

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Wealstun

31 October 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
- the University for Industry's **learnirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- learning and job preparation programmes funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

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

Overall judgement

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

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:

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

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

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

INSPECTION REPORT

HMP Wealstun

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Wealstun is the result of the amalgamation of HMP Thorp Arch and HMP Rudgate in 1995. This was an historic development for the prison service and had the effect of creating a Category C (closed side) and a Category D (open side) prison within the one establishment. The prison is set in a rural location three miles from Wetherby in West Yorkshire. A major rebuilding and expansion of the prison is due to be completed by the end of May 2005.
2. HMP Wealstun receives prisoners from Leeds, the Northeast and the Yorkshire area. Prisoners have an average sentence length of three years and an average length of stay of six months. The operational capacity of the prison is 712, with a current population of 663 adult males. Approximately 43 per cent are closed side prisoners and 57 per cent open side prisoners. The average age of prisoners is 26 years, within a current age range of 18 to 73 years. The minority ethnic population of the prison for the year ending 2002 was approximately 13 per cent.
3. The responsibilities of the head of inmate activities include the education department, chaplaincy, catering, the library, the gymnasium and industries throughout the prison. The responsibilities for training and industries are delegated to two managers for inmate activities, one for the closed side and one for the open side. The education department is managed by an education manager who is responsible for two full-time co-ordinators, two part-time co-ordinators, 15 part-time tutors, one full-time and one part-time administrative assistant and a part-time examinations officer. The education department caters for over 200 learners, half of whom are studying part time. Provision is offered during the day. Courses are offered in information and communications technology (ICT) and foundation programmes and the department supports learners on distance learning courses.
4. The prison has two main libraries, one on the open side of the prison and one on the closed side for A, B and C wings. D wing has its own library facility. The contract is held by Leeds library service.
5. All prisoners are required to attend full-time education or work. Opportunities include land-based activities, lift truck training, industrial cleaning, data entry, laundry, construction, tailoring, catering and light assembly work. National vocational qualification (NVQ) programmes are offered in tailoring and cutting and electrical assembly, but at the time of inspection there were few learners working toward NVQs in these areas.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Construction

6. Forty-nine learners are training in construction. In the closed side of the prison, 18 are

working towards a multi-skills qualification at level 1. This includes training and assessment in painting and decorating, tiling, plastering and brickwork. The open side of the prison also offers multi-skills qualifications and has 18 learners. A further 13 learners on the open side are working towards level 1 qualifications in brickwork. Community work for charities, and projects around the prison are used to develop learners' skills in a real work environment. Five learners from the brickwork class are working on projects in the community. Workshops are open mornings and afternoons, four and a half days each week. Several learners receive additional support for literacy and numeracy. In the closed side, training support is given in the practical workshops and in the open side it is given in the education department. There are two instructors on the closed side for multi-skills training, with a further four sharing multi-skills and brickwork on the open side.

Information & communications technology

7. HMP Wealstun has 81 learners on ICT training programmes. Thirty-seven learners are on the closed side of the prison and 44 on the open side. Of the 81 learners attending ICT classes, 74 are working towards an elementary qualification and 16 towards an intermediate award. There are also 34 prisoners in the data entry workshop. All learners work towards qualifications at elementary or intermediate levels. While some learners obtain one or more qualifications, some do not complete the work because they are transferred to another prison or discharged. All the qualifications are internally assessed and externally moderated.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

8. Eleven learners are working towards progression qualifications at level 2 in catering and hospitality, 12 learners are studying for the treatment of sports injuries certificate. The catering course is full time for a period of nine months, and the sports courses are intensive programmes operating over four weeks.

9. Training in catering takes place in a kitchen, with supporting facilities for background knowledge work. The industrial cleaning courses have a training room with purpose-built floor surfaces constructed to practise cleaning skills. Support for literacy and numeracy is provided to learners who require it. The catering course is taught by specialist instructors. In catering, all learners gain the food hygiene certificate.

10. A range of sports coaching courses takes place on an ongoing, four-week cycle. Courses include first aid, sports leadership, weight training, fitness instruction and specific sports coaching awards. Sports courses are delivered in the sports hall and gymnasium on the closed side and the gymnasium on the open side. A recreational physical education programme takes place during some periods of the day, evenings and at certain times at the weekend. Over 240 learners use the sports facilities each week for recreational physical education. All learners receive an induction to the physical education programme to ensure safe participation and learners gain emergency first aid and manual handling certificates through this process.

Foundation programmes

11. Seventy-nine learners are following foundation programmes offered by the education department. Of these, most are following programmes in literacy and/or numeracy. Three learners are attending English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes. The education department offers full- and part-time day programmes for learners on both the open and closed sides of the prison. On both open and closed sides there is one class a week each of dyslexia support, and ESOL.

12. There are five full-time programmes, three on the closed and two on the open side, operating over nine, three-hour sessions each week. On four of the programmes at least six sessions are literacy and or numeracy classes, with between one and three sessions of optional subjects which include art, information technology (IT), craft and health studies. A fifth programme, designed for learners whose release date is imminent, does not have option classes.

