

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## **HMP Featherstone Reinspection**

**18 January 2006**



ADULT LEARNING  
INSPECTORATE

## HMP FEATHERSTONE REINSPECTION

### **Grading**

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the four grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - inadequate*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

## 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.
- adult information, advice and guidance services (**nextstep** )

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.

# REINSPECTION REPORT

## HMP Featherstone Reinspection

### Contents

#### Summary

Description of the provider	1
Scope of provision	2
About the reinspection	2
Overall judgement	3
Grades	3
Key findings	3

#### Detailed reinspection findings

Leadership and management	8
Equality of opportunity	9
Quality assurance	11
Engineering, technology & manufacturing	13
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	16

## REINSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Featherstone, built in 1976, is a category C training prison for adult men, and is situated north of Wolverhampton in Staffordshire. It has an operational capacity of 615. At the time of inspection the offender population was 610, of whom 10 per cent were serving less than two years, and 36 per cent less than four years. Fifty-seven per cent of offenders are aged between 21 and 29 years of age, and 30 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. All the offenders are required to work, although at the time of inspection, approximately 40 were without work or education places. Employed offenders work in prison workshops, the kitchens, prison gardens or as orderlies around the prison.

2. A mix of prison staff and staff from local colleges provides the prison's education and training programmes. Many of the offenders have poor levels of literacy and numeracy. A regular needs analysis has identified an average attainment of entry level 3. In addition to this, many offenders are disaffected and have experienced drug dependency, social exclusion and emotional difficulties. Initially, the main focus is to bring them back into a system they see as having previously failed them. HMP Featherstone aims to offer offenders a range of qualifications which will be achievable and will improve their employment skills and life chances. Some of the qualifications will deal with offending behaviour while others will be educational.

3. Learning provision at the establishment is in two main divisions, education and work-based learning. Both of these areas are the responsibility of the head of learning and skills but each is devolved down to a manager. The main education provision is contracted out to Dudley College, and run by the education manager. There is one main educational building, which is well equipped. The education provision concentrates mainly on offenders with literacy and numeracy needs. The training programmes include vocational courses in engineering and hairdressing up to level 3. Courses are also offered in business studies, information and communications technology and visual arts. Physical education (PE) classes offer local and national accreditation. Catering national vocational qualifications (NVQs) at levels 1 and 2 are offered in the main kitchen. The library is managed by Staffordshire County Library Service. It is staffed by a professional librarian on one afternoon and evening a week and at other times by prison officers. The industries department employs offenders in engineering, textiles and a metal finishing paint shop.

4. Work also takes place in the close observation unit, providing literacy, numeracy and key skills support to offenders who would otherwise be excluded. The work-based learning manager is a prison service employee. She is responsible for providing literacy, numeracy, language and key skills support to learners in all work areas, both to improve their skill levels and to help them to gain accreditation. She also supports instructional staff with advice on educational processes and procedures. Work-based learning is provided either by the prison service staff or through partnership agreements with external providers, supported by service level agreements.

## SCOPE OF PROVISION

### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

5. The prison offers programmes in performing engineering operations, performing manufacturing operations, distribution and warehousing at levels 1 and 2, and lift truck operations. Assessment and internal verification on engineering programmes are provided by Dudley and Stoke Colleges of Further Education. Prison workshop instructors provide training and witness testimony evidence for learners' portfolios. There are 10 learners on courses in performing engineering operations at level 2, of whom seven are on welding courses, two are on machine operations courses and one is on a paint spraying course. There are 31 learners on performing manufacturing operations programmes, of whom 26 are in textiles industries and five are in engineering production. In distribution and warehousing there are five learners at level 1. All programmes last for 12 weeks and offer flexible starts. Education staff provide support for literacy and numeracy in the workplace.

### Hairdressing & beauty therapy

6. There are 10 hairdressing learners following an NVQ at level 2 in barbering. The prison is also able to offer a barbering NVQ at level 3, but no learners are following this programme at present. Learners attend for four and a half days a week and receive practical and background knowledge training in the hairdressing salon situated in the education block. When there are level 3 learners, they train in a commercial salon in one of the prison workshops. The hairdressing co-ordinator, who is qualified as an assessor and internal verifier, is responsible for the overall operational activities of the provision. Currently there is one other assessor and the prison is actively recruiting to fill another post. Internal verification is carried out monthly by a member of staff from Dudley College.

## ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	4
Number of inspection days	12
Number of learners interviewed	40
Number of staff interviewed	8
Number of subcontractors interviewed	3
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	4
Number of visits	1

## OVERALL JUDGEMENT

7. At the previous inspection, training was unsatisfactory in engineering and hairdressing. Training was good in catering and PE and satisfactory in business studies, art and design and foundation programmes. Leadership and management were unsatisfactory, while arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality assurance were very weak. At the end of the reinspection process, engineering and hairdressing training were judged to be satisfactory. Leadership and management were good, as was quality assurance, and equality of opportunity was satisfactory. The quality of all other aspects of the prison's provision has been maintained.

## GRADES

*grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak*

*Grades awarded at reinspection*

<b>Leadership and management</b>		<b>2</b>
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality assurance		2
<b>Engineering, technology &amp; manufacturing</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Manufacturing</b>		
- Other government-funded provision	46	3
<b>Hairdressing &amp; beauty therapy</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Hairdressing</b>		
- Other government-funded provision	10	3

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievement and standards

8. **The retention rate in performing manufacturing operations is high at 96 per cent. The retention and achievement rates are high for lift truck operations** with 96 per cent retention and 98 per cent achievement in 2005. Learners on all programmes develop **good practical skills** in a real industrial context.

**9. Learners achieve good qualifications and practical skills on hairdressing programmes.**

Of the 12 learners who started the barbering NVQ at level 2 in 2004-05, eight achieved the qualification, an achievement rate of 66 per cent. Of the remaining learners, two left the course and two were released, of whom one continued the course at a local college. On the level 3 NVQ courses, five learners started during the same period and three achieved the NVQ.

10. There have been **delays in assessment for some learners on the performing engineering operations programme**, and they are making slow progress.

**Quality of education and training**

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	1	2	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

11. The table above only shows areas of learning in which two or more learning sessions have been observed and graded.

12. Since the previous inspection, partnership arrangements with Dudley and Stoke Colleges of Further Education have **improved the range of engineering qualifications** significantly to meet learners’ and local employers’ needs. **In lift truck operations there is a well-structured training programme** covering background knowledge and practical skills, with detailed course notes and projection slides.

13. **Learners on barbering courses have good opportunities to progress to higher qualifications and employment.** Staff have a good understanding of the requirements of the qualification and are skilled at helping learners to progress from level 2 qualifications to level 3.

14. Learners have good opportunities to work on clients from the prison in a busy salon environment. The range of haircutting taking place has increased since the previous inspection and learners now have better opportunities to carry out more complex fashion cutting on hair of different lengths.

15. Tutors in background knowledge learning sessions successfully use a variety of teaching methods including games and quizzes. Learners are motivated and find these sessions interesting and stimulating. Tutors give good individual support to help learners complete their assignments.

16. **Training and assessment are insufficiently co-ordinated in performing engineering operations and performing manufacturing operations.** Many instructors have a poor understanding of their learners’ progress and are not fully involved in reviewing it with assessors, or in setting actions plans and targets.



17. **There is insufficient literacy and numeracy support** to meet the needs of all those who need it. There is only one tutor, and she spends half a day a week with learners in the textiles shop and half a day in the engineering workshop.
18. **Housekeeping is poor in the engineering workshops.** Many work areas are untidy and cluttered and there is insufficient attention to learners' use of personal and protective equipment.
19. **On the barbering course, insufficient attention is given to setting short-term targets** for learners. Learners are set targets at their fortnightly reviews, but they are insufficiently specific and are not linked to particular units of the qualification. The targets do not challenge learners to progress faster to achieve their qualification.

