

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Leicester

11 July 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 learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training 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

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.

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Leicester

Contents

Summary

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	1
About the inspection	2
Overall judgement	2
Key findings	2
What learners like about HMP Leicester	7
What learners think HMP Leicester could improve	7
Key challenges for HMP Leicester	8

Detailed inspection findings

Leadership and management	9
Equality of opportunity	11
Quality assurance	12
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	13
Foundation programmes	16

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Leicester (the prison) is a Category B local prison situated near to the centre of the city of Leicester. At the time of the inspection, 347 prisoners were held at the prison, which has an operating capacity of 361. During the inspection week additional prisoners were received at the prison, and it was full at the end of the week. Leicester is a local prison and many prisoners are expected to move on to other prisons or to release, after a relatively short period. The prison does not offer accredited work training. There is a workshop which provides very simple work, such as attaching badges to cards, for approximately 40 prisoners. Other prisoners work as cleaners or orderlies. The education unit offers full-time classes in literacy and numeracy (basic skills) to a maximum of 50 prisoners and provides outreach or distance learning to a further 65 prisoners. There is no education provision for learners other than for those who have basic skills needs, though informal support is provided to two prisoners taking Open University courses. The physical education department offers a range of qualifications in sport and recreation. Most are short, health-related courses, but coaching and weightlifting qualifications are provided.

2. Education, training, and work for prisoners are managed by the head of admissions and regimes, assisted by a principal officer who carries out day-to-day management of the education contract. Education provision is subcontracted to a further education college, which also has contracts with 10 other prisons. The education department employs an education manager, 17 teaching staff and one administrator. The physical education (PE) department has three PE instructors and a senior officer in charge.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

3. The PE department offers a range of short courses, including: a national weightlifting leaders course; step aerobics; football referee training; emergency life support; a distance learning package offered in collaboration with a local college; and manual handling. The manual handling course is provided as part of the prison induction programme, and accounts for a large amount of the certification achieved. There were no learners on training programmes at the time of the inspection. A senior PE officer and three PE officers manage the department. Access to the gymnasium is allocated through a recently introduced computer-based system, which has improved access to recreational PE for all prisoners. Facilities are poor, but well-managed. They consist of a small gymnasium, equipped with cardio-vascular workout machines, a small weights room, and an outside games area suitable for four-a-side soccer or basketball.

Foundation programmes

4. There are 45 full-time learners in the education department. The number of learners on roll varies because of the high turnover of prisoners. There are 67 part-time learners. Three of these are studying by distance learning on the main prison wings because of mobility or emotional difficulties. Two are following Open University programmes by distance learning. Approximately 20 attend evening classes each week. The remainder receive tuition by education outreach teachers in the workshops, the hospital wing or in the vulnerable prisoner unit. The department provides courses in four subjects: information technology (IT), literacy, numeracy, and social and life skills. All full-time students do these courses, which focus on the development of basic skills at entry level and level 1 and level 2. There is also an art class and evening classes in Spanish and business studies.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learner interviews	34
Number of staff interviews	28
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

5. The quality of provision is not adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the leadership and management of education and training at the prison are unsatisfactory. Its equal opportunities arrangements are satisfactory, but quality assurance is unsatisfactory. The training provision in education and physical education is satisfactory.

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

6. Most prisoners do not remain at the prison for long enough to achieve a qualification. The average length of attendance in the education department was only eight days during the month before the inspection. **However, for those who complete their courses, achievement levels are high on foundation programmes. The 2002-03 key prison targets for achievement of basic skills at levels 1 and 2 have been significantly exceeded,** with 106 prisoners achieving basic skills awards during the year. Learners on some courses produce well-structured portfolios, which are of a good standard. **On PE courses, achievement is very high.** Most are short courses such as manual handling. Ninety-eight per cent of learners on PE courses completed them successfully in the year ending May 2003.

Quality of education and training

7. Standards of teaching and learning in the education department are satisfactory. The best teaching engages the interest of learners and meets their individual needs. However, the high turnover of learners makes lesson-planning difficult and there are insufficient strategies in place to deal with this problem. In some classes, teachers base their teaching on generic lesson plans which do not meet individual learners' needs, and there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets to keep learners occupied.

