

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HMP Risley**

**10 February 2006**



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 aged over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learnirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.
- 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.

### Pre-inspection analysis

The resources allocated to a cycle 2 inspection are primarily determined by the findings from the previous inspection. Account is also taken of information about achievement and retention obtained from the funding body, and any significant changes in the size or scope of the provision.

Where a provider has received good grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is relatively light. If the provider offers a number of areas of learning, a restricted sample is inspected.

Where a provider has received satisfactory grades in cycle 1, the cycle 2 inspection is less intensive and it is possible that not all areas of learning are included.

Where there are significant unsatisfactory grades from cycle 1, the intensity of the cycle 2 inspection is broadly the same as cycle 1, and all significant areas of learning are inspected.

Providers that have not previously been inspected will receive a full inspection.

## Overall effectiveness

The grades given for areas of learning and leadership and management will be used to arrive at a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the provider.

An **outstanding** provider should typically have leadership and management and at least half of the areas of learning judged to be a grade 1. All area of learning grades will be graded 1 or 2.

A **good** provider should have leadership and management and at least half of the area of learning grades judged to be a grade 2 or better. A good training provider should not have any grade 4s, and few grade 3s in the areas of learning.

A **satisfactory** provider should have adequate or better grades in leadership and management and in at least two thirds of the area of learning grades. An adequate provider might have a range of grades across areas of learning, some of which might be graded 4.

Provision will normally be deemed to be **inadequate** where more than one third of the area of learning grades and/or leadership and management are judged to be inadequate.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning.

## Grading

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

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

# INSPECTION REPORT

## HMP Risley

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## INSPECTION REPORT

### DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Risley (the prison) is situated between Warrington and Leigh in Cheshire. The prison opened in 1965 and its previous function was as a remand centre for men and women. In 1990 it became a 440-place training prison with an integrated regime for mainstream and vulnerable category C offenders. In March 2000 the prison assumed a single function as a category C training prison for approximately 800 male offenders. An additional wing was built and two of the existing wings were refurbished. The prison is now the eighth largest training prison in England and Wales with a certified normal accommodation of 1,048 places and an operational capacity of 1,083. These figures have been reduced to 983 and 1,073, respectively, while a new segregation unit is being built. One wing is a resettlement unit with a target population of category C offenders from Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Merseyside who are within three to six months of release. Two other wings accommodate, separately, vulnerable offenders and offenders who require support to recover from drugs misuse. The establishment typically holds about 50 life sentence offenders at any one time. The average length of stay for offenders at HMP Risley is approximately three years. This figure is affected by the number of offenders who are serving life sentences and also by the number of offenders who are transferred for three to six months on resettlement programmes.

2. The head of learning and skills is responsible for all the education and vocational training that is subcontracted to and delivered by City College Manchester (the college). The head of learning and skills is a member of the prison's strategic senior management team, and reports to the head of resettlement who is responsible for all learning and skills activities in the prison. The head of activities oversees the operation of the vocational and production workshops and liaises closely with the head of learning and skills. Vocational training is offered in the construction trades, laundry and physical education (PE). Thirty learners are working on construction crafts programmes and 12 learners are following a 'fitness for life' programme. Courses in lift truck driving and large goods vehicle (LGV) operations were offered last year, and it is expected that they will be offered again this year.

3. Education courses are provided in two buildings in the prison, and there are 329 places in foundation programmes within the education department. Of these, 217 learners attend programmes in literacy, numeracy and language, 59 are learning social and life skills, and 53 learners are on foundation art programmes. These figures do not include support for learners in workshops and vocational training. Programmes are offered from pre-entry level to level 2. Social and life skills modules are provided in subjects which include parenting, budgeting, assertiveness, drug and alcohol awareness, and decision-making. A separate foundation programme is provided for vulnerable offenders on their living accommodation wing. Classes are provided on a part-time basis and sessions last for three hours, some learners who follow more than one programme attend on a full-time basis. Sixty-five learners are enrolled on ICT courses. Learners work towards nationally recognised qualifications at level 1, 2, and 3.

**OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS****Grade 3**

4. **The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory.** The prison's leadership and management are satisfactory, as are its arrangements for quality improvement and equality of opportunity. The literacy and numeracy provision is satisfactory as are information and communications technology (ICT) for users, and construction crafts. The provision in sports, leisure and recreation is inadequate.

5. **The inspection team was broadly confident in the reliability of the self-assessment process.** The self-assessment process is updated annually and the updated report identified many of the improvements found at inspection.

6. **The provider has demonstrated that it has sufficient capacity to make improvements.** The prison's efforts to introduce more skills training and accreditation are beginning to have an effect in vocational and production working areas. Some courses have been suspended for staffing and operational reasons.

**KEY CHALLENGES FOR HMP RISLEY:**

- expand the vocational training opportunities
- reduce the excessive disruptions to courses
- review the level of courses on offer
- improve the quality of teaching
- implement the government's strategy on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language, 'skills for life', in a timely manner
- review the PE programme

**GRADES**

*grade 1 = outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = inadequate*

| <b>Leadership and management</b> |  | <b>3</b> |
|----------------------------------|--|----------|
| Contributory grades:             |  |          |
| Equality of opportunity          |  | 3        |
| Quality improvement              |  | 3        |

| <b>Construction, planning and the built environment</b> |                           |                           | <b>3</b> |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| <b>Contributory areas:</b>                              | <b>Number of learners</b> | <b>Contributory grade</b> |          |
| <b>Construction crafts</b>                              |                           | <b>3</b>                  |          |
| Other government-funded provision                       | 30                        | 3                         |          |

| Information and communications technology |                    | 3                  |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Contributory areas:                       | Number of learners | Contributory grade |
| <i>ICT for users</i>                      |                    | 3                  |
| Other government-funded provision         | 65                 | 3                  |

| Leisure, travel and tourism          |                    | 4                  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Contributory areas:                  | Number of learners | Contributory grade |
| <i>Sport, leisure and recreation</i> |                    | 4                  |
| Other government-funded provision    | 12                 | 4                  |

| Preparation for life and work     |                    | 3                  |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Contributory areas:               | Number of learners | Contributory grade |
| <i>Literacy and numeracy</i>      |                    | 3                  |
| Other government-funded provision | 329                | 3                  |

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

7. All areas of education, training and work were inspected, although catering and laundry training were not graded because of the small numbers in training. The findings from these two areas were taken account of, however, and were included in the leadership and management sections of the report.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of inspectors                               | 6  |
| Number of inspection days                          | 25 |
| Number of learners interviewed                     | 84 |
| Number of staff interviewed                        | 50 |
| Number of subcontractors interviewed               | 9  |
| Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited | 1  |
| Number of partners/external agencies interviewed   | 2  |

## KEY FINDINGS

### Achievements and standards

8. **Achievement rates are good on literacy and numeracy level 2 national tests. They are also good for ICT at level 1. Achievement and retention rates are very good for painting and decorating courses. In PE the retention and achievement rates are low, and there is not enough monitoring to find out why learners leave the programmes before completing their objectives.**

9. **Learners acquire practical skills well in construction trades.** In observed training sessions, learners demonstrated good levels of knowledge and standards in practical skills. Basic preparation for work skills are being introduced into the production work areas, **although other work skills are not being assessed and accredited.**

10. **Not enough vocational training opportunities are available for what is a large category C training prison.** Courses in industrial cleaning have been suspended, and there is no accreditation of gardening skills. The kitchens have just one learner on a training programme. **The PE department only offers level 1 courses and progress by learners is slow.** A hairdressing facility is operating in the prison, and although it previously offered training and qualifications, it no longer does so.

### The quality of provision

Grades given to learning sessions

|  | Grade 1  | Grade 2  | Grade 3   | Grade 4  | Total     |
|--|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Construction, planning and the built environment | 0        | 1        | 3         | 0        | 4         |
| Information and communications technology        | 0        | 1        | 2         | 1        | 4         |
| Leisure, travel and tourism                      | 0        | 0        | 2         | 0        | 2         |
| Preparation for life and work                    | 0        | 3        | 10        | 1        | 14        |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>0</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>17</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>24</b> |

11. **Good procedures are used by instructors in construction to record learners' achievements and to monitor their progress.** Teaching is satisfactory in ICT classes. **In some lessons, there is some good individual coaching and checking of learners' understanding.** Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory on the PE courses, and in literacy and numeracy classes.