### **Leadership and management**

20. Leadership and management have improved significantly since the previous inspection was carried out some two years ago. There is now **a good range of well-planned and effectively managed activities** leading to nationally recognised qualifications. For example, the extensive range of vocational training now includes well-established programmes such as warehousing and distribution, lift truck operations, industrial cleaning, performing engineering operations, performing manufacturing operations, and business administration.
21. **Partnerships with learning and skills providers and support agencies are extremely well managed** and significantly better than at the previous inspection. Colleges of further education play a key role in supporting vocational training in the production workshops, providing well-managed assessment and internal verification activities.
22. The **collection and use of management data has improved significantly and is now good.** A wide range of information is collected about progress, participation and achievement, and trend monitoring meetings are held frequently to review targets. All staff are aware of learners' targets and progress on most programmes.
23. **The promotion and practice of equality of opportunity has improved significantly** since the previous inspection. The prison has rectified specific aspects of its provision that were preventing all learners from receiving the education that best suited their individual needs.
24. The allocation of learners to activities has improved, with vocational tasters being used to help learners decide what activities to participate in. An improved and thorough initial assessment ensures a better match between course and learner.
25. **Quality assurance arrangements have improved substantially** since the previous inspection and are now good. There are well-conceived and implemented arrangements in place to support quality assurance and improvement.
26. The self-assessment report is rigorous and evaluative and has drawn widely on the

## HMP FEATHERSTONE REINSPECTION

views of staff at a range of levels, through regular formal meetings.

27. The quality systems audit process is very good. It is used to monitor and assess partners' quality assurance arrangements against the prison's own quality assurance requirements. The audit process is thorough and focused around the partners' processes for planning and management.

28. There is **insufficient involvement of production workshop staff in the planning of training, management and the assessment process**. There is little communication between training staff and assessors and little planned integration of training and assessment.

29. There is **no formal strategy or forum to develop equality of opportunity** for learning and skills strategically within the prison, and ethnicity data is not routinely shared between different departments.

### Leadership and management

#### Strengths

- good range of well-planned and managed activities to meet learners' and employers' needs
- very effective partnerships with learning and skills providers and support agencies
- good actions to promote equality of opportunity
- well-conceived and implemented arrangements to support quality assurance and improvement

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement of staff in the training and assessment of learners on the engineering programme
- no formal strategies to develop equality of opportunity

## **Engineering, technology & manufacturing**

### ***Manufacturing***

#### *Strengths*

- good retention rate on performing manufacturing operations and lift truck operations courses
- particularly good development of learners' practical skills
- good range of courses to support learning

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient co-ordination of training and assessment
- insufficient literacy and numeracy support to meet all learners' needs
- poor housekeeping practices in the engineering workshops

## **Hairdressing & beauty therapy**

### ***Hairdressing***

#### *Strengths*

- good achievement of qualifications and practical skills
- good progression to further qualifications and employment

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient attention to setting improvement targets for learners

## DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDING

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 2

#### Strengths

- good range of well-planned and managed activities to meet learners' and employers' needs
- very effective partnerships with learning and skills providers and support agencies
- good actions to promote equality of opportunity
- well-conceived and implemented arrangements to support quality assurance and improvement

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient involvement of staff in the training and assessment of learners on the engineering programme
- no formal strategies to develop equality of opportunity

30. Leadership and management have improved significantly since the previous inspection was carried out, some two years ago. At that time the report highlighted a number of proposed initiatives to develop education and training in the prison. Since then many of those initiatives have been implemented. There is now a good range of well-planned and effectively managed activities leading to nationally recognised qualifications. Learners can develop good practical skills in production workshops where staff observe and accredit their skills against standards which are accepted by industry. For example, the extensive range of vocational training now includes well-established programmes such as warehousing and distribution, lift truck operations, industrial cleaning, performing engineering operations, performing manufacturing operations and business administration.

31. Open learning courses are well managed and supported and close links with local colleges have resulted in several learners going on to further education courses upon release. The prison population has changed over the past few months and many more learners are now being referred to HMP Featherstone from local prisons. Learners are in the prison for much shorter periods and the prison has changed its induction and allocation processes significantly to ensure that they are able to benefit from access to learning and skills as quickly as possible.

32. Partnerships with learning and skills providers and support agencies are extremely well managed and have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Colleges of further education play a key role in supporting vocational training in the production workshops, providing well-managed assessment and internal verification. The prison has developed its partnerships with the subcontracted colleges to ensure that each uses its particular expertise in supporting learning. Most of the courses are designed to support

skills shortages and area regeneration projects. New areas such as bricklaying training are planned for the future to meet the needs of local employers. The prison has maintained its relationships with agencies such as Relate and the Beth Johnson Foundation to support learners on offending behaviour programmes and after release. Resettlement staff continue to work closely with learning and skills staff and voluntary agencies and provide extensive support for job-related and personal problems and concerns.