13. Four part-time literacy and numeracy classes are provided on the closed side, and three on the open side. These classes cater for learners on vocational training programmes, those in employment, and as additional support for some full-time education learners. On the closed side a tutor visits the gymnasium, catering section and the multi-skills workshop, for one session each week in each area, to provide additional support in literacy and numeracy skills. On the open side there is similar support for construction workshop learners. This takes place in the education department.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	26
Number of learner interviews	97
Number of staff interviews	53
Number of employer interviews	2
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	3

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

14. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. Construction, hospitality and physical education (PE) programmes are good, foundation programmes are satisfactory, but ICT programmes are unsatisfactory. Leadership and management and equality of opportunity are satisfactory, quality assurance is unsatisfactory.

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

15. Learners' achievements in construction are good. Most learners who start training achieve units or a full qualification, although the prison does not claim certification for fewer than three units. In the period April 2002 to March 2003, 96 learners achieved construction qualifications. **The prison has excellent external and internal projects for learners on the open side of the prison.** These good-quality projects in the community and the prison are used to develop learners' skills and they gain considerable self-esteem during their time on the project. Brickwork is of a particularly good standard, with learners showing very good levels of achievement after only a short time in the workshop. **Learners' portfolios of evidence are very good.**

16. In ICT during the period April 2002 to March 2003, 179 learners obtained elementary qualifications and 16 gained intermediate qualifications. In addition, they process text as a commercial activity and produce good-quality publicity material and information brochures for the prison. **Learners have good opportunities to obtain externally awarded qualifications at elementary and intermediate levels.** Where they are unable to obtain a full qualification, they can receive accreditation for the modules or units achieved.

17. **Learners achieve good pass rates in PE and catering. In catering learners acquire very good skill levels, historically, 90 per cent of those who start the training programme successfully achieve the qualification.** Similar pass rates are obtained on the sports courses. In the period April 2002 to March 2003, 50 learners achieved a catering qualification and 101 achieved a sports qualification. The quality of work produced by learners is very good, with standards in catering particularly outstanding. Many learners have ambitions to work in the catering industry and most are achieving competences to industry standards. **The provision of catering and sports programmes on the open side is poor.**

18. **Personal learning goals are achieved to a good level in foundation programmes.** In 2002-03, 183 learners achieved entry level qualifications, 154 achieved level 1 and 251 achieved level 2. They understand the value of improving their literacy and numeracy skills and the benefits these can bring. Learners are proud of the certificates they have received, and are often enthusiastic about their prospects of reaching the next level in their studies. They frequently refer to the significant increase in their confidence, generated by their studies.

Quality of education and training

19. **Construction learners receive good practical training and clearly develop many valuable new skills.** They have good working relationships with their instructors and the atmosphere in workshops is industrious and respectful. **During closed side training sessions there is significant disruption when learners are called away at short notice.** This is particularly frustrating when, for instance, those working on plastering projects have to

leave work half-completed. **Accommodation in the multi-skills workshop on the closed side is unsatisfactory.**

20. **Learners speak very well of the support they receive from their ICT tutors**, who are very approachable, patient and non-judgemental. They provide constructive advice and guidance and, when needed, demonstrate various computing functions to learners. They explain clearly as they demonstrate different functions and provide a good level of supervision when learners are practising their computing skills. Overall, standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory, **although learners' keyboarding skills are poorly developed.** However, insufficient attention is given to using ICT to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills formally and informally through word processing, spreadsheets and databases. **On the open side of the prison, good resources are available for learners to work towards an examination-based qualification in IT. On the closed side of the prison ICT resources are inadequate.** The computers are old and unreliable and frequently break down. **Individual learning plans are not used adequately as working documents, and are not sufficiently co-ordinated with sentence plans.**

21. **The catering and sports courses provide good training.** Staff are well qualified, experienced and very competent. Lessons are well prepared and structured, with detailed and progressive activities. On the catering course the tutor uses an innovative and very enthusiastic approach that motivates learners. Training on sports courses is delivered in an informative and motivational style at a level and pace very appropriate to the needs of the learners. Experience and competence are enhanced by learners organising and leading activity sessions, and in providing practical sports coaching for members of community groups who have learning disabilities.

22. **Teachers provide very effective individual support in foundation programme learning sessions.** In most classes, learners work individually towards the targets specified in their individual learning plans. Teachers rapidly establish a good rapport with their learners, which helps new arrivals to settle quickly into productive work patterns. Teachers use a wide range of strategies in individual teaching to cater for differing needs. Learners speak very well of their tutors and the support they provide. Resources for learning are satisfactory. Most classrooms are large enough for the groups that use them, but some are cramped. Most learners use computers in some literacy and numeracy sessions on the open side, but use is very restricted on the closed side.

23. **Literacy, numeracy and language skills support is effective in construction, catering and PE.** Many of the learners who receive additional support make significant progress with their literacy and numeracy skills. Not enough attention is given in ICT to the use of computer software to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills through word processing, spreadsheets and databases. Managers are currently reorganising ESOL provision to resolve identified weaknesses in previous arrangements.

Leadership and management

24. **Strategic planning is good.** The comprehensive business plan clearly sets out the strategic direction for education and training in the prison. The plan recognises that the prison is in transition and identifies the actions required to accommodate the planned increase in the number of prisoners and the detailed strategy to cope with the expansion of education and training.