8. In PE, learners develop their knowledge, skills and abilities through a variety of health and fitness-related courses. Sessions are planned to meet learners' specific needs, including those who are physically less able, or who have specific drug problems. Learners are aware of the progress they are making towards their personal learning goals and speak confidently about their personal and social skills development.

9. **Accommodation for learning is poor** at the prison, partly because of the general lack of space. Classrooms are small and cramped, with insufficient space to spread out or display work. PE facilities are old and too small for the number of prisoners. Lack of space limits the range of PE activities that can be offered. However, the staff in the department have given careful thought to ways of making maximum use of the space available and the facilities are very well maintained. Other resources are satisfactory. Teaching staff are generally well qualified and use up-to-date textbooks and worksheets. One classroom has recently been equipped with a suite of new computers, and all classrooms now have at least one computer, though these are not yet used to their full potential.

10. **Assessment at the prison is satisfactory.** All prisoners complete a basic skills test during their prison induction and are assigned to education if their results indicate that they have basic skills needs. In PE, there are good assessment procedures and learners produce well-structured portfolios. **However, there is no formal support for prisoners' literacy or numeracy needs in the PE department.** In education there was particularly good assessment of portfolios on the Family Learning course. There is appropriate internal verification for those courses which require it.

11. **The range of learning opportunities at the prison is inadequate,** particularly for the significant minority of prisoners who remain at the prison for several months or more. There is no work-based learning and no education provision for prisoners who have previously achieved basic skills level 2 qualifications. The education curriculum is not broad or flexible enough. The education department offers four subjects: literacy, numeracy, IT, and life skills. Learners must take all four subjects, regardless of their interests or needs. Learners can also take evening classes in subjects such as Spanish, art, and business studies, but take-up is low because these classes take place at the same time as the prisoners' association activities. A generic preparation for work course has recently been developed jointly between education and prison staff. It aims to improve learners' communication skills and to help them to develop a strategy for learning while

HMP LEICESTER

they are in prison. At the time of the inspection this course was only in its second week, which is too soon to measure its effectiveness.

12. The education department provides tutoring and support for distance learning for approximately 65 prisoners who are unable or unwilling to attend the education unit. Tutors visit the workshop, segregation unit and vulnerable prisoner unit. **Arrangements for distance learning for vulnerable prisoners are particularly effective.** Tutors are experienced and quickly develop a good rapport with learners. However, this service is not available throughout the prison, and there is insufficient tutor time to provide help to all the potential learners.

13. **Learners receive a high level of personal support from their tutors** which benefits their learning and self-esteem. The good rapport between learners and tutors fosters effective two-way communication in training sessions. However, formal arrangements for monitoring learners' progress are inadequate. **Target-setting on some individual action plans is poor.** The plans do not provide guidance or motivation to learners. Learners do not have overall individual learning plans, and although there are plans for each curriculum area these are not always maintained or updated.

Leadership and management

14. **HMP Leicester has effective systems for the allocation of prisoners to education or work.** All new prisoners undertake an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills. The results of the test are used to indicate whether a particular prisoner needs to attend education or not. The prison has instituted a new prisoner allocation and monitoring system. This has speeded up the allocation of new prisoners to education, and improved the match between prisoners' needs and the courses offered.

15. **Prison managers have developed sound education policies for education for the complex and rapidly changing prison population.** Staff at the prison are well aware of these policies and of the importance attached to education and training as a means to resettlement. Funding has been obtained to refurbish the education unit and to add further rooms to increase its capacity. However, these policies operate within a framework of insufficient resources to meet the needs of all learners. Resources are managed efficiently, but there is not enough space or facilities for education, training and work at the prison.

16. The management of equal opportunities is satisfactory. The prison has clear, well-promoted policies. The prison monitors participation by different minority ethnic groups in educational activities. However, access to education is restricted to those learners with basic skills needs. Staff in education have not had diversity training.

17. The prison has no work-based learning. The prison workshop offers only the most basic of tasks, which do not provide any meaningful learning opportunities. Other prisoners work in the kitchens, as cleaners, or as orderlies. There is no accredited training in any of these areas. Many prisoners working in these areas remain at the prison long enough for worthwhile training to be provided for them.

18. **Education accommodation is poor**, as the prison acknowledges in its self-assessment report. The small number of rooms restricts the range of courses offered and the number of prisoners who can attend education. Most classes have waiting lists. Other facilities are also inadequate. Learners must attend the education unit for sessions of up to three hours, but there is no toilet, or drinking water.