33. Staff manage the work allocation process well and make good use of tasters in the workshops and training areas. These sessions can last a few weeks if necessary, and they play a major role in helping to manage waiting times. The time is also used effectively to carry out a thorough and detailed assessment of learners' needs.

34. The arrangements for supporting learners' literacy, numeracy and language needs are satisfactory. Staff from the education department provide effective support in the workshops, vocational training areas and residential units. However, in some areas such as the engineering workshops, accommodation and staff resources are inadequate to support all learners' needs.

35. The management of resources is satisfactory and there are now sufficient instructors and tutors to cover the range of courses provided. For example, improved barbering facilities mean that more learners can participate in courses, and higher levels of qualifications can be provided.

36. The collection and use of management data has improved significantly and is now good. A wide range of information is collected about progress, participation and achievement, and trend monitoring meetings are held frequently to review targets. All staff are aware of learners' targets and progress on most programmes, and comparisons are made between groups of learners. The head of learning and skills is currently refining the management information system to provide information at individual course level.

37. There is insufficient involvement of production workshop staff in the planning of training, management and the assessment process. Experienced and well-qualified training staff provide excellent support for the development of practical skills. College staff provide a well-planned and structured assessment and verification service. However, there is little communication between training staff and assessors and little planned integration of training and assessment. Assessment is sometimes delayed and a few learners are making slow progress through the assessment process. Learners have progress reviews, but learners, assessors and trainers rarely meet to discuss training and assessment needs.

### **Equality of opportunity**

### **Contributory grade 3**

38. The promotion and practice of equality of opportunity has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. The prison has taken good action to rectify specific aspects of its provision that were preventing all learners from receiving the education that best suited their individual needs. For example, there were some

## HMP FEATHERSTONE REINSPECTION

wide differentials in pay rates that were a disincentive for some learners to take part in education. Pay rates are now similar for all activities. The number of learners in education, and who are retained for the duration of a course, has steadily risen. Learners in education are generally kept at the prison so that they can complete their course. Course attendance is also improving and is consistently over 80 per cent.

39. The allocation of learners to activities has improved. Vocational tasters help learners decide what activities to participate in. An improved and thorough initial assessment ensures a better match between course and learner. The amount of time that learners may spend in the allocation area before starting courses has fallen to around two to three weeks. Waiting lists are at a minimum. If classes are cancelled, learners can choose an alternative class rather than returning to their cells.

40. There is a good range of courses aimed at improving learners' skills and preparing them for employment. The number of courses available to learners has been increased, particularly at entry level and level 1, although there is insufficient provision for entry level learners. The good and extending range of partnerships with colleges and other outside agencies is beginning to provide planned progression to mainstream college courses, with additional support for personal issues such as housing. This kind of integrated support for learners pre- and post-release is at an early stage of development but is working well and ensuring that resettlement staff are fully involved in the learning process.

41. There is a satisfactory range of up-to-date policies and procedures, which reflects the prison's approach to equality of opportunity. The arrangements for multi-faith prayer continue to be good. Access to education and training for learners with restricted movement or a disability remains satisfactory. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of the complaints procedures, and the arrangements for dealing with complaints are also satisfactory.

42. Induction and reinforcement of equality of opportunity and diversity issues are now satisfactory. A well-taught and attended three-week diversity course has recently started, and learners participate well. Feedback from learners on past courses is good. However, this course is currently only available to learners who are unemployed, although there are plans to extend access to employed offenders.

43. Library facilities are now satisfactory. The resources have been extended to include networked computers and a jobsearch terminal. The range of books and literature has been expanded to include a greater range of material likely to appeal to readers from minority ethnic groups. The library also houses a job club, a housing and resettlement office, and a successful Toe by Toe reading mentoring and support scheme to encourage non-readers to learn to read.

44. A range of family support programmes has been introduced, for example in parentcraft, and an innovative new programme for learners nearing release and their partners, in which they explore and discuss potential post-release stresses in relationships. These initiatives are in their early stages and it is too early to gauge their

effect. There is satisfactory collection and use of data on the ethnicity of learners on education programmes. A revised learners' charter clearly sets out the prison's commitment to learning, and learners' rights and entitlements, including the right to complain. However, not all staff are aware of or understand the charter.