25. **Internal and external communications are effective.** Input to the business plan through the quality improvement group is good and education and training is clearly a priority in the prison. Monthly meetings are held on both sides of the prison for prisoners, learners and staff to discuss various issues. External contacts are numerous and effective. Community projects which involve learners and prisoners working with disadvantaged groups are effective in developing learners' social skills and personal esteem and fully prepares them for employment on release.

26. **Training is well managed in PE, catering, industrial cleaning and the workshops.** Courses in these areas are well planned and resourced. Daily communication is good in the workshops. Bulletins are issued on a weekly basis, supported by frequent visits by managers to the training areas. In most areas, instructors feel well supported by their line managers. However, the management of some education programmes is inadequate. The current ICT and foundation programmes meet the needs of many learners, **but the curriculum is not sufficiently developed** to make it more attractive to a wider range of prisoners. **For foundation learners there is insufficient provision for learners at entry level 2 and below, especially on the open side of the prison.** There is no evening or weekend provision. Many learners are working outside the prison during the day. Analyses of learner data are confined to compliance with key performance targets. There are no data on the number of starters in each programme area. Managers find it difficult to determine how well the department is performing with regard to retention and achievement rates.

27. **Equality of opportunity is satisfactory.** HMP Wealstun has appropriate, written equal opportunities policies and procedures which cover a range of issues, including harassment, complaints and appeals. Copies are displayed throughout the prison and prisoners have a sound understanding of them. Reinforcement of equal opportunities issues with prisoners is an ongoing process which builds upon the information and training given during induction sessions.

28. Health and hygiene conditions in some of the open side accommodation blocks are unsatisfactory and adversely affect prisoners' welfare and motivation. **Some prisoners are currently living in dirty and unsatisfactory conditions, and some do not have adequate access to education. Some learners who have started higher-level qualifications at other prisons, are finding it difficult to get funding** to allow them to complete their courses with external educational organisations.

29. **The quality assurance arrangements are unsatisfactory.** Teaching staff are not systematically observed. Some staff have not been observed for over a year, **others**

have received no recent development opportunities. Where observations have been carried out they are not sufficiently critical. Most of the observations were graded at the highest levels and did not clearly identify specific issues for improvement. There is no observation of the training in the workshop training areas. The prison has recently issued new quality assurance objectives to staff, but it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of this initiative.

30. Assessment and internal verification are satisfactory. In construction, internal verification, which is subcontracted to an external provider, is satisfactory. Generally, in all areas, work that is assessed and returned to learners is accompanied by useful and supportive comments and guidance.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good strategic planning
- effective internal and external communications
- good management of training in catering, PE and prison workshops
- good equal opportunities practice in most learning environments

Weaknesses

- inadequate management of some education programmes
- inadequate access to education for some prisoners
- unsatisfactory quality assurance arrangements

Construction

Strengths

- excellent projects for open side learners
- good practical training
- particularly good support for literacy and numeracy
- very good portfolios of evidence

Weaknesses

- many interruptions to closed side sessions
- insufficient IT resources for staff
- some poor accommodation on the closed side of the prison
- insufficient staff development

Information & communications technology

Strengths

- very good tutor support
- good provision on open side for the examination-based qualification in IT
- good opportunities to obtain external accreditation

Weaknesses

- inadequate use of individual learning plans
- some inadequate resources
- poor curriculum planning
- poorly developed keyboarding skills

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Strengths

- good pass rates on all courses
- very good skill levels of catering learners
- good standards of teaching and training
- particularly good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor catering and sport provision on the open side of the prison

Foundation programmes

Strengths

- good achievement of personal learning goals
- very effective individual support

Weaknesses

- incomplete curriculum
- inadequate management of full-time provision

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HMP WEALSTUN:

- the relaxed learning atmosphere
- the equal treatment for learners
- the good support from most instructors and staff
- the respect and fair treatment shown
- the good training
- the fact that staff deal well with disruptive behaviour
- the improvements in their confidence and morale
- 'the time teachers spend with you'
- the approachable teachers
- the help given towards gaining employment
- 'being successful in examinations'

WHAT LEARNERS THINK HMP WEALSTUN COULD IMPROVE:

- the waiting period for exchange items such as clothing - it's too long
- the range of relevant qualifications and courses
- the work in some production workshops - it's boring and repetitive
- the pay awarded across disciplines - to achieve parity
- the amount of information about NVQs
- the choice of food
- the open side resources and accommodation
- the number of opportunities for full-time study on the open side
- the amount of IT - more is needed
- the amount of guidance in classes
- the computers - updates are required

KEY CHALLENGES FOR HMP WEALSTUN:

- improve the strategic and operational focus of the education department
- improve the quality of the ICT resources particularly on the closed side of the prison.
- implement quality assurance practices for assessing the teaching, training and learning arrangements in the prison
- introduce the gathering and analysis of learner retention and achievement data for education and training
- increase the number of learners working towards NVQs
- develop the provision of catering programmes on the open side of the prison
- extend the choice of recreational activities in PE on the open side
- improve communication between the education department and the library
- encourage learners to use the library facilities to support education and training

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

31. The leadership and management of education and training is satisfactory, as is equal opportunities. Quality assurance is unsatisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good strategic planning
- effective internal and external communications
- good management of training in catering, PE and prison workshops
- good equal opportunities practice in most learning environments

Weaknesses

- inadequate management of some education programmes
- inadequate access to education for some prisoners
- unsatisfactory quality assurance arrangements

32. Strategic planning is good. The comprehensive business plan clearly sets out the strategic direction for education and training. The plan recognises that the prison is in transition and identifies the actions required to accommodate the planned increase in the number of prisoners, and the detailed strategy to cope with the expansion of education and training. The senior management team developed the overall strategy for the management of the prison, identifying key responsibilities, performance targets and the management roles required to ensure compliance. A comprehensive accreditation framework describes in great detail how the prison will provide education and training to learners to meet their individual needs and increase their ability to find a job on release.

