on courses. The classroom accommodation in most areas is satisfactory. Rooms are big and bright with many examples of posters to stimulate learning. Some furniture is damaged and is not adequate for use with computers. The temporary accommodation on the healthcare wing is less than satisfactory as sessions are run at tables on the landing.

35. The workshop where learners renovate computers for charity organisations is unsuitable and unfit for purpose. It was previously used for construction activities and is cluttered and extremely dirty. The learners who are testing equipment do so in the main working area and have inadequate space to work.

36. There are insufficient opportunities for learners to progress through the levels of qualifications. For example, the levels that ICT learners can achieve in key skills and single subjects are limited by available resources. There have been no level 1 or 2 key skills in IT achieved to date.

#### Good Practice

*A group of 12 learners took part in the 'family man' course. This short intensive course was run over four weeks and was designed to help prisoners improve communications with their families while in prison. Nine learners completed the course and each achieved three qualifications. Coursework was accredited for OCN family relationships, groupwork and teamwork and key skills in communication. Most of the participants have gone on to other education courses.*

#### Poor Practice

*The temporary accommodation in the healthcare unit is not conducive to learning. Tables are set up in the corridor and officers, nursing staff and other prisoners walk past during lessons. This distracts learners who already have attention problems and severely impacts on learning.*