45. All staff took part in equality and diversity training between June 2005 and September 2005. However, inspectors observed some inappropriate use of language between instructors and offenders, and there were inappropriate images on display in some working areas. The learning and skills staff do not yet all have an overall acceptance and understanding of the wider aspects of equality of opportunity.

46. The number of offenders serving sentences of less than 12 months has recently increased to 10 per cent of the total and some learners' needs are not being met. The prison is well aware of this and is attempting to find a solution.

47. There is no formal strategy or forum in the prison to develop equality of opportunity for learning and skills. Ethnicity data is not routinely shared between different departments. There are several groups which meet to ensure that equality issues are dealt with, but insufficient information is shared between them. A new diversity manager has been appointed but has yet to start work.

### **Quality assurance**

### **Contributory grade 2**

48. Quality improvement arrangements have improved substantially since the previous inspection and are now good. There is a comprehensive, up-to-date and clearly stated quality improvement framework, the elements of which have been put into practice well, particularly during the past six months. Quality improvement processes for the education provision are managed through a quality improvement group which meets every two months, and has been in place since August 2004. There is evidence of good, responsive action-planning by the quality improvement group to achieve well-defined quality improvement projects to set deadlines. The group plays a key role in the production and monitoring of the self-assessment report.

49. The quality systems audit process is very good and is used to monitor and assess partners' quality improvement arrangements against the prison's own. The audit process is thorough and focuses on the partners' processes for planning and management, support for learners, and internal and external moderation. The partners' audit files are maintained by the prison. They contain a wide range of information including the prison's assessment against clearly defined standards for aspects such as progress plans, internal verification practice and sampling records, staff qualifications, continuing professional development, and policies and procedures.

50. Staff make good use of learners' evaluations of courses to identify what is working well and what needs to be improved. If necessary, additional funding or resources are allocated to improve course delivery. Learners' overall satisfaction with courses is high, and generally averages above 95 per cent.

#### HMP FEATHERSTONE REINSPECTION

51. The collection and analysis of data to identify trends is good, although the software program is cumbersome. A trend analysis meeting is held every two months and provides a useful forum in which to discuss issues raised through the analysis of data.

52. The self-assessment report is rigorous and evaluative and has drawn widely on the views of staff at a range of levels, through regular formal meetings. Inspectors' findings matched many of the grades and judgements in the self-assessment report, but they identified some different strengths and weaknesses. Most staff understand the need for and value of the quality improvement arrangements now in place, but some are less supportive.



## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Engineering, technology & manufacturing

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Manufacturing</b>		
- Other government-funded provision	46	3

#### **Manufacturing**

##### *Strengths*

- good retention rate on performing manufacturing operations and lift truck operations courses
- particularly good development of learners' practical skills
- good range of courses to support learning

##### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient co-ordination of training and assessment
- insufficient literacy and numeracy support to meet all learners' needs
- poor housekeeping practices in the engineering workshops

#### **Achievement and standards**

53. In performing manufacturing operations, the retention rate is high at 96 per cent. There have been no achievements yet, but learners are making satisfactory progress towards completion. Retention and achievement rates in lift truck operations are good, particularly in 2005 when the retention rate was 96 per cent and the achievement rate was 98 per cent. The retention rate in performing engineering operations is satisfactory. Ten of the 15 learners who started in October 2005 are still in learning. Learners who left early did so because of early release, transfer or for discipline reasons. Achievement and progress are satisfactory overall. No learners have achieved a full qualification, but 27 units have been achieved. The courses are too new to identify trends over time.

54. Learners continue to develop very good practical skills in a production environment. They have a good understanding of engineering operations and manufacturing processes and produce good-quality work to industrial standards using tools and equipment competently with minimum supervision. For example, they manufacture beds, chairs and tables for other establishments, working to deadlines to realistic production targets. This strength was recognised in the previous inspection. The more experienced learners become demonstrators, and help to train new arrivals. This builds their self-esteem, improving their confidence and attracting respect from their peers. Learners have a particularly good working relationship with their instructors and assessors and this creates

a relaxed environment for learning.