33. The prison has a large and well-advanced building programme in operation. By August 2004, education and training in the prison will have four new workshops, providing an extra 96 vocational training places and 45 non-vocational places for the closed side. There will be two new libraries with study and computer facilities, eight new training staff and there are plans to begin evening courses. The new library on the open side of the prison is due to be completed by May 2005.

34. Internal and external communications are effective. The head of inmate activities has regular meetings with managers and staff. Issues raised are dealt with effectively through nominated members of staff. Minutes are clear and detailed and cover an extensive range of meetings, all of which are scheduled throughout the year. The head of inmate activities is chair of the quality improvement group, the NVQ group, the library

committee and the activities services and industries group. There is effective input to the business plan through the quality improvement group, and education and training is clearly a priority in the prison. Monthly meetings are held on both sides of the prison for prisoners, learners and staff to discuss issues. The prison has many effective external contacts. Community projects allow learners to develop their social skills and personal esteem and fully prepares them for employment on release. On release some learners have continued to work with disadvantaged groups during their spare time. The prison is also represented at local exhibitions, shows, and a recent employers job fair held at the prison.

35. Training is well managed in PE, catering, industrial cleaning and the workshops. Courses in these areas are well planned and resourced. Daily communication is good in the workshops. Bulletins are issued on a weekly basis supported by frequent visits by managers to the training areas. In most areas instructors feel well supported by their immediate line managers. The fabric-cutting workshop has designed particularly effective systems to meet the requirements of NVQs. Thorough lesson plans and course structuring have been developed to support the delivery of short programmes. Individual learning plans are used well and provide accurate information about learners' progress. A thorough evaluation of the course content and quality of delivery is provided through the feedback questionnaire completed by learners. There are well-advanced plans to increase the number of learners working towards accredited qualifications. Administration arrangements for all programmes are effective. The management of construction training is satisfactory.

36. Literacy, numeracy and language skills support is effective in construction, catering and PE. Prisoners' ability levels are initially identified by the education staff. Many of the learners who receive additional support make significant progress with literacy and numeracy. In ICT, not enough attention is given to using computer software to develop learners' skills through word processing, spreadsheets and databases.

37. The management of some education programmes is inadequate. Although the current ICT and foundation programmes meet the needs of many learners, insufficient attention is given to developing the curriculum further, so that it becomes more attractive to a wider range of prisoners. For example, in ICT there are no courses in computer installation and maintenance, programming, or web page design. For foundation learners there is not enough provision for learners at entry level 2 and below, especially on the open side. The prison has no evening or weekend training provision. ICT and foundation programme managers do not routinely analyse data to set targets for improving achievement. Analysis is confined to compliance with key performance targets for qualifications, contained in the education department's contract with the prison. There are no data about the number of starters in each programme area. Managers find it difficult to determine how well the department is performing with regard to retention and achievement rates. Education managers are aware of the need to make better use of data, and have recently acquired a new database.

38. Integration between the libraries and the education service is poor. Learners are not encouraged to use the libraries and complain that they are not resourced to meet their

learning needs.

Equality of opportunity

39. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. The prison has appropriate, written equal opportunities policies and procedures which cover a range of prisoners' issues, including harassment, complaints and appeals. Copies are displayed throughout the prison and prisoners have a sound understanding of them. Reinforcement of equal opportunities to prisoners is an ongoing process which builds upon the information and training given during induction sessions. The prison takes the issue of bullying seriously and has a range of effective strategies and procedures to ensure that prisoners are not subjected to intimidation. Complaints made by prisoners are considered and appropriate responses are made, although there is sometimes a time delay. Staff have a good awareness of equal opportunities and diversity issues and most have had specific training.

40. Good equal opportunities practice is observed in most learning environments. Learners attending education and training are treated with respect and dignity. They speak favourably about the help and support they receive from staff. Staff show an active interest in the progress being made by learners. They provide effective help and guidance to allow learners to overcome barriers to learning and achieve their target qualification. Training facilities provide a safe and suitable environment for learners to focus on their work. Learners show mutual respect for each other to create a positive environment for effective personal development.

41. Health and hygiene conditions in some of the open side accommodation blocks are unsatisfactory and adversely affect prisoner welfare and motivation. Although new accommodation is being planned and constructed, prisoners are currently living in dirty and unsatisfactory conditions.

42. Some prisoners cannot access education adequately. Some learners who began higher-level qualifications at other prisons are finding it difficult to get funding to allow them to complete their courses with external educational organisations. Workshop activities, especially those with external contracts, offer higher pay than education and vocational training. Although this is recognised by prison managers, not enough incentive is given to prisoners to choose education and training.

