

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Erlestoke

07 April 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
- **learndirect** 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 Erlestoke

Contents

Summary

| | |
|---|---|
| Description of the provider | 1 |
| Scope of provision | 1 |
| About the inspection | 2 |
| Overall judgement | 2 |
| Key findings | 3 |
| What learners like about HMP Erlestoke | 8 |
| What learners think HMP Erlestoke could improve | 8 |
| Key challenges for HMP Erlestoke | 9 |

Detailed inspection findings

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Leadership and management | 10 |
| Equality of opportunity | 12 |
| Quality assurance | 12 |
| Construction | 14 |
| Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel | 17 |
| Health, social care & public services | 20 |
| Foundation programmes | 22 |

INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Erlestoke is a Category C training prison situated in a rural area near Devizes, Wiltshire. There are 374 prisoners at the prison, which has an operating capacity of 380. The prison has undergone significant expansion in the last two years. The prison's education unit offers classes in basic skills and key skills, often taught through the medium of practical subjects such as cookery, carpentry, or pottery making. There is support for prisoners taking Open University courses. There are two small programmes offering work-based learning in painting and decorating, and industrial cleaning. Most prisoners are employed in jobs without accredited training, such as light assembly, cleaning, garden maintenance and computer data entry. The education department has one member of staff who offers some support to prisoners in workshops and training programmes. The physical education (PE) department offers qualifications in sport and recreation.

2. Education, training, and work for prisoners are managed by the prison governor designated head of regimes. There is a prison officer who has recently taken responsibility for the operation of the workshops. Each training workshop is managed by an instructor. The education department is subcontracted to a local college, which also has a contract with another prison in the region. The education department employs a manager, five full-time and 12 hourly-paid part-time teaching staff, and an administrative assistant. The training workshops employ six instructors, and the PE department has five PE instructors and a senior officer in charge.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Construction

3. Training is provided for eight learners in painting and decorating and nine in carpentry and joinery leading to vocational qualifications at level 1. Learners attend the workshops for four and a half days a week to enhance their practical skills and gain the required background knowledge. There is one instructor in each area; both are qualified to instruct, teach and assess learners. The painting and decorating instructor is also a qualified internal verifier. Most learners have to wait no longer than a few weeks to gain a place on these courses.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

4. There are 18 learners on the prison's vocational training programmes in sport. Learners can participate in a range of PE activities including basketball, volleyball, football, badminton, and fitness, circuit and weight training. Accommodation comprises a small sports hall, a weight training and cardio-vascular room, a classroom and an all-weather outdoor cricket strip and five-a-side football pitch. There is one senior physical education officer and four physical education officers. Learners can work towards coaching awards in weight lifting and community sports, qualifications in first aid and manual handling, or a national vocational qualification (NVQ) in sport and recreation at level 1. Four learners are currently working towards this award and twelve are attending the physical education development course. All attend full time.

Health, social care & public services

5. There are 14 learners on industrial cleaning programmes. Two attend half time, the others for four and a half days a week. In the industrial cleaning unit, learners are working towards a qualification in cleaning science. This is based on assessments of practical tasks and has three levels. Learners receive some training and assessment in real working situations within the prison.

Foundation programmes

6. Foundation learners attend the education unit full or part time. There are 39 learners attending morning sessions only, 61 attending afternoon sessions only, and 40 attending full time. Lessons are offered for 24 hours a week for 50 weeks a year. The focus of the department is on the development of literacy and numeracy skills at entry level and key skills at level 2. Key skills are an integral part of the pottery, art, cookery and information and communications technology (ICT) programmes. An outreach service has been established to provide literacy and numeracy support for learners on vocational training programmes and for individual learners who lack the confidence to attend group lessons. The Firm Start programme is offered to learners who are considering setting up their own businesses after release. It provides basic information on business practices and helps learners to develop a business plan.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

| | |
|------------------------------|----|
| Number of inspectors | 4 |
| Number of inspection days | 17 |
| Number of learner interviews | 60 |
| Number of staff interviews | 32 |

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

7. 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. Education and training provision is satisfactory for those who receive it, and is good in construction and industrial cleaning.