### **Quality of education and training**

55. Training is satisfactory and there is a good range of courses to support learning. Since the previous inspection, partnership arrangements with Dudley and Stoke Colleges of Further Education have improved the range of qualifications significantly to meet learners' and local employers' needs. The number of learners that can take part in training has also increased. The range of qualifications provides learners with good opportunities for progression. Most courses have attracted many applicants, and learners' feedback indicates high levels of satisfaction with their training, progress, and achievement. The introduction of the lift truck operator's course is particularly beneficial to learners who are soon to be released.

56. Assessment of learners' performance and portfolio evidence is satisfactory. Assessors visit learners weekly to observe them and mark their work. They give written feedback and set action plans and targets for progression. Learners who have difficulty writing their answers are questioned verbally. However, some of the answers given are not sufficiently detailed or specific. Learners' portfolios are satisfactory. They are well organised, structured and contain a range of evidence that includes observation reports, witness testimony, written and oral questions, and engineering drawings. Learners' portfolios are held by their assessor. Some learners have little involvement in the process and do not fully understand the evidence requirements. Internal verification was identified as a weakness by the previous inspection, but is now satisfactory and meets awarding body requirements.

57. In lift truck operations there is a well-structured practical and background training programme with detailed course notes and projection slides. The distribution and warehousing programme is new and three learners have recently been registered with the awarding body.

58. Training and assessment are insufficiently co-ordinated in performing engineering operations and performing manufacturing operations. At the previous inspection the planning and management of training was judged to be inadequate. Steps have been taken to deal with this through the appointment of a work-based learning manager. Many instructors have a poor understanding of their learners' progress and are not fully involved in progress reviews or setting action plans and targets. Learners do not understand their individual learning plans, and most plans are not used to identify the stages through which the learner will achieve their target qualification. There are no formal regular meetings for instructors and assessors to discuss and co-ordinate training and assessment plans. Some performing engineering operations learners who started training in October 2005 are making slow progress. Some learners have achieved six units while others are still working towards their first. This new weakness was identified in the self-assessment report.

59. There is insufficient literacy and numeracy support to meet the needs of all the

learners who require it. One tutor spends half a day a week with learners in the textiles shop and half a day in the engineering workshop. The prison has increased the range of staff who are able to refer learners for support and this has led to an increase in the numbers being referred. Staff make good use of a computer-based assessment programme as a teaching and learning aid. While the content of the support is relevant and well taught, staffing levels have not increased to accommodate the additional learners. Some accommodation in the workshops is inadequate and not conducive to learning.

60. Housekeeping is poor in the engineering workshops. Many work areas are untidy and cluttered. For example, walkways and welding bays are littered with paper, magazines and clothing that may present a fire hazard. There are insufficient facilities for learners to store their personal protective equipment. Some machines have discarded waste materials scattered nearby restricting access. There is insufficient promotion and monitoring of health and safety. In one engineering workshop, learners were permitted to use machinery without wearing eye protection. This practice was not challenged by instructors.

### **Leadership and management**

61. Since the previous inspection, there has been a greater emphasis on increasing the training capacity, widening the range of training programmes and improving learners' potential for employment. The introduction of partnerships for performing engineering operations and performing manufacturing operations courses has provided the greatest challenge for managers and staff. The appointment of a work-based learning manager has led to improved lines of management and communication. There are clear procedures for quality assurance. Colleges' performance and learners' progress and achievement are closely monitored. Equality of opportunity is not sufficiently promoted and monitored. In some engineering workshops there are still inappropriate images on display. These were evident at the previous inspection and during monitoring visits.

**Hairdressing & beauty therapy**

<b>Hairdressing &amp; beauty therapy</b>		<b>3</b>
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<b>Hairdressing</b> - Other government-funded provision	10	3

**Hairdressing***Strengths*

- good achievement of qualifications and practical skills
- good progression to further qualifications and employment

*Weaknesses*

- insufficient attention to setting improvement targets for learners

**Achievement and standards**

62. The rate of achievement of qualifications and practical skills is good. Of the 12 learners who started the level 2 barbering NVQ in 2004-05, eight achieved their NVQ, an achievement rate of 66 per cent. Of the remaining learners, two left the course and two were released, of whom one continued the course at a local college. On the level 3 NVQ courses for the same period, five learners started and three achieved their NVQ. One of the others was transferred to another prison having achieved four units towards the qualification. The 10 learners who are currently following barbering courses are making good progress and are on target to achieve their qualification. Retention rates on both programmes are satisfactory.