Quality assurance

43. The prison has a self-assessment report and development plan which includes leadership and management of programmes and all prisoner employment, education and training opportunities. The report was produced in February 2003. Managers in all areas of training and education contributed to the plan, through individual assessment of their own areas. The report is thorough and clearly describes many of the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors.

44. The quality assurance arrangements are unsatisfactory. This is identified in the self-assessment report. The education manager has a quality assurance framework

developed by the college responsible for education in the prison. The system is based on the observation of teaching sessions and regular staff reviews; but there is no systematic observation of education staff. Some staff have not been observed for over a year. Where observations have been carried out they are not sufficiently critical. Most of the observations were graded at the highest levels and did not clearly identify specific issues for improvement. The grades were inconsistent with those given by inspectors. No observation of training takes place in the workshop training areas. There is an over-reliance on the external reports of awarding bodies when monitoring the quality of the training in workshops.

45. Targets are set for the achievement of learners on education and training programmes. Achievement against these targets is monitored at the twice-monthly meetings of the resettlement committee. The prison effectively monitors those learners who have been released from prison and have entered employment and training. However, management and staff have no record of the number of starters on the programmes and are unable to determine the success of the programmes through retention and achievement rates. Performance indicators are not monitored sufficiently to identify poor practice and to develop a clear and focused policy for the continual development of education and training in the prison.

46. Good practice is not shared in the workshops. One of the workshops has clear evidence of good practice taking place. For example, some training staff receive good feedback from learners through questionnaires, but this is not identified and shared among the learning programmes. Instructor officers do not meet to share good practice. Although informal meetings take place, there are significant variations in methods of working and the delivery of programmes. No clear action points are produced, or timescales identified for the improvement of courses.

47. The prison has recently issued new quality assurance objectives to staff. The document provides a clear policy statement, terms of reference and key objectives to ensure that quality is maintained in all areas of the prison, it includes an observation and feedback form. It is too soon to judge the effectiveness of these procedures.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

48. Training in construction is good.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- excellent projects for open side learners
- good practical training
- particularly good support for literacy and numeracy
- very good portfolios of evidence

Weaknesses

- many interruptions to closed side sessions
- insufficient IT resources for staff
- some poor accommodation on the closed side of the prison
- insufficient staff development

Achievement and standards

49. In the period April 2002 to March 2003, 96 learners obtained construction qualifications. The prison has excellent external and internal projects for learners on the open side of the prison to develop their skills. Several have worked on an ongoing project to landscape gardens in a sheltered housing complex. This has involved converting an area of wasteland into a garden rest area. The work on seating, paving and fencing is of a very good standard and valued by the client and residents. On this project, and one refurbishing workshop for children with learning difficulties, learners gain considerable self-esteem, as well as developing construction skills. Some learners continue to work with charities in their own time after release. The learners value the work-placement experience and its use in developing social skills during the latter part of long sentences.

50. Archways, communal seating areas and a chapel have been built by learners around the prison, making a pleasant environment. These projects give learners a sense of pride and promote the construction programme throughout the prison and to visitors. All learners interviewed showed optimism about their future. Some, who have previously worked casually, or as unskilled labourers in the construction industry are confident about their ability to secure skilled, higher-paying work on release. Others have developed skills that will be useful in renovating and decorating their own properties. There are no waiting lists to start training in construction, most prisoners start in the workshops within a few days of an initial request.

51. Most learners who start training achieve units or a full qualification, although the prison does not claim certification for fewer than three units of a qualification.

Quality of education and training

52. Learners receive good practical training. They clearly develop many valuable new skills. Learners have good working relationships with their instructors and the atmosphere in workshops is industrious and respectful. Brickwork is of a particularly good standard with learners showing very good levels of achievement after only a short time in the workshop. These new skills have been used effectively in the community projects, with many written testimonials from charity directors and clients.

53. The prison provides particularly good support for learners with literacy and numeracy needs. It is effective and delivered in a construction context. In workshops on the closed side, support staff visit learners for individual tuition designed around the learners' needs. This support helps learners to calculate quantities of materials and to develop estimating skills. Many make significant progress with numeracy during their time in the prison and become more confident in dealing with personal finances and helping their children with schoolwork during visits.

54. Learners have very good portfolios of evidence that are well structured, and contain good evidence of learners' experience and competence. Staff in brickwork have developed clearly designed workbooks. Learners complete a simple list showing which tools and materials they will use and show how they plan to complete each job. Photographs of completed work support written descriptions. Learners are proud of their portfolios. Accurate monitoring of their progress and feedback about their work allow learners to understand clearly what they need to do to improve their skills and achieve their qualifications. Internal verification, which is subcontracted to an external provider, is satisfactory, as is the standard of assessment.

55. Closed side training sessions are frequently interrupted. There is significant disruption when learners are called away at short notice. Numbers of learners present in one session fluctuated between 12 and 17, with the instructors constantly distracted from their work to update registers and pass details to security. Tools have to be checked when learners leave the workshop. This further disrupts classes and can lead to delays in attending to learners. This is particularly frustrating for learners when, for instance, those working on plastering projects have to leave half-completed work which cannot be completed later.

56. Staff have no computer facilities in the closed side of the prison. This restricts their ability to develop and print learning materials and to use software packages to improve their own and learners' knowledge. There is no printer in the multi-skills staffroom on the open side of the prison.