19. **The prison does not have enough staff for the education department's outreach provision**, so that many prisoners are not receiving the basic skills support they need. At the time of the inspection 45 learners were receiving individual help in this way. The outreach provision extends to the workshop and vulnerable prisoner unit, but not to learners working in the kitchens or attending courses in the gym. In the workshop, only six of the 40 learners attending can receive instruction, though many others need help with literacy or numeracy skills.

20. Quality assurance of education and training is unsatisfactory. A recently formed quality improvement group has not had time to influence the education and training experience for learners. The contracting college for education has produced a manual of procedures. These are generally well-implemented, but there are areas of non-compliance. Internal verification is satisfactory.

21. The prison does not have an established self-assessment process. Most departments provided a self-assessment report for the inspection which generally gave an accurate account of the provision. However, these were derived entirely from staff contributions and did not show specific evidence for strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors identified more weaknesses in education.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- effective allocation of prisoners to work or education
- clear policies for the development of education at the prison

Weaknesses

- no work-based learning opportunities
- poor education accommodation
- insufficient outreach education
- poor promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity in education
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good achievement of accredited qualifications
- good links with external and prison agencies
- good access to gym for all learners

Weaknesses

- poor facilities
- poor links between education and physical education departments
- insufficient courses appropriate to employment

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- very good achievement of basic skills at level 1 and 2
- good personal support for learners
- effective distance learning for vulnerable prisoners

Weaknesses

- inadequate target-setting on some individual learning plans
- ineffective formal monitoring of learners' progress
- insufficiently broad and flexible curriculum

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HMP LEICESTER:

- good relationships with staff
- good support from tutors
- learning through PE activity
- 'classes exercise your mind'
- opportunities to interact with other prisoners

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HMP LEICESTER COULD IMPROVE:

- number and range of courses
- access to toilets in education accommodation
- the length of teaching sessions - shorter, with breaks in between
- the size of the weights training room
- the resources for art courses

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HMP LEICESTER:

- develop tutorial and monitoring systems in education
- increase the range of accredited courses and training programmes
- increase resources for outreach provision, including the gymnasium
- develop and implement consistent quality assurance arrangements throughout all prison activities
- improve the monitoring and promotion of equality of opportunity in education

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

22. The leadership and management of education, training and work at the prison are unsatisfactory. The management of equality of opportunity is satisfactory, but quality assurance is unsatisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- effective allocation of prisoners to work or education
- clear policies for the development of education at the prison

Weaknesses

- no work-based learning opportunities
- poor education accommodation
- insufficient outreach education
- poor promotion and monitoring of equality of opportunity in education
- incomplete quality assurance arrangements

23. The prison has effective systems to allocate prisoners to education or work, within the constraints of the resources available. All new prisoners have an initial assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills. The results of the test are available on the same day, and are used to indicate whether a particular prisoner needs to attend education or not. The prison has instituted a new prisoner allocation and monitoring system which enables rapid allocation of new prisoners to education; most can start classes in the week after their induction. The system also alerts managers to the build-up of waiting lists for particular classes, and enables the education programme to be altered accordingly. The system has been used to allocate PE sessions fairly, so that all prisoners can benefit from time in the gym.

24. Prison managers have developed sound education policies for the complex and rapidly changing prisoner population. Staff at the prison are well aware of these policies and of the importance attached to education and training as a means to resettlement. Funding has been obtained to refurbish the education unit and add further rooms to increase its capacity. A new computer suite has been installed to provide good teaching resources, and another is scheduled to be installed shortly. These computers will be networked to the library computers, enabling a sharing of learning resources between education and the library. A generic preparation for work course has been established to assist those prisoners who will be moving to training prisons after a short period at Leicester. Courses in adult basic education and English as a second language (ESOL)

HMP LEICESTER

have been made part time in order to increase flexibility and the numbers of learners who will benefit from them. However, these policies operate within a framework of insufficient resources to meet the needs of all learners. The prison manages resources efficiently, but there is insufficient space and facilities for education, training and work at the prison.

25. The links between the prison's management and education are good. There is a written contract which is renewed annually, and progress against the contract is monitored at quarterly meetings with the governor. To support the education manager, a college senior manager visits the department regularly to advise and monitor its work. This manager also attends the contract monitoring meetings.