63. Learners quickly develop good practical barbering skills which they are able to use in a realistic commercial environment. They demonstrate good scissor skills and are able to produce a range of different haircuts. They are also able to trim and shape facial hair to a good professional standard. Learners carry out consultations with clients and can identify factors that may restrict the style that can be achieved, such as the texture and density of the hair. This strength was recognised at the previous inspection and has been maintained. Most offenders have their hair cut either in the training salon or in the salon in the workshops. The standard of learners' portfolio work is satisfactory.

**Quality of education and training**

64. Learners have good opportunities to progress to higher qualifications and employment. Staff have a good understanding of the requirements of the qualifications and are skilled at helping learners to progress from level 2 to level 3. Learners who express an interest in becoming self-employed hairdressers are encouraged to take

courses such as money management. Staff have arranged for learners to gain valuable work experience with commercial salons in the area and also helped them to progress into courses at local colleges upon release. The prison has developed effective links with local employers, which helps create employment opportunities for learners. One employer has donated a prestigious award to the prison to help motivate learners.

65. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The small group sizes enable trainers to give good individual coaching. Learners have good opportunities to work on clients from the prison in a busy salon environment. The range of haircutting taking place has widened since the previous inspection, and learners now have better opportunities to carry out more complex fashion cutting on hair of different lengths. In background knowledge learning sessions, tutors successfully use a variety of teaching methods, including games and puzzles, to engage learners. Learners are motivated and find these sessions interesting and stimulating. They receive good individual support from staff to help them complete their assignment work. Staff use schemes of work and have a structured approach to training. On one half-day a week, learners receive key skills training linked to the vocational area. Assessments are planned and learners are clear about the qualification and the types of assessments they need to complete. Assessment of learners' work is satisfactory. It takes place frequently and in accordance with awarding body standards. Assessments are recorded well and monitored effectively.

66. Resources are satisfactory and the accommodation reflects current industry standards. Each of the two salons has a realistic reception area and operates an appointment system to meet the requirements of the NVQ. Personal protective equipment is of a good standard and sufficient for the number of learners on the course.

67. The arrangements for literacy and numeracy support are satisfactory. Learners receive a comprehensive assessment of their literacy and numeracy skills during induction and those who are identified as requiring help can access individual support on half a day a week. The type of support given is recorded and the learners' progress is evaluated.

68. Induction arrangements have been improved since the previous inspection, and better initial advice and guidance is given to learners who have expressed an interest in joining the barbering course. Learners are now better informed about the requirements of the qualification. Access to training, which was a weakness at the previous inspection, has improved and now is satisfactory. Learners can now join courses within a few weeks of expressing an interest.

69. Tutors pay insufficient attention to setting short-term targets for learners. Learners are set targets at their fortnightly reviews. They broadly understand the progress they are making and have a clear monitoring document in their portfolios. However, the short-term targets they are given are insufficiently specific and are not linked to particular units of the qualification. They do not challenge learners to progress faster to achieve their qualification.

## **Leadership and management**

70. Since the previous inspection, internal verification has been improved and is now satisfactory. An internal verifier from Dudley College visits every month to review progress. Internal verification is now adequately planned to cover an appropriate sample of evidence across all units of the qualification. Assessors are observed and given valuable written feedback. Action points identified by the internal verifier are checked to ensure that they have been dealt with. The results of internal verification and external verifiers' reports are discussed at the monthly team meeting.

71. The planning of hairdressing training is satisfactory. A variety of data is collected on all aspects of learners' progress including retention. Data on learners' achievement and progress is regularly used to evaluate the effectiveness of each course. Course evaluations also use the results of learner surveys. The self-assessment process included all staff, and the resulting report is broadly accurate in identifying strengths and weaknesses. The report was sufficiently self-critical and strengths were supported by clear evidence.

72. Learners' understanding of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. However, the marketing material used to promote the hairdressing course on the accommodation wings contains inappropriate information that may deter some learners from applying for the course.