57. Accommodation in the multi-skills workshop on the closed side of the prison is unsatisfactory. Visibility is poor, and staff cannot see all areas of the workshop. Machinery for cutting materials and mixing cement and plaster are modern and well maintained, but the workshop in general is untidy and cluttered with learners' dismantled work and cleaning materials. The workshop has only a small room for learners to complete written exercises or read textbooks. On the open side of the prison the multi-skills workshop is spacious and provides a good, productive environment for learners.

Leadership and management

58. Leadership and management are satisfactory in construction. The achievement of units is closely monitored, although the prison is unable to provide accurate data to show how many of those who start training, achieve units or a full qualification. Staff are set targets based on the previous year's achievements, but numbers have increased in the prison since last year.

59. Projects in the community are closely monitored. The careful selection of projects ensures that they will benefit the community and the learners involved. Several offers have been declined, as they were not thought to be appropriate. Staff meetings are regular, with detailed minutes which are shared among staff. A recent and detailed prison-wide staff survey was carried out, in which staff views were canvassed on a range of issues. A strategy for improvement has been developed and an action plan, which is updated monthly, is used by training managers to measure the progress made.

60. The prison does not ensure sufficient staff development. Instructors teach in the workshops in the mornings and afternoons five days a week, with limited time to carry out administration duties and prepare materials for learners. One member of staff who has been working in the prison for a year has not had any teacher training or assessor training, and other members of staff have had no recent development. The prison has recognised this and has recently begun to train staff, although this is at too early a stage to have had any effect.

Information & communications technology

61. ICT learning is unsatisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- very good tutor support
- good provision on open side for the examination-based qualification in IT
- good opportunities to obtain external accreditation

Weaknesses

- inadequate use of individual learning plans
- some inadequate resources
- poor curriculum planning
- poorly developed keyboarding skills

Achievement and standards

62. In the period April 2002 to March 2003, 179 learners obtained elementary qualifications and 16 gained intermediate awards. Most learners develop skills in word processing, spreadsheets, databases and desktop publishing. The sessions are organised to allow learners to progress at their own rate and to achieve as much as they can in the time available. The prisoners in the data entry workshop also have the opportunity to work towards an elementary and an intermediate ICT qualification. In addition, they process text as a commercial activity and produce good-quality publicity material and information brochures for the prison. In the education department no retention and achievement rates are set, apart from the number of achievement targets required for a given period. There is no systematic recording of the number of starters on programmes. Managers find it difficult to determine how well the department is performing.

Quality of education and training

63. Learners speak very well of the support they receive from their tutors. Tutors are very approachable, patient and non-judgemental. They provide constructive advice and guidance and, when needed, demonstrate various computing functions to help learners. Tutors are familiar with word processing, spreadsheets, databases and desktop publishing. They clearly explain as they demonstrate the various functions and provide a good level of supervision when learners are practising their computing skills. Tutors also provide good support when learners have difficulties with the prison regime. For

example, one learner was having difficulty obtaining prison clothing. Through the tutor's intervention, clothing was obtained.

64. On the open side of the prison there is good provision for learners to work towards an examination-based qualification in IT. The room is attractively laid out to accommodate 14 learners and it provides a very good learning environment. There is a network of modern computers and up-to-date software. Learners have immediate access to all the appropriate learning and assessment resources when they log on to the network. They work at their own speed. Instant feedback is given to them about the accuracy of their coursework and on the results of their assessments. The six half-day sessions that full-time learners have each week enable them to make good progress and to complete the qualification quickly. There is no provision on the closed side for learners to work towards this internationally recognised qualification. When learners opt to take the examination-based qualification as an option, they attend for one half-day each week and make much slower progress.

65. Learners have good opportunities to obtain externally awarded qualifications at elementary and intermediate levels. Most learners work towards qualifications which enable them to obtain units or modules in word processing, spreadsheets, databases and desktop publishing. Where they are unable to obtain a complete qualification, they can receive accreditation for the modules or units they complete. Learners are justifiably proud of their achievements, especially if they left school early without obtaining any formal qualifications.

66. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners' work is satisfactorily marked. From tutors' comments, learners can see where they have made errors and whether their work is of an acceptable standard. However, insufficient attention is given to using ICT to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills, formally and informally, through word processing, spreadsheets and databases.

67. Individual learning plans are compiled for each learner, but they are not used effectively. The plans do not contain sufficient information about learners' long- and short-term targets. Learners do not use the plans effectively to guide their learning and to record their progress. They do not refer to the plans during their learning sessions and are vague about their contents. Insufficient importance is given to setting short-term targets against which progress can be measured. Some learners work too slowly because not enough time is spent at the beginning of the lesson negotiating what they will be able to achieve during the lesson. Individual learning plans are not sufficiently co-ordinated with sentence plans.

68. The ICT resources on the closed side of the prison are inadequate, as recognised in the self-assessment report. The computers are old and unreliable and they frequently break down. There are also three old computers in the computer room in the open side of the prison which have not been replaced. Faults take too long to be repaired. The software is not of modern industry standard. There are no laptops or personal computers for learners to use in the residential wings. There are too few computers in the closed and open sides of the prison in the literacy and numeracy classrooms,

although learners do use the computer rooms when available. In the closed side of the prison there is poor natural lighting and ventilation in the two computer rooms. Both rooms have a poor appearance. Learners do not have opportunities to practise sending and receiving e-mails, or searching for computer-based information. There are not enough up-to-date textbooks and recently published books of practice tasks, although there are some good self-teaching materials compiled by tutors for a range of computer applications. Tutors do not have computer-based display and projection facilities for when they are tutoring several learners at the same time.