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

8. **Construction learners produce a good standard of work.** They carry out a wide range of tasks in the workshops to good industrial standards. Learners produce well-presented and structured portfolios. Achievement rates are good for carpentry and joinery learners. Of 15 learners who took part in the course between June 2002 and April 2003, 66 per cent achieved their learning goal. Achievement data for painting and decorating learners are not collected or analysed systematically. It is not possible to make meaningful judgements on them.

9. **Achievement rates on foundation programmes are satisfactory.** The prison service sets targets for the number of qualifications gained. HMP Erlestoke's education department has exceeded these. Learners' achievement rate for basic skills awards has been higher than for key skills qualifications.

10. **The standards achieved by learners on PE courses are high.** The rate of achievement in individual coaching qualifications is high, but few learners gain an NVQ.

Quality of education and training

11. Ninety-one per cent of learning sessions observed by inspectors were graded satisfactory or good.

12. **Practical training in construction is good.** The training programmes are well designed with good training materials to help learners complete tasks effectively. Practical skills, background knowledge and industrial applications are integrated effectively and learners can see their relevance to their training.

13. **Resources for painting and decorating courses are good. Woodworking machines for carpentry and joinery training are dated but satisfactory for the course.** Training rooms are small and spread out, which makes individual supervision difficult at times. There are not enough specialist resources such as books, ICT equipment, videos and trade journals in workshop areas. Workshop facilities for industrial cleaning are inadequate for tutors to carry out realistic demonstrations or for learners to practise and develop their skills. Resources for PE are unsatisfactory. There is insufficient space, and the prison has recently lost its outdoor playing areas to new building work. The fitness room has inadequate lighting and ventilation and is sometimes overcrowded. There are plans to remedy some of these problems.

14. **There is effective support for learners.** Problems are dealt with quickly and sympathetically. Learners are given specific work tasks and responsibilities in their training programmes and this improves their confidence and motivation. A member of staff from the education department visits some of the workshops to provide literacy and numeracy support, though this is not enough to meet the needs of all prisoners who need it. Learners do not all get regular structured progress reviews. In most areas of learning there is no systematic reviewing of learners' past work, planning of future training, or setting of realistic and meaningful targets to help them progress.

15. **Training programmes offer insufficient work experience.** Although workshop resources are satisfactory there are too few opportunities for learners to practise their skills in real working conditions. Learners carry out some real work in the prison, but it is infrequent and not properly structured as part of the training.

16. In the industrial cleaning department there are **good assessment practices.** Assessments are carried out by the instructor or one of three orderlies, all of whom are qualified assessors. Assessment is carried out in an unobtrusive manner with good questioning at pertinent times. Good verbal and written feedback is given and the recording and monitoring paperwork is good. At any time, learners know what they have achieved to date and what they need to do to achieve their intended goal.

17. **In sport, the induction process for all learners is thorough.** Health and safety is given priority and all learners have a medical examination before they participate in their first activity session. The induction is realistic, meaningful and maintains the interest of most learners.

18. **Teaching on most foundation and education programmes is good.** Tutors prepare materials that engage the learner, and there is a good mix of practical tasks and background knowledge. Good use is made of real-world examples such as money transactions to increase learners' confidence and achievement. Learners' rate of progress from entry level 1 to entry level 3 is good. The achievement of accreditation is a boost to learners' confidence and encourages them to continue with their learning.

Leadership and management

19. **The prison management has made a strategic commitment to improving the range and quality of education and training at the prison.** However, these strategies are too new for their effectiveness to be judged. The prison population has increased significantly in the past two years, but this has not been matched by increased learning opportunities. Less than one third of prisoners are in education or work training; most are in work which provides little scope for skills development. Pay rates within the prison are much higher for work without training.

20. **The management style is open and communication with prison staff is effective.** Staff understand and support the strategies for improving education and training provision. However there is insufficient communication between departments in the

prison and little sharing of good practice.

21. The contracting college has not fully implemented its procedures for quality assurance and staff development at the prison. The day-to-day management of the education department is satisfactory, but uncertainty over its long-term management structure has held up improvements to programmes.