26. The prison has no work-based learning. The prison workshop offers only the most basic of work tasks, such as rolling posters and putting them into plastic tubes, or attaching novelty badges to cards. This work does not provide any learning or vocational outcomes, except to encourage habits of regular attendance at work. As there is often insufficient work to keep prisoners busy, the work rate is very relaxed and does not replicate that which would be found in industry. Other prisoners work in the kitchens, or as cleaners. The kitchens have been registered as an national vocational qualification (NVQ) training centre with an awarding body, but no action has been taken to enrol learners, or to start structured training. Prisoners working in the kitchen work for an introductory food hygiene certificate. There is no accredited training in industrial cleaning, or for those prisoners who work as orderlies in the library or education office. Many prisoners working in these areas remain at the prison long enough for worthwhile training to be provided.

27. Accommodation for education is poor, as the prison acknowledges in its self-assessment report. There are six teaching rooms, five of which are for 10 students, and one is for six students. One of the larger rooms is used for computer teaching and has a new suite of computers, providing a good teaching resource. An additional room has recently been made available for prisoners on induction to take literacy and numeracy tests and receive an introduction to the education department; however this was not furnished at the time of the inspection. The small number of rooms restricts the range of courses offered and the number of prisoners who can attend education. There are waiting lists for most classes. The rooms themselves are small, so teachers have difficulty moving around them to speak to individual learners. Other facilities are also inadequate. Prisoners have to attend the education unit for sessions of up to 3 hours, but there is no toilet or drinking water available. There is no space in the unit where teachers can work on class preparation or administration.

28. Teachers from the education department provide outreach education to prisoners elsewhere in the prison. At the time of the inspection, 65 prisoners were receiving individual help in this way. The prison does not have sufficient staff for this provision. The outreach education extends to the workshop and vulnerable prisoner unit, but not to prisoners working in the kitchens or attending courses in the gym. In the workshop, only six of the 40 prisoners attending can receive instruction, though many others need help with literacy or numeracy.

29. The prison's support for the development of prisoners' literacy, numeracy and language needs is not satisfactory. Nearly all prisoners have an assessment of their basic skills during their induction week. However, if prisoners are allocated to work, the results of their diagnostic tests are not provided to their supervisors. There is no formal link between these supervisors and the education outreach staff to enable them to reinforce the work of teachers.

Equality of opportunity

30. HMP Leicester has clear policies for equality of opportunity and race and diversity, which are well advertised within the prison, and well understood by staff. There are positive relationships between prisoners and staff in the workshop and education unit. All prisoners have a week-long induction which includes information about the opportunities available to them at the prison and the procedures to follow if they have a complaint. However this induction is not followed-up or re-emphasised in teaching and training programmes. The prison has a diversity committee which is chaired by the governor. Among its activities is the monitoring of participation in education and training by different ethnic groups: a survey was commissioned in 2002 which found that attendance at the various activities was broadly in line with the prison population. There is no education provision for prisoners other than for those with basic skills needs. Although this emphasis is in line with national policy, the complete absence of provision above this level means that access to education in the prison is not available to all.

31. In PE, equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The staff have recently received diversity training and have a good grasp of diversity issues. For those learners with restricted mobility there is good access to the gym and cardio-vascular fitness suite. The less physically able prisoners are encouraged to take part in activities. In education, the results of learners' initial assessment tests are used to place them on the most appropriate course. Teachers try to assist learners individually where possible, but there is insufficient time to provide additional learning support for all who need it. The department does not have fully qualified staff for basic skills and ESOL teaching. However one member of staff is attending a course about dyslexia, in order to be able to offer better service to learners with dyslexia.

32. The management of some aspects of equality of opportunity in education is poor. There is a representative from the education department on the diversity committee, but, because of a regular staff development commitment, they have been unable to attend for almost a year. Staff in education have not received diversity training, though it is available within the prison service staff development programme. Monitoring of diversity is poor. Until recently, there was no monitoring or target-setting in this area. Data about achievements, based on ethnic background have recently been collected and analysed, but the results have not been used for planning or continuous improvement. The prison mounted a major education project during Black History week, but does not actively celebrate diversity in the rest of its work. Access to the education unit is impossible for wheelchair users and others who cannot climb steep steps; however, learners who are unable to attend because of disabilities are provided with outreach teaching.