69. Curriculum planning is poor. Not enough importance is given to examining the ICT curriculum to ensure that learners' ICT skills and knowledge are progressively developed. Co-ordination of the provision between the closed and open sides of the prison is inadequate. On the closed side of the prison there is no full-time ICT programme and no examination-based qualification in IT. On the open side of the prison there are insufficient opportunities for learners to obtain a well-recognised ICT qualification at elementary and intermediate levels. However, all prisoners in the data entry workshop have opportunities to prepare for this qualification and many do so. There are no advanced courses in the prison, no courses to develop learners' skills and knowledge in the installation and maintenance of computing systems, and no programming or web design courses. The prison does not provide evening and weekend courses. Most part-time learners attend ICT classes for half a day each week, whereas the effective development of ICT skills requires more frequent practice. There is insufficient forward planning to develop the ICT provision and inadequate staff development to ensure that staff are well prepared to introduce new and innovative courses.

70. Learners' keyboarding skills are poorly developed. They are not trained to use their fingers correctly and to operate the keyboard with increasing speed and dexterity. Their progress is slowed and they acquire faulty techniques which are difficult to correct. Learners develop inefficient working practices.

Leadership and management

71. The contract for providing education and training is held by a post-16 college and managed by the education manager. He delegates responsibility for the day-to-day management of ICT to the ICT co-ordinator. The ICT hardware and software resources are inadequate, especially on the closed side of the prison. Although bids have been submitted for new computers, approval has not yet been given.

72. The current programmes meet the needs of many learners, but insufficient attention is given to developing the curriculum further so that it becomes more attractive to a wider range of prisoners. For example, there are no courses in computer installation and maintenance, programming, or web page design. ICT is not used effectively as a learning tool to offer courses such as personal budgeting, essential business skills and effective communication, although it is used to help learners with the driving test theory. Not enough attention is given to the need for learners to have frequent, regularly spaced learning periods. Some part-time learners have only one half-day a week in an ICT class.

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Too much emphasis is placed on the number of external awards gained by learners as the main indicator of the quality of the provision.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

73. Training in hospitality and PE is good.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good pass rates on all courses
- very good skill levels of catering learners
- good standards of teaching and training
- particularly good support for learners

Weaknesses

- poor catering and sport provision on the open side of the prison

Achievement and standards

74. In the period April 2002 to March 2003, 50 learners achieved a catering qualification, 101 achieved a sports qualification and 11 achieved an industrial cleaning qualification. Good pass rates are achieved by learners on all courses. In catering, 90 per cent of learners who start the training programme successfully achieve the qualification. Similar pass rates are obtained on the sports and industrial cleaning courses. Learners in sport gain a good range of qualifications over a period of time. Learners in industrial cleaning training develop a wide range of skills and expertise. The quality of work produced by learners is very good with the standards in catering particularly outstanding.

75. Learners on catering courses develop very good skill levels. Many who start the course with little previous knowledge or experience, develop a wide range of skills and become very competent cooks, working with a good range of menus. Learners take great pride in their work and develop significant improvements in confidence and self-esteem. Many learners want to work in their chosen training area. Most of them are developing competence to industry standards.

Quality of education and training

76. Good teaching and training is provided on the catering, sports and industrial cleaning courses. Staff are well qualified, experienced and display very good levels of competence. Lessons are well prepared and structured, with detailed and progressive activities. On the catering course the tutor uses an innovative, highly enthusiastic approach that motivates learners. Work tasks are clearly explained and demonstrated,

and learners are guided carefully to reach a level of competence. Learners are given a good balance of practical and background knowledge lessons. Every opportunity is taken to allow learners to prepare and cook for others. Learners' portfolios contain a variety of well-presented evidence. Teaching on sports courses has an informative and motivational style at a level and pace very appropriate to the needs of the learners. Learners' training programmes are detailed and thorough, producing very good standards of work. Learners organise and lead activity sessions, and provide practical sports coaching for members of community groups who have learning disabilities. The training in industrial cleaning is detailed and thorough, with good reinforcement of learning to ensure that skills are developed and retained.

77. Particularly good support is provided for learners. Working relationships between staff and learners are excellent. Staff display very good levels of competence, enthusiasm and a commitment towards providing good-quality training that is focused on the needs of the individual. Learners respond by working hard and displaying a positive and co-operative attitude towards each other. Staff are respected by learners and this contributes to an environment that is orderly and conducive to learning. Learners comment favourably on the support and guidance they receive from staff who, they believe, show a genuine concern for their welfare and treat them with respect. Effective literacy and numeracy support is given to learners to help them overcome difficulties with their background knowledge work, or in gathering appropriate evidence for their portfolios.

78. The catering course takes place on the closed side. The training kitchen and small classroom are adequate. In sport, the closed side has a sports hall and weight training gymnasium which are satisfactory. Equipment levels are sufficient for the work of the learners. Industrial cleaning courses take place on the open side and have good, specialist facilities and equipment.

79. Before starting a training programme, all learners receive an appropriate initial assessment of their suitability for the course which identifies any additional support that may be required. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory throughout their training programme. Assessed work is returned to learners accompanied by useful and supportive comments and guidance.

80. The range of catering and sports provision on the open site is limited. There is a working kitchen on the open side, but no catering courses are available. Sports facilities on the open side consist of a gymnasium containing weight training equipment and there is also an open space for general activities. With the exception of those covered in the sports induction, there are few vocational sports courses offered on the open side of the prison. The choice of recreational activities for learners on the open side is restricted to evenings and weekends.

Leadership and management

81. Leadership and management of the catering, sport and industrial cleaning programmes are good. Courses are well planned and resourced. Training is quality assured and feedback is obtained from learners in order to improve the quality of provision. Administration arrangements for all programmes are effective and good procedures are established with awarding bodies, to ensure prompt verification and certification for the courses. Communications between staff are effective and the prison has good working relationships with a range of external organisations. Staff have the opportunity to develop their expertise and competence by attending in-prison training courses, or external training programmes.

Foundation programmes

82. The foundation programmes are satisfactory.

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during this inspection:

Strengths

- good achievement of personal learning goals
- very effective individual support

Weaknesses

- incomplete curriculum
- inadequate management of full-time provision

Achievement and standards

83. In 2002-03, 183 learners achieved entry level qualifications, 154 achieved level 1 and 251 achieved level 2. There is a good level of achievement of personal learning goals. Many learners on the programmes have had poor experiences of formal education, and many left school with few, if any qualifications. They are clear about the value of improving their literacy and numeracy skills and the benefits this can bring them now, and on release. This is true at all levels of achievement. In one class, for example, a learner who started with very weak reading and writing skills is now able write letters home unaided, and to read the replies with confidence. For most learners the planning of their individual learning offers a clear path to follow to achieve their qualifications in literacy and numeracy at levels which are challenging but attainable. Learners have a good understanding of the tests they are working towards, and the level. They are proud of the certificates they have received, and are often enthusiastic about their prospects of reaching the next level in their studies. They frequently refer to a significant increase in their confidence.

Quality of education and training

84. The prison provides very effective individual support in learning sessions. In most classes, learners work individually towards the targets specified in their individual learning plans. Teachers rapidly establish a good rapport with their learners, which assists new arrivals to settle quickly into productive work patterns. Teachers use a wide range of strategies in individual teaching to cater for differing needs. They are skilled in allocating all learners adequate individual time, responding to immediate needs, and routinely monitoring the progress of those who are apparently working well. They have a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of subject matter, and many have qualifications in teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers are quick to praise

success, and skilled at ensuring that learners make good use of their time while working alone. In all sessions, learners and teachers treat each other with mutual respect. Learners speak very highly of their teachers and the support they provide.

85. Learning resources are satisfactory. Most classrooms are large enough for the groups that use them, but some are cramped. Classroom furniture is adequate, with sufficient tables and chairs. Classroom décor is often shabby on the closed side, but all teaching rooms have bright, attractive display materials on the walls, including commercially produced posters relevant to the subject areas and learners' work. There are adequate supplies of books and other resources, such as handouts, some of which have been referenced to the relevant national curriculum. Most learners use computers in some literacy and numeracy sessions on the open side, but this is very restricted on the closed side.

86. Assessment is satisfactory. Initial assessment and subsequent diagnostic testing enable staff to effectively identify most learners' literacy and numeracy levels. Learners have individual learning plans, with broad targets, and specific short-term goals. Teachers review their progress against their targets with them regularly. The targets are appropriate, but teachers do not record target achievement dates. Learners regularly complete tests to help establish whether they are ready for external accreditation testing.

87. The curriculum is incomplete. Managers are aware of gaps in the provision and have recently introduced worthwhile new programmes, such as an intensive fast-track course for those learners due for imminent release. However, there is not enough provision for learners at entry level 2 and below, especially on the open side. Many of the programmes cater for learners who are working towards level 1 or level 2. There is no evening or weekend provision. Some learners on the open side of the prison go out of the prison to work during the day when classes operate, and some of those in prison employment prefer to work a full week. In recent months, the prison has introduced part-time day classes which give access to learning for those doing industrial work. However, there is insufficient contact between instructors and education teaching staff, and no link between the education curriculum and the learners' work. Managers are currently reorganising ESOL provision to resolve weaknesses identified in previous arrangements, but are unclear as to the scale of need for these classes.

Leadership and management

88. The full-time provision is not managed adequately. The management response to the reduced number of learners on the closed side of the prison is poor. For some months one of the wings of the prison has been closed. During this period, few learners have enrolled on full-time programmes, with classes running at about half their capacity. In response to this, managers have merged classes under one teacher, rather than have sessions with only one or two learners. Staff teaching such classes rarely know in advance who is attending the class, and are often unable to plan whole group learning effectively. Learners follow topics that are inappropriate or are not sufficiently challenging. Rooms for these courses are large, and staff do not seat these small groups to enable them to work together well or, at other times, individually. There is not enough

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privacy for confidential discussions at induction. Staff regularly interview new learners about personal matters in a small room, in front of others sitting initial assessment tests.