22. Quality assurance procedures are unsatisfactory. There are no established quality assurance procedures for training. Self-assessment was introduced just before the inspection. Learners' views on their programmes are collected, but not analysed to provide action points for improvement.

23. Internal verification is satisfactory in both education and training. In industrial cleaning, portfolios are well referenced to awarding-body standards, but in most areas the recording of achievement is less effective.

24. There is poor leadership and management of training programmes. Most workshops have only one instructor, with no contingency plan for staff absence. There is little sharing of experience between staff from different workshops. A training co-ordinator has recently been appointed but has not yet had time to make an impact on the provision.

25. There are few opportunities for learners to make progress. Most training only extends to level 1 qualifications. In education there is provision to level 2, but not to level 3. This particularly affects long-term prisoners.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- strong management focus on the development of education and training
- good information technology resources
- good internal communications

Weaknesses

- insufficient accredited training
- low rates of pay for learners in education and training compared to those for work without training
- inadequate focus by subcontracted college on managing prison education
- insufficient links between education, training and library
- little promotion of equality of opportunity
- weak quality assurance of education and training

HMP ERLESTOKE

- inadequate resources for education and training in some areas

Construction

Strengths

- good achievement rates in carpentry and joinery
- good standards of work by learners
- good practical training
- good use of resources in painting and decorating
- effective support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient work experience for learners
- insufficient reviews of learners' progress
- poor leadership and management in painting and decorating

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- effective development of individual learners
- thorough induction
- good teaching
- good management of the department

Weaknesses

- low NVQ achievement rate
- poor access to initial assessment information
- insufficient resources to meet learners' needs
- ineffective quality assurance of training, teaching and assessment

Health, social care & public services

Strengths

- good achievement rates
- good practical training
- comprehensive and effective assessment process

Weaknesses

- poor progression routes for learners
- insufficient space in training workshop

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good teaching in most lessons
- good portfolio development on Firm Start programme
- effective use of post-induction course to encourage participation in education
- very good integration of key skills training with training in pottery and cookery

Weaknesses

- over-dependence on a narrow range of teaching methods in a minority of classes
- some unsatisfactory resources
- dull and uninspiring teaching areas
- insufficient outreach support for basic skills

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HMP ERLESTOKE:

- the instructors' training methods and support
- the industrial nature of the course and its relevance to intended occupation on release
- the additional support from instructors in the practical workshops, and the integration of literacy, numeracy, and language teaching with their practical instruction
- being given respect and responsibility within the training programme
- the new IT suite
- very good help with reading and number skills

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HMP ERLESTOKE COULD IMPROVE:

- the pay differential between education, training and some commercial projects within the prison
- the lack of progression routes on completion of training
- the lack of PE sessions and outdoor sports
- the flexibility of activities to allow learners to work in well-paid employment as well as attending lessons
- the number of vocational training programmes which lead to employment opportunities
- the accuracy of the information prisoners are given about Erlestoke's work-based training opportunities before they transfer there
- the provision of ESOL programmes

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HMP ERLESTOKE:

- to increase the range of training and education offered to prisoners
- to clarify management arrangements for the education department
- to improve facilities for education and training
- to increase the links between the different components of the prison regime
- to improve the quality assurance process in both education and training

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

26. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory while quality assurance arrangements are unsatisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- strong management focus on the development of education and training
- good information technology resources
- good internal communications

Weaknesses

- insufficient accredited training
- low rates of pay for learners in education and training compared to those for work without training
- inadequate focus by subcontracted college on managing prison education
- insufficient links between education, training and library
- little promotion of equality of opportunity
- weak quality assurance of education and training
- inadequate resources for education and training in some areas

27. The new management team at HMP Erlestoke demonstrates a strong commitment to improving the range and quality of learning opportunities at the prison, in order to improve prisoners' prospects of rehabilitation and employment on release. Education and training have a high priority in the prison's quality improvement strategy for 2003-2006, which sets out clear targets for increased participation and achievement of qualifications. As part of the strategy, the training provision has been reviewed to identify opportunities to increase the achievement rate. Some work patterns have been amended to allow part-time working with part-time education. Training programmes in painting and decorating have been shortened in order to enable more prisoners to gain a qualification.