12. Resources in most areas are satisfactory, although a new PE fitness suite in one of the accommodation units is not being used. **Individual learning is not planned sufficiently in literacy and numeracy programmes.** Lesson plans are too general and do not clearly identify learning activities and outcomes. Some of the computers in current use are quite old, but a new suite of computers is awaiting installation in the education department.

13. Arrangements for initial assessment are satisfactory. An initial screening of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills is carried out at the prison induction. Learners attending courses then complete a further diagnosis of their skills in literacy and numeracy. The assessment of language needs is satisfactory and consists of speaking, listening and writing activities. Dyslexia screening is available, but this is not routinely applied to all offenders who may show signs of dyslexia.

14. Induction to all programmes is satisfactory. Learners are made aware of their rights and responsibilities to others. Learners sign a compact agreement when they join education courses, to agree what treatment and behaviour levels are to be expected and provided.

15. Internal verification is satisfactory and meets awarding body requirements for all the accredited courses offered.



## Leadership and management

16. **Good initiatives have been introduced recently to provide education and skills in work and vocational training areas. The education department provides good, contextualised literacy, numeracy and key skills support on an outreach basis in the workshops.** Preparation for work courses are also being piloted by education staff in these areas, which are beginning to involve the workshop supervisors. **However, there are not enough vocational training courses, and competing regime issues interrupt the courses.**

17. The prison's promotion of equality of opportunity and diversity is satisfactory. A race relations management team meets every other month to discuss racial issues and offenders' and staff's behaviour. Equality and diversity data relating to the ethnic backgrounds of offenders is routinely collected and analysed as part of the prison's monitoring arrangements.

18. A review of offenders' pay was conducted September 2005. Policies were then implemented to ensure that offenders will not be worse off financially by attending education or training.

19. **Good quality improvement processes have been implemented.** Lessons are observed in the education department and in the workshops, and improvement opportunities are discussed and introduced. Learners' views are sought about the training courses and they receive good feedback about any changes made as a result of their comments. Review meetings with subcontractors are used to look actively for quality improvement opportunities, and not just at contractual compliance.

## Leadership and management

### Strengths

- good initiatives to provide education and skills accreditation in the production workshops
- good quality improvement processes

### Weaknesses

- insufficient vocational training opportunities
- excessive disruptions to courses

## Construction, planning and the built environment

### *Construction crafts*

**Grade 3**

### *Strengths*

- good acquisition of practical skills focused on employability
- very good retention and achievement rates in painting and decorating
- good recording and monitoring of progress
- good use of contextualised learning materials for skills for life support

*Weaknesses*

- no opportunities to gain qualifications in multi-skills and construction
- no availability of courses above level 1
- reduction of teaching time

**Information and communications technology**

***ICT for users***

***Grade 3***

*Strengths*

- good achievement rates on level 1 computer courses
- good development of learners' skills
- good use of peer tutors to support learning

*Weaknesses*

- insufficient planning of individual learning
- inadequate range of programmes for beginners
- insufficient software update training for tutors

**Leisure, travel and tourism**

***Sport, leisure and recreation***

***Grade 4***

*Strengths*

- good recent initiatives to improve learning

*Weaknesses*

- low retention and achievement rates
- insufficient opportunities to gain skills and qualifications to enhance employability
- inadequate planning of learning
- insufficient support for literacy, numeracy and key skills

## **Preparation for life and work**

### ***Literacy and numeracy***

**Grade 3**

#### *Strengths*

- good achievement rates for literacy and numeracy level 2
- good use of peer support
- good access to literacy and numeracy support

#### *Weaknesses*

- insufficient planning of individual learning
- insufficient use of information technology (IT) to support learners
- slow implementation of the skills for life strategy