Quality assurance

33. The quality assurance of education and training at the prison is unsatisfactory. A quality improvement group has been formed, but has not had time to establish itself or have a positive effect on the experience of prisoners. There are no quality assurance procedures associated with the workshop, or PE department. For example, there is no procedure for observation of teaching in the gym. The prison has no programme for observations of assessors, or teaching carried out by PE staff. Staff meetings are held to discuss improvements to the provision, but do not involve self-evaluation or any assessment of the effectiveness of training sessions.

34. In education, there are well-established procedures for quality assurance. The college holds contracts with several other prisons, and has produced a manual of procedures specifically for prison education, based on a nationally recognised framework for quality assurance. Procedures are audited twice each year, and a senior manager from the college visits the prison monthly to monitor the work of the department. The education manager keeps a quality assurance diary to ensure that procedures are carried out at the correct time. The views of prisoners are regularly collected through end-of-course questionnaires and discussed at staff meetings.

35. There is non-compliance with some quality assurance procedures. The system for recording and monitoring the work of learners is frequently not implemented correctly by part-time teachers. The rapid turnover of learners in the department makes it difficult to keep up-to-date records. In some subject areas there is a curriculum leader who can monitor the completion of progress reports, but this is not the case in all areas. Lesson observations are well conducted and provide clear and detailed feedback. However, they are not established as a regular quality assurance process. In 2002-03, no observations were carried out, and only eight of 19 staff have been observed so far this year. The arrangements to meet internal verification requirements are satisfactory.

36. The prison does not have an established self-assessment process, but most departments provided a self-assessment report for the inspection. In general these provided an accurate account of the provision, but they were derived entirely from the views of staff, and did not have sufficient specific evidence for the strengths and weaknesses identified. In education, the self-assessment process is well-established and there are procedures for obtaining the views of learners and teaching staff. The education self-assessment produced a generally accurate view of provision, but was not thorough enough in some instances. For example, the tutorial system was claimed to be a strength of the provision, but inspectors found that no time is set aside for tutorials, they are not properly recorded, and there is no system for monitoring their quality or frequency.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

37. The quality of training in PE is satisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement of accredited qualifications
- good links with external and prison agencies
- good access to gym for all learners

Weaknesses

- poor facilities
- poor links between education and physical education departments
- insufficient courses appropriate to employment

Achievement and standards

38. The PE department achieves good results with accredited qualifications. Most of the courses are short, such as the manual handling course taken by most learners during their induction to the prison. Achievements on these courses are good. During 2002-03, achievement rates were 98.9 per cent. Achievements on longer courses, such as football coaching and weight-lifting are also good. Retention of learners is always an issue because the prison is a local prison and most learners only stay for a short time before being moved to a training prison, or released.

39. Learners develop their knowledge, skills and abilities through a variety of health and fitness-related courses. They are aware of the progress they are making towards their personal learning goals and speak confidently about their personal and social skills development. These include personal confidence levels, team working, planning and independent learning, which have all contributed to improvements in learners' self-esteem. Individual learning plans are clearly drawn up and there is good achievement of set targets. Learners produce good work in their portfolios, which are well organised and carefully compiled, using a variety of evidence sources.

40. At the time of the inspection, no learners were working towards qualifications. A few programmes were scheduled for the inspection week, but these were cancelled because some staff were on sick leave.

Quality of education and training

41. The PE staff team is very well motivated and encourages participation of learners at all levels. Learners take part in PE activities which include football, basketball, weight training and fitness training. The activities form part of a structured programme, which involves courses leading to qualifications. Teaching on these courses is lively and makes use of a variety of methods, achieving a good balance between practical and background knowledge work. This maintains learners' interest in the background knowledge, as well as the sports activity. The staff have good relationships with the learners and use their personal knowledge and experiences effectively to help and support them.

42. The PE accommodation consists of are a small weight training room, which can accommodate 15 learners, a cardiovascular gymnasium, an outside all-weather area and a classroom. The facilities are old and the lack of space restricts the activities offered, but they are well maintained and used to the best advantage. There are three gymnasium orderlies who assist with the cleaning, preparation and maintenance of the facilities and equipment. The staff team has a good range of sport-related qualifications and are able to advise learners about career opportunities. However, none of the PE staff has a teaching qualification, or basic or key skills training to support the learners.