28. The information technology resources are good. A workshop where prisoners worked on data entry tasks without training has been re-organised to allow computer training to take place. Managers have submitted bids for funding to improve training facilities. Shortly before the inspection, a new computer suite was installed, providing an excellent training resource and enabling the education department to widen the range of computing courses offered. Computer resources at the prison are now very good.

The prison has also submitted and won a half-million pound bid to extend training facilities so as to offer courses in plumbing as well as painting and decorating.

29. There are good internal communications at HMP Erlestoke. The quality improvement strategy is well known and understood by staff. Heads of sections attend a daily briefing with the governor and hold section meetings at least once a month. These meetings are effective in keeping staff informed about progress with the strategy. The senior management team regularly monitors progress with the development of education and training through a standing item on their meeting agenda. However, there is not enough communication between departments and insufficient sharing of good practice. Prisoners transferring to Erlestoke from other prisons are not always given accurate information about the amount of work-based learning available.

30. Too few prisoners are able to gain qualifications through education or vocational training. For those who do, there are few opportunities to progress beyond a basic level. There are 34 full-time, and 65 part-time learners. There are 38 places on vocational training programmes, including 18 places on the PE training course, but there are 199 places in work without accredited training, most of which are full time. In several areas, such as the kitchens, and grounds maintenance, the prison has plans to offer new training opportunities in the near future. Most prisoners, however, carry out repetitive unskilled assembly work, which does little to develop their skills. The rate of pay for these unskilled jobs is high by prison standards, and can be up to four times higher than the rate for attending education. This large differential between pay rates discourages many prisoners from attending education or training.

31. Management of some aspects of the education provision by the subcontracting college is weak. The department is led by a temporary education manager due to long-term sickness of the manager. Until recently the qualification aims of prisoners were not aligned with prison service targets. This has now been changed and the achievement of qualifications by prisoners has improved. The prison's key performance targets have been met. The acting manager has a significant teaching load. The college's policies and procedures in areas such as staff development, appraisal, and quality assurance are not fully implemented. Staff express uncertainty over the future management of the department, and are not aware of any college strategy for the development of provision at the prison. The appraisal system has not operated in the current academic year, and opportunities for staff development are limited. For example, there has been no recent diversity training for education staff to enable them to keep up with changes in the law and college procedure. There is no agreed staff development plan for the department. The college has a tutorial policy but does not implement it at the prison. Course tutors are expected to provide pastoral support for learners but have no time available for them to do this. The department was not able to provide reliable data on the past achievements of learners.

32. There are no links between the library and the education department which might be used to support literacy development. The prison's approach to supporting the development of prisoners' literacy, numeracy and language needs is not satisfactory. Nearly all prisoners have a basic skills assessment during their induction week. Most

then go on to a week-long course in the education department, where their ability is further assessed and they are given 'taster' sessions to familiarise them with the education opportunities available. This course is effective in persuading many prisoners who have literacy or numeracy difficulties to stay with the education department. However, if prisoners choose to go to training or work, the results of their diagnostic tests are not passed on to their instructors. There is a small amount of education outreach into training and work areas by one member of staff, but it is poorly co-ordinated with workshop staff and does not reach most prisoners. The only provision for learners for whom English is an additional language is one volunteer helper.

Equality of opportunity

33. There is little promotion of equality of opportunity through education and training programmes. HMP Erlestoke has a well-documented commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity. Statements of this commitment appear on notice boards all over the prison. There is a culture of respect for individuals at the prison, which contributes to good relationships generally between prisoners and staff. All prisoners are given an induction which includes information about their rights and those of others. However this induction is not followed up or reinforced in education or training programmes. The prison has recently embarked on a programme of diversity training which will eventually be attended by all staff. Some training instructors have attended this training, but none of the tutors from the education department have done so. The prison participated in a week of events to celebrate diversity, but has not actively sustained this approach.

34. The prison carefully monitors the groups of prisoners in education, training and work to identify any imbalances in the participation of different ethnic groups. The statistics are reported to its race relations management team, which meets quarterly. The meeting is chaired by the deputy governor and includes prisoners' representatives. All prisoners who wish to attend education may do so, though some classes, such as carpentry, do have a waiting list. The prison's site and range of buildings make it very difficult to provide access for prisoners with restricted mobility, and few such prisoners are sent to Erlestoke. Equality of access to information is weak. Most of the literature used to promote courses and learning programmes is written for an audience of readers at level 2 or above. Many prisoners have much lower literacy levels.

Quality assurance

35. The prison's quality assurance of training is poorly developed. There is no formal system for reviewing the performance of the training workshops. A quality assurance improvement group has been established, but has not yet had time to make an impact. Most training is satisfactory or good, but there are no systems which would allow managers to monitor its quality. For example, there is no system for observing training, or for analysing the results and setting targets for achievement.

36. In education there are well-established procedures for quality assurance, derived from those of the contracting college. These include lesson observations, regular boards of study to monitor progress, and course reviews, as well as the self-assessment process.

However, the procedures were not being fully applied. Lesson observations were carried out just before the inspection, but there were the first in the current academic year. The views of learners are not systematically used to inform improvement strategies. The course review process lacks rigor and has not produced significant improvements in recent times.

37. The prison initiated a self-assessment process in the months leading up to the inspection. It did not produce an overall report, but looked separately at every aspect of education and training activity at the prison. The reports gave a generally accurate picture of the prison and identified many of the strengths and weaknesses reported by inspectors. The writing of the report drew on the experience of a wide range of staff. In education, staff in each curriculum area were given the opportunity to comment on a draft report produced by the education manager, and some did so. An action plan has been drawn up from the points raised in the self-assessment reports. The arrangements to meet internal verification requirements are satisfactory in training and key skills education.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

38. Training in construction is good.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement rates in carpentry and joinery
- good standards of work by learners
- good practical training
- good use of resources in painting and decorating
- effective support for learners

Weaknesses

- insufficient work experience for learners
- insufficient reviews of learners' progress
- poor leadership and management in painting and decorating

Achievement and standards

39. Achievement rates are good for carpentry and joinery learners. Of 15 learners who took part in the course between June 2002 and April 2003, 10 achieved their intended goal. Achievement data in carpentry are well recorded. In painting and decorating achievement data are not systematically analysed. The instructor collects the data in notebook form. Since learners start at different times, it is difficult to make meaningful judgements on their achievement rate.

40. Learners produce good work. A wide range of tasks is carried out in the workshops to good industrial standards. Learners produce well-presented and structured portfolios. The evidence is clear and in some cases cross-referenced to the awarding body standards. There are well-produced learning materials, which give a clear indication of what work is required and to what standard.

Quality of education and training

41. Practical training in construction is good. The training programmes are well developed and good training materials are used. Most instruction is given individually. Learners have very good working relationships with the instructor. They are enthusiastic and highly motivated to take responsibility for their training and achieve their intended

goal. Practical skills, background knowledge and industrial applications are effectively integrated, and learners can see their relevance to their training.

42. In painting and decorating there are good resources. Learners have a dedicated work cubicle in which to carry out their training exercises and have their work assessed. They value this exclusive use and take pride in the work they produce. Each learner has their own set of tools and there are sufficient painting and decorating consumable materials. However, there are not enough specialist resources such as books, ICT equipment, videos and trade journals in the workshops. In carpentry and joinery, resources are satisfactory. There are sufficient hand tools in good repair. Woodworking machines are dated but satisfactory to develop learners' skills and fulfil the requirements of the course. Training rooms are spread out, which makes individual supervision difficult at times.

43. There is effective support for learners. Problems are dealt with quickly and sympathetically. As part of their training, learners are given specific work tasks and responsibilities. This improves their confidence and motivation. Training is often given individually. Learners' introduction to the basic skills of painting and decorating and carpentry and joinery is good. Many learners have no previous experience or qualifications of any kind. The support they are given increases their motivation and desire to succeed. Staff from the education department visit the workshops to provide additional learning support and key skills training. This is integrated with the vocational core subjects. Two learners are receiving additional support.

44. There is insufficient work experience for construction learners. Although resources in the workshop area are good, there are too few opportunities for learners to practise the good skills they have acquired in real working conditions. Learners carry out some real work in the prison, but it is infrequent and not properly structured.

45. Learners have too few regular structured progress reviews. Learners' progress is well recorded and monitored, but there is no process to review learners' past work, plan for future training, and set targets to assist their progress. Formal progress reviews are only carried out when a learner progresses to the intermediate craft award. These reviews are scheduled at six-month intervals, which is too infrequent for effective monitoring. The carpentry and joinery tutor has a tutorial period in the weekly timetable at which there is some reviewing of learners' progress. However, there is little target-setting. Assessment is carried out frequently and is fair and accurate. There is satisfactory paperwork for recording assessment details and learners can access this when necessary. A member of staff from another prison carries out internal verification. Internal verification procedures and practices are satisfactory and are carried out in a formative manner.

Leadership and management

46. There is poor leadership and management of painting and decorating programmes. There is no monitoring of the work done in the training workshop, and no clear direction for the development of the provision. A co-ordinator has recently been appointed but there has yet to be a meeting to discuss the management of the programme. There is

HMP ERLESTOKE

some confusion about the exact roles and responsibilities of management.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

47. Training in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel is satisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- effective development of individual learners
- thorough induction
- good teaching
- good management of the department

Weaknesses

- low NVQ achievement rate
- poor access to initial assessment information
- insufficient resources to meet learners' needs
- ineffective quality assurance of training, teaching and assessment

Achievement and standards

48. For a few learners there is good progression and significant achievement. Those who attend rehabilitation and start at a low level of personal fitness or who have a drug dependency problem can develop a range of skills and achieve a healthier lifestyle. However, the NVQ achievement rate is low. Between April 2002 and March 2003, four learners gained NVQs at level 1. Staff shortages during this period meant that NVQ courses did not always operate. Achievement rates for the qualification in sports leadership are also low. The achievement rate for the weightlifting, heart start, kinetic lifting and open college network awards is excellent. Most have a 100 per cent pass rate. Portfolios of work demonstrate the high level of learners' knowledge and understanding, and their performance ability. The portfolios are well structured but contain too few assessment or internal verification records, making it difficult to judge the validity and authenticity of evidence.

Quality of education and training

49. There is effective development of individual learners. Physical education officers develop positive working relationships with learners. They encourage and motivate them to increase their fitness levels and extend their range of skills. High standards are set and demonstrated by the staff. Learners receive individual attention in most teaching sessions. Specific targets are set for learners and then monitored, and some learners make immense progress. Learners who attend the physical education development

HMP ERLESTOKE

course are required to coach other learners, lead practical sessions and teach background knowledge sessions, supported by the staff.

50. The induction process for all learners is thorough. Health and safety is given priority and all learners have a medical examination before they participate in their first activity session. The delivery of induction is realistic, meaningful and maintains the interest of most learners. A variety of teaching techniques is used to motivate learners and each session is conducted in an appropriate environment. The learners take part in a useful individual interview which enables them to plan, with staff, an appropriate individual programme.

51. Teaching and training is good. In both background knowledge and practical sessions staff maintain learners interest throughout. Information is delivered at a pace that stimulates discussions and motivates learners. Learning is enhanced by good quality resources and teaching aids. Staff use good questioning techniques to probe learners' understanding of a subject and draw into discussions the quieter, less-confident learners. All instructors are knowledgeable and very experienced and act as good role models to the learners. Sessions are prepared in advance but are not always well documented or thoroughly evaluated. There is little sharing of best practice among staff.

52. Information about individual learner's needs is often missing when critical programme decisions are made. Lack of information about learners' prior achievement may lead to them repeating awards or being placed at the wrong course level. The training department does not receive results of diagnostic tests conducted by the education department. Learners' specific language, communication and numeracy needs can remain unidentified. Staff are not confident about teaching key skills and do not include them in the objectives of most sessions. Individual learning plans are set and monitored but too little evaluation or detail is recorded. Targets are not always specific to the individual learner, and the same targets appear on many training plans.

53. There are insufficient resources to meet learner' needs. Recent staff and accommodation shortages have reduced participation in sport at the prison, and have affected the success of the department. Outdoor playing areas have been lost as a result of building work. The indoor accommodation is small and needs refurbishment. Some sessions in the fitness room are overcrowded and there is inadequate lighting and ventilation. Waiting lists exist for most sessions and many learners are frustrated with the lack of physical education opportunities. Some of these problems have recently been dealt with, for example, by the appointment of additional PE instructors. There are plans to deal with some of the accommodation problems.

Leadership and management

54. The department is managed well. Roles and responsibilities are clear and individual staff are accountable for specific schemes. Individual staff manage their time well. There are thorough programme reviews and these have recently led to changes in programme delivery. Staff are able to contribute to the programme's development and are encouraged to try new ideas. The department has plans and proposals for its future

growth.

55. Quality assurance of training, teaching and assessment is poor. There is no formal system to monitor tutors' performance or share good practice. Insufficient use of lesson plans and records hinders accurate monitoring of progress and the evaluation of teaching styles. Learners' portfolios contain no records of assessment or verification. There is too much reliance on signed forms to authenticate and validate learners' work. Marking does not adequately identify errors in learners' work and includes few comments to aid progress. Internal verification of learners' portfolios of evidence is insufficiently planned and there are no standardisation meetings. There is no planned sample regime to enable assessors' consistency to be checked.

Health, social care & public services

56. Training in health, social care and public services is good.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement rates
- good practical training
- comprehensive and effective assessment process

Weaknesses

- poor progression routes for learners
- insufficient space in training workshop

Achievement and standards

57. Achievement rates in industrial cleaning are good. Between June 2002 and February 2003, there was an average of 12 learners on programme. These learners worked towards a qualification in cleaning science at level 1, 2 or 3. There were 29 accredited achievements at level 1 or 2 and four at level 3. Three prisoner orderlies have achieved level 3 qualifications in the past 12 months and also gained assessors' awards.

Quality of education and training

58. There is good practical training in industrial cleaning. Clear, well-presented demonstrations help learners to understand methods of work and develop good skills. The instructor promotes a safe working environment by strongly emphasising health and safety. Learners take notes during the demonstration to use for reference when practising the demonstrated skills. All learners are keen and highly motivated to succeed. The instructor makes good use of industrial applications to support the practical work. Orderlies who have previously gained qualifications help the instructor by carrying out training and demonstrations.

59. The assessment process is comprehensive and effective. Assessments are carried out by the instructor or one of three orderlies, all qualified assessors. Learners and assessors agree assessments beforehand, so the learner is well prepared and knows what to expect. The assessment is carried out in an unobtrusive manner with good questioning at pertinent times throughout the assessment. Good verbal and written feedback is given to the candidate and a dialogue is established. There are very good recording and tracking documents. Learners have one copy and others are displayed in

workshop and classroom areas. At any time, learners know their achievements to date and what they need to do to achieve their intended goal.

60. There is poor progression for learners in industrial cleaning. On completion of levels 1 to 3 of the industrial cleaning course, learners have no real progression routes available to them. Most are keen and highly motivated to succeed and can see the relevance of their training to future sustainable employment in this area, but there are no further, relevant qualifications they can take.

61. Training is carried out in a small workshop area. There is insufficient space for demonstrations or for learners to practise and develop their skills. Demonstrations and training can only be carried out in one of three small sectioned-off areas. These do not reflect industrial situations. There is a limited range of floor coverings for learners to practise on.

62. There is good personal support for learners from the instructor and his three assistants. Learners are very appreciative of this. Staff from the education department visit the section for half a day each week to provide additional learning support and key skills training. Learners' needs are not systematically identified and it is often the learner who asks for additional support. Not all learners attend the key skills workshops.

Leadership and management

63. The industrial cleaning unit is managed satisfactorily. There are clear lines of management and staff know and understand their roles and responsibilities. The instructor has a delegated budget with which to manage the workshop. There are few meetings to discuss issues and plan for future developments.

Foundation programmes

64. Training in foundation programmes is satisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good teaching in most lessons
- good portfolio development on Firm Start programme
- effective use of post-induction course to encourage participation in education
- very good integration of key skills training with training in pottery and cookery

Weaknesses

- over-dependence on a narrow range of teaching methods in a minority of classes
- some unsatisfactory resources
- dull and uninspiring teaching areas
- insufficient outreach support for basic skills

Achievement and standards

65. Data on retention and achievement rates supplied by the education centre are not very reliable. The achievements of learners on foundation programmes are satisfactory. Most learners who complete their programmes achieve their learning goals. In 2002-03, learners achieved 273 accreditations in literacy, numeracy and language. This is above the key performance target of 227 accreditations set by the prison service. The achievement rates on entry level literacy and numeracy courses are close to the national average. Many learners have gained confidence and self-esteem and developed negotiation skills during their time at HMP Erlestoke. There is much evidence of individual progress on programmes at entry level and level 1. The standard of most of the learners' work is satisfactory. Portfolios are well organised and demonstrate the transference of skills and knowledge from the taught lessons into individual research. Many learners show good literacy, numeracy and computer skills. There are some examples of good project work, such as the business plans developed by learners on the Firm Start programme, which are of a very high standard. The retention rate is also satisfactory. Most learners are set realistic targets and make good progress towards achieving their learning goals. Punctuality is affected by prison routine and staffing issues. Many lessons start late, which results in a considerable loss of learning time and opportunity. During the inspection all sessions began late because learners arrived late.

Quality of education and training

66. Eighty-five per cent of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better. Most learners are highly motivated and work hard. In the most effective lessons, tutors plan carefully and use a range of teaching methods to stimulate and motivate learners. The best teaching in literacy and numeracy enables learners to pursue their individual aims in a structured way. Learning activities in the pottery and cookery classes provide opportunities to develop practical literacy and numeracy. Teaching in other areas is linked to learners' interests and allows them to work at their own pace. Most learners have an opportunity to use information technology as a learning tool with direction from the tutor. They produce text, charts and graphs for their portfolios and acquire valuable computer skills. Some teaching is unsatisfactory. It relies too much on worksheets and teaching methods which do not take into account individual learning goals or learning styles.

67. The education department has established an outreach service to provide literacy and numeracy support for learners on vocational training programmes and for individual learners who lack the confidence to attend group lessons. A tutor visits learners on work parties on two days each week, to help them improve their literacy and numeracy. However, this work is poorly planned and inadequately resourced. There are several work areas where prisoners are receiving no support. There is no outreach support for key skills.

68. Some of the tutors are creative in using learning resources to develop learners' skills and explain concepts. In one entry-level numeracy class, the teacher skilfully introduced money as a topic to develop learners' understanding of decimal calculations. Learners not only gained experience in mental arithmetic, using a calculator and mathematical functions, but also developed an understanding of more complex number relationships and the language used in numeracy. However, individual needs and learning goals are not dealt with adequately in lesson plans and teaching. Some schemes of work and lesson plans are poor with little focus on learning outcomes. Materials and exercises are not always relevant to learners' interests or individual goals. Some are insufficiently differentiated for learners of different abilities. Assessment is poorly managed. Teachers have to assess new learners while teaching others. There is no regular formal monitoring of learners' progress, and the use of individual learning plans is incomplete.

69. Support for learners is good. Learners feel that their contributions have value and purpose. Group and individual tutorials help learners to consolidate the progress they have made in the classrooms, and carry out realistic action-planning. However, much of this work is carried out in the tutors' own time, as there is no allowance for it in the timetable.

70. Accommodation is poor. Many teaching areas are unsuitable for the groups using them. They are dull and characterless, and there is insufficient work by learners on show.

Leadership and management

71. Day-to-day management of the education unit is satisfactory. Teachers understand the aims of the department and have a clear focus on helping learners to achieve accredited qualifications. However, there has been uncertainty over several months about the contracting college's plans for the management of the department, and a lack of support from the college for the operation of procedures such as quality assurance, staff development and appraisal. Teachers on foundation courses do not have sufficient information about recent curriculum developments. There are five full-time and 12 part-time staff in the education centre. At the time of the inspection, one member of staff was on long-term sick leave, and one post was vacant. Three lessons were cancelled during the inspection as a result of the staff shortages.