## **WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT HMP RISLEY:**

- using the computers
- being treated with respect by the tutors
- learning new skills and getting qualifications
- 'we like the support from the peer tutors'
- 'I have learnt a lot - I haven't been to school for a long time'
- 'we like the teachers'
- 'I like being able to learn at my own pace'
- 'food is OK - you get good portions'
- most officers are approachable and helpful
- two hours for visits
- 'I like the gym'

## **WHAT LEARNERS THINK HMP RISLEY COULD IMPROVE:**

- the ways of learning how to use the internet
- the slow appointment systems to see the optician
- the opportunities for vocational training
- the quality of the food
- the amount of weekend activities available
- the process for booking visits needs to be simpler
- communications - 'managers don't take notice of other's views'
- 'not a good place for lifers - train the staff in lifer issues'
- the waiting lists for courses - they are too long
- the speed of responses to applications for courses

## DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Grade 3**

#### Strengths

- good initiatives to provide education and skills accreditation in the production workshops
- good quality improvement processes

#### Weaknesses

- insufficient vocational training opportunities
- excessive disruptions to courses

20. Education, and the vocational training programmes delivered by the education department, are the responsibility of the head of learning and skills. This person is a member of the strategic senior management team and reports directly to the head of resettlement. The head of resettlement has responsibility for all education, vocational training and work areas in the prison. Education is subcontracted to the college. The head of learning and skills liaises with the industries manager who has daily responsibility for all the production workshops and the vocational training areas operated by prison staff.

21. The prison has introduced good initiatives recently to provide education and skills accreditation in the production workshops and vocational training areas. The production workshops mainly provide low skilled and menial work for offenders. In many of the workshops, offenders are playing cards and reading newspapers. Often, only a few of those learners in the workshops are regularly carrying out production work. The education department provides support in the workshops for offenders with literacy or numeracy needs, and this is contextualised to be relevant to the production work. The education department has just begun to pilot a basic preparation for work course in the workshop areas. Many of the workshop instructors have been reluctant previously to be involved in assessing and accrediting the work skills shown by some learners, but they are now beginning to become involved by helping and assessing some of the learners. Vocational training courses are generally well planned and allow learners to acquire useful work skills. The education department provides contextualised literacy and numeracy training for those learners with such needs while they are working in the vocational training areas.

22. The implementation of the skills for life strategy and the response to the national initiative has been slow. The education department has a range of current documents including a strategy document, which was produced in April 2005, with an action plan, as well as a strategic objective and an action plan for the skills for life quality initiative. However, these documents are not linked effectively enough to provide a coherent strategy to support implementation.

23. A small laundry production workshop also provides work for offenders in washing all the bedding, linen and clothing of the prison. Last year, 10 learners were accredited with a level 2 award in laundry work. Another five learners are progressing well and expected to gain the level 2 award by March 2006. A Braille workshop is also available for vulnerable offenders. They learn to transcribe books into Braille, for blind or partially sighted people,

on computers. The Braille workshop is operated in collaboration with a charitable organisation that works in prisons, and learners gain qualifications that are accredited by the organisation. The Braille workshop provides work for six learners who often remain working in the workshop until they are released or moved to another prison. A workshop that was established to repair computers in collaboration with another charitable project was closed during the inspection, and it was not clear whether it would be reopened in the near future. A training area for industrial cleaning was also closed, and again it was not known when it will be operational again. A barbering workshop had previously offered qualifications to learners, but it is currently used as a service for cutting offenders' hair, and there is no accredited training available.

24. The range of vocational courses available is too restricted to meet the needs of the population of this prison. The vocational skills courses that do offer qualifications have good achievement rates and there are waiting lists of offenders wanting to join the courses. None of the offenders working in the gardens are able to gain qualifications or attend accredited horticultural course. Working in the garden has changed from being classed as 'activities', to being part of the works department. Offenders in the gardening works party also empty the bins and are involved in waste management for approximately 50 per cent of their time. Ten to 12 offenders work regularly in the gardening works party. Offenders on the gardening works party do, however, attend key skills sessions on Friday afternoons with education staff. The head of learning and skills has put forward a suggestion that the two members of the gardening staff are employed by the college on Friday afternoons to develop a gardening programme. This proposal is being considered. The head of learning and skills would like to offer accredited qualifications in gardening.

25. Thirteen orderlies work in the kitchen and eight work in the staff restaurant. Only one of these offenders is on an accredited vocational programme. A basic food hygiene course is offered by the education department and is a prerequisite for working in the catering areas. Kitchen portering at level 1 is the only qualification provided for catering staff. Some good initiatives introduced recently are beginning to improve learning opportunities. Four qualified assessors and two qualified internal verifiers have been trained in the past year. Plans are established to introduce the national vocational qualification (NVQ) at level 2 in food preparation and cooking. Long-term plans include the introduction of the level 3 NVQ and using the staff restaurant to provide more training opportunities. However, the implementation of these plans is slow. Retention and achievement rates are poor. Of the eight learners who began the NVQ at level 1 in kitchen portering, only one is still on programme. All the others have left the programme without achieving the qualification. The remaining learner is making slow progress and has not met his expected completion date of November last year.

26. There are excessive disruptions to courses, together with late starts and early finishes. Learners make slow progress. They often arrive late or are absent from courses. Other regime activities interfere with course timetables. For example, learners regularly miss training courses to attend recreational PE in the gymnasium. There is no provision of education or training classes in the evenings or at weekends. Some of the other regime activities can be arranged to take place in the evenings or at weekends, but there are no attempts to co-ordinate timetables and avoid conflicting demands on the learners. Learners cannot make progress beyond level 1 of the NVQ.

**Equality of opportunity****Contributory grade 3**

27. The prison has a comprehensive range of documents which commit the provider to supporting equality of opportunity, raising levels of decency and reducing violence. The college has implemented its own supplementary policies and procedures to support these principles in education and training. The learners' charter, for example, outlines the responsibilities of the education contractor and the learner, and a succinct equal opportunities policy commits the college to giving equal access to education for all offenders. The learner inclusion policy commits the college to providing appropriate progression routes, although progression to levels beyond level 1 has not been introduced into vocational training.

28. The English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) arrangements to support foreign national offenders are adequate enough to enable them to engage fully in education and training opportunities. Learners from minority ethnic groups constitute 23 per cent of the learners in education. This compares with a 16 per cent representation of minority ethnic groups in the prison population.

29. The prison's violence reduction policy and an anti-bullying strategy document were reviewed in July 2005. The document includes clear aims and objectives to foster a culture of non-violence and to promote a healthy and safe environment that supports equality of opportunity. Training to raise the awareness and understanding of all staff of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Amendment Act 1995 began last year. Training priorities have changed, however, and most staff have not completed this training. They are expected to complete it this year.

30. A race relations management team meets every other month to discuss racial issues and offenders' and staff's behaviour. The team comprises a wide spectrum of people from within the prison and includes two offenders. The team has drawn up an action plan to eliminate discrimination and to promote a safe environment. Surveys of offenders are carried out to measure performance against set targets and to indicate trends. The team is persistent in its efforts to reduce discrimination and bullying. However, the frequency of racially based incidents and the number of complaints from offenders relating to their treatment and conditions within the prison have shown only small reduction in the past year. This remains a concern. The team's attempts to enter discussions with representatives from minority ethnic groups in the local community have so far been unsuccessful.

31. A review of offenders' pay was conducted September 2005. Policies were then introduced to ensure that offenders would not be financially disadvantaged by attending education or training. A bonus scheme was introduced for the achievement of qualifications and progress which eliminated the need for offenders to opt out of education and training for financial reasons.

32. Equality and diversity data relating to offenders' ethnic backgrounds is collected and analysed as a matter of routine, as part of the prison's monitoring arrangements. A monthly data report is provided for the race relations management team, which is used by the team to guide action-planning. Data analysis of offenders' achievements and progression based on age and disability is not well developed and there is little routine collection and use of this information.

33. Equal opportunities policies statements and information posters about decent behaviour are displayed in the workshops and the education department. Posters urging learners to exercise respect for their peers have been designed and produced in the prison. The effect of these posters is increased by producing them in several different languages. Equality of opportunity is discussed in education and workshop inductions and reinforced in training. The education department has introduced a training module about diversity as part of the social and life skills programme, to reinforce offenders' understanding of equality issues.

34. The library has a comprehensive stock of books for recreational reading, written in a range of foreign languages in response to the needs of the diverse prison population. Offenders are able to borrow 'talking books' on compact disc and audio tape in English and other languages and there is a small section of 'easy reading' books.

### **Quality improvement**

### **Contributory grade 3**

35. The quality improvement group meets quarterly to discuss education and skills training at the prison and to consider any areas for improvement. Lesson observation feedback forms are reviewed to provide the group with information about the quality of the education and vocational training courses. Any recommendations from these observations are usually implemented as soon as possible. The progress made in implementing these recommendations is checked at the next meeting. Feedback from learners is obtained through course reviews and questionnaires. The feedback is collated and analysed to identify any areas that can be improved. The quality improvement group meetings discuss the findings and decide on any improvements to be made. Offenders are informed about any improvements that have been made based on their feedback. They can see that reasonable requests are acted upon.

36. Formal contract review meetings take place every six months between the subcontracted education provider, a representative from the funding body and the head of learning and skills. The education manager provides a report for the meeting, which shows what education and training has been provided by the department. Data is produced to show performance against contractual and key performance targets. There are also discussions at these meetings about how the quality of the provision can be improved. At a recent meeting it was found that the number of offenders for whom English is an additional language had increased and so it was agreed to provide additional ESOL courses. The area contract manager, who works for the subcontracted college, also attends the quality improvement group meetings to monitor the quality of the provision and to assist with the improvement process.

37. Internal verification is satisfactory and data is being analysed satisfactorily for quality improvement purposes and to identify trends. However, data about the outreach support courses carried out in the workshops is difficult to collect and analyse. Paper-based records are being used and the only copy is kept in the workshops. Meaningful data from each area where the support is given cannot be retrieved quickly and easily. Self-assessment is carried out annually and an action plan is produced to ensure that any identified weaknesses are resolved. Self-assessment is seen as an important part of the quality assurance and improvement process for education and training at the prison. The quality improvement group is actively involved in the production of the self-assessment report and the ongoing monitoring of the resulting action plan. Learners' and offenders' views are



taken into account when compiling the self-assessment report, as are those of staff and managers. Self-assessment is judged to be satisfactory.

38. Although planned quality checks are carried out periodically by managers to assess the consistency and application of training records and learning processes, there are inconsistencies. The quality of the information in learners' individual learning plans varies and there are some examples of poor planning and recording of learning. This is particularly the case in the PE and catering areas.

## AREAS OF LEARNING

### Construction, planning and the built environment

Grade 3

| Contributory areas:               | Number of learners | Contributory grade |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Construction crafts</b>        |                    | <b>3</b>           |
| Other government-funded provision | 30                 | 3                  |

39. Construction industry training is delivered in three workshops. Courses in painting and decorating and multi-skills are delivered by the education contractor. The 12 learners on the painting and decorating programme follow a 16-week course at level 1. The multi-skills activity was introduced in September 2005 to replace wall and floor tiling courses. The tiling workshop is still being converted for use as a multi-skills area, and scheme approval from the awarding body for the intended level 1 multi-skills course has not been granted yet. Five learners attend the multi-skills workshop where they receive practical skills training. A foundation construction award programme offering skills in plastering, brickwork, tiling, and carpentry and joinery is provided as part of the prison's resettlement strategy. The prison works in partnership with the Employment Regeneration Partnership, an organisation contracted by the prison service's custody to work unit, to provide basic training in construction skills. Thirteen learners, selected from those within nine months of release, are on this 12-week programme. While on the programme, learners complete a site safety course as part of their training in order to gain the Construction Industry Training Board's construction skills certification scheme card. This will enable them to work on construction sites.

### **Construction crafts**

**Grade 3**

#### *Strengths*

- good acquisition of practical skills focused on employability
- very good retention and achievement rates in painting and decorating
- good recording and monitoring of progress
- good use of contextualised learning materials for skills for life support

#### *Weaknesses*

- no opportunities to gain qualifications in multi-skills and construction
- no availability of courses above level 1
- reduction of teaching time

### **Achievement and standards**

40. Learners acquire the good practical skills required by employers. In observed training sessions, learners demonstrated good levels of knowledge and standards in practical skills. The range and standard of learners' work in their course files meet those required by the awarding body. The learners take a pride in their work and they work hard to complete the set tasks to very good standards. In every case, learners' files contain a wide range of

evidence and records of progress are detailed and up to date.

41. Achievement and retention rates in painting and decorating are very good. In the year to October 2005, 30 of the 35 leavers achieved the full qualification and all learners on the programme achieved at least a part qualification. Retention rates are very good at 89 per cent, and only five of the 44 learners left the programme before completing their learning goals.

42. Learners' attendance in all workshop sessions is satisfactory. Seventy-five per cent of the enrolled learners attended the observed sessions. Learners are keen to stress that they enjoy their courses and feel that they are acquiring knowledge and practical skills. Many have waited several weeks to join the courses and they are keen to retain their places on the programme. Several learners expressed an interest in finding employment in the occupational areas covered by their courses. Generally, the learners' behaviour was good and they applied themselves well to the given tasks. Learners demonstrated a willingness and ability to work competently on their own, and in co-operation with others.

43. There has been no achievement of vocational qualifications for learners on either the multi-skills course or the foundation construction award course. The prison did not take action to achieve scheme approval from the awarding body for these courses. Learners have not been able to achieve certificates in spite of gaining the necessary skills and knowledge. Learners on the construction programme do, however, achieve the site safety certificate as part of the requirements for acquiring a construction skills certification scheme card. The Construction Industry Training Board has recently given approval for learners to take the skills certification test at the prison, and eight out of 10 candidates who sat the test in January 2006 were successful in gaining their cards. The learner retention rate on the construction course is satisfactory, at 74 per cent.

### **The quality of provision**

44. Instructors use good procedures to record achievements and to monitor learners' progress. The training programmes are well structured and planned and instructors carry out daily monitoring of learners' progress against set targets. Records are completed routinely by the instructors and the learners. Charts plotting learners' progress are displayed in the workshops and serve to motivate the learners. Their progress is reviewed regularly on an informal basis and they are given detailed feedback after assessment, and advice on how to improve. Instructors prepare the learners well for assessment.

45. Managers have introduced support for skills for life effectively into the workshops. Trained skills for life tutors from the education department visit the workshops for half a day each week, and they make good use of contextualised learning materials in providing skills for life support. The findings from initial assessment tests are used to plan training for the learners. For all the learners on the foundation construction course who are assessed at below level 1, skills for life support is a mandatory part of the programme. The learners feel well supported and they enjoy gaining literacy and numeracy skills using materials which are relevant to their occupational training.

46. Teaching is thorough and learning sessions are effective in reinforcing knowledge and enabling practical skills to be developed. The instructors have extensive industrial experience and use their skills and knowledge well to help learners gain practical competences. Learners clearly understood the aims and objectives of the sessions. They

were set individual tasks and the instructors were diligent in providing support and encouragement throughout the sessions. Instructors praise learners' efforts and they have a good understanding of learners' needs.

47. The accommodation for vocational training is provided in good, purpose-built workshops. However, open areas within the workshop are used for written work, which must be done surrounded by noise and distraction from other activities. The workshops are well maintained and kept clean and tidy with adequate storage facilities for equipment and materials. They are well equipped with a range of hand tools, power tools and bench-mounted equipment. Resources for the construction course are particularly good. Instructors use learning materials developed as part of the Department for Education and Skills' 'Success for All' initiative, although there are no computers for teaching in the workshops and the available compact disc-based learning materials are unused.

48. The library facilities support construction industry training with an adequate range of textbooks which are borrowed frequently by learners. The librarian has timetabled weekly sessions for learners on each of the three programmes in order that they can visit and make use of the facilities, including the computing suite. However, learners rarely visit the library during workshop time.

49. Learners do not have access to courses above level 1, and the present training programmes do not give learners the opportunity to advance to the higher levels demanded in the construction