43. Access to sports facilities is good. All prisoners receive an induction to the gym and are encouraged to participate in sport and health programmes. Classes are allocated fairly, so the facilities are not monopolised by the more able, sport-oriented prisoners, but are open to all. Staff have developed links with health and sports agencies in order to improve the curriculum. For example, a link with a local college allows learners who have begun courses to complete them at the college when they are released. Links with health promotion agencies have led to a programme to raise prisoners' awareness of the symptoms and dangers of testicular cancer. The team also provides access to support to prisoners who have rehabilitation or medical needs. PE staff make contacts with the local NHS GP referral scheme, so that the individuals can continue with their recovery once they are released.

44. Learners do not have sufficient opportunities to achieve nationally recognised qualifications which would increase their employability. The selection of courses available at the prison does not comply with the employment requirements for the fitness industry. Some of the qualifications are no longer valid outside the prison service, and will not help prisoners to obtain jobs. The PE department does not offer NVQs even where they could be achieved, for example, by PE orderlies.

45. The links between the education department and PE department are poor. No basic skills support is provided for learners on sport and recreation programmes. Basic and key skills evidence is not collected during the training and assessment of sport and recreation. The PE department recently had a programme called 'Learning through Sport', which involved a member of the education staff working with the PE staff to give learners support. The programme integrated basic and key skills, and achieved 65 basic and key skills awards over a two-year period. Because of a re-organisation of the prison

regime this programme is no longer available, and links with the education department have now ceased.

Leadership and management

46. The PE department is well managed by an enthusiastic senior PE officer. The resources available are used effectively. The organisation and management of the PE sessions ensures that many specific needs of learners are dealt with effectively. Good sessions are provided for the physically less able, and learners with specific drug problems. Assessment and verification procedures are satisfactory, but there is insufficient evidence of the sharing of good practice, either within the PE department, or with other departments such as education.

Foundation programmes

47. The provision of foundation education programmes at the prison is satisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- very good achievement of basic skills at level 1 and 2
- good personal support for learners
- effective distance learning for vulnerable prisoners

Weaknesses

- inadequate target-setting on some individual learning plans
- ineffective formal monitoring of learners' progress
- insufficiently broad and flexible curriculum

Achievement and standards

48. Achievement levels are high on many foundation programmes. Most prisoners do not remain at the prison for long enough to achieve a qualification; the average length of attendance in education was only eight days during the month before the inspection. However, of those who remain longer, most who attend education achieve a foundation or basic skills qualification. Teachers are strongly focused on enabling and encouraging learners to achieve qualifications. The prison has significantly exceeded the 2002-03 key prison targets for achievement of basic skills at levels 1 and 2, and 106 prisoners achieved basic skills qualifications during the year. In the three months to June 2003, 25 prisoners achieved an entry level qualification, 18 achieved a level 1 basic skills qualification and 31 achieved at basic skills level 2.

Quality of education and training

49. Learners receive a high level of personal support from their tutors which helps their learning and self-esteem. The good rapport between learners and tutors allows effective communications in learning sessions. Tutors praise and encourage the learners and success is celebrated. Recent work is displayed in classrooms and corridors, and basic skills certificates are presented at a simple and effective awards ceremony which involves all learners. Tutors are approachable and willing to give of their time outside classroom sessions. Learners enjoy attending classes. Prisoners are given a basic skills test during their induction to the prison and the results are used to determine the level of education provision required. They are then allocated to full-time education as soon as places are available. Learners are quickly settled into classes. Satisfactory guidance is given about

progression routes through basic skills qualifications and Life Skills Open College Network (OCN) accreditation opportunities.

50. The education department provides distance learning tutoring and support for those prisoners who are unable or unwilling to attend the education unit. Arrangements for distance learning for vulnerable prisoners are particularly effective. A teacher visits this unit each day to provide individual or small-group tuition, and each learner is seen at least once each week. The teachers' response to learners' learning needs is sympathetic and effective. New learners quickly establish themselves on their learning programmes, using textbooks, worksheets and other learning materials supplied by the education department. The good relationships established between the learner and tutor provide a sound basis for the learner to work in a self-directed way. At each session, realistic but challenging targets are set for the next session. These are flexible enough to accommodate the personal difficulties common to vulnerable prisoners, which might affect their ability to make progress between the weekly tutorial visits.

51. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory; but the high turnover of learners creates lesson-planning difficulties. Teachers may not know which learners will be in their classes until the start of the session. The prison does not have enough strategies in place to resolve these difficulties. In some areas of work, teachers base their teaching on generic lesson plans which do not meet individual learners' needs. Although there is some challenging and thoughtful teaching, in most classes there is an over-reliance on the use of worksheets and not enough innovation. Some schemes of work are detailed and matched with the basic skills core curriculum. Others do not have clear and relevant overall aims and objectives. There is a satisfactory choice of options in life skills but the delivery of the programme is mainly through individual work on written modules. Although this offers a route to accreditation, there are insufficient opportunities for learning through group work activities. Teaching methods were identified as a strength in the recent self-assessment report.

52. Staff use a satisfactory range of teaching resources. There is some over-use of textbooks and worksheets in basic skills lessons, but resources are up to date and some differentiated learning materials are in regular use. Teaching staff are generally well qualified in their subject areas and most have a teaching qualification. However, some staff teaching basic skills do not have an appropriate teaching qualification and of those who have, it is generally the basic, introductory qualification. Teaching accommodation is cramped. Teachers cannot move easily around the classrooms to deal with the individual needs of learners. Access to the education centre is by a flight of stairs, making it difficult for those with restricted mobility, though distance learning is available. The shortage of up-to-date computers identified in the self-assessment report has been resolved. One classroom has been equipped with a networked suite of new computers, and all classrooms now have at least one computer. However, these are not yet used to their full potential. There is not enough specialist software, particularly for basic skills diagnosis and learning, and teachers have not had training in how to use computers successfully in their subject areas.

53. Some of the target-setting in some individual action plans is inadequate. Poor

examples contain neither targets nor completion dates and are not effective in planning learning to meet individual learners' needs. However, others have clear and relevant targets matched with the basic skills core curriculum, or cross-referenced to the required learning outcomes. These are usually checked and signed off so that the learner and teacher have a clear indication that the required learning has been completed. In general, learning plans are fragmented, because each learner has a separate action plan for each subject. There is insufficient time for cross-referencing these plans, so it is difficult to judge the overall progress of individual learners. Good practice is not shared sufficiently to promote a consistent approach to the use of learning plans throughout the department.

54. The curriculum is not broad enough or flexible enough. The education department offers four subjects, literacy, numeracy, IT, and life skills. Learners are placed in classes according to their test results in literacy. They must then take all four subjects at that level, regardless of individual needs. A new policy allocates learners to classes according to scores in both literacy and numeracy tests, but the system is too new to have had any significant effect. Some learners are still allocated to an inappropriate level in numeracy classes, on the basis of their scores in literacy tests. There are no programmes above level 2. Some learners attend level 2 classes, particularly in literacy, even though their initial assessment test has identified them as being above this level. Two learners are currently in Open University programmes. They are fully supported with fees and resources, but the initial advice and guidance came from other prisoners, rather than from the education department. A good deal of effective informal support and assistance is given by tutors to these learners. Recreational classes in business, art, Spanish and IT are offered on three evenings each week. Attendance is often poor because these classes clash with other prisoner association activities.

Leadership and management

55. Leadership and management in the foundation area of learning are satisfactory. Clear strategic direction is provided by the college and there are appropriate policies and procedures to guide the day-to-day operational management of the education provision. Regular staff meetings provide a useful forum for discussion and development. Part-time teachers who are unable to attend the meetings can complete a 'staff perception' form to ensure that their views are considered. There are two full-time subject co-ordinators who have produced good schemes of work and sample lesson plans. These have not always been effectively shared with hourly paid staff. An effective database for recording achievement has recently been established. It is too new to have had a significant effect on curriculum management and development-planning.

56. Internal verification is satisfactory. There is a procedural manual which gives clear guidelines for sampling and recording. There is currently only one qualified member of staff to internally verify portfolios, because another qualified member of staff has left. Temporarily, some portfolios have to be verified by a member of staff who has no internal verification qualifications. The self-assessment report satisfactorily analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Inspectors identified some of the same strengths and weaknesses and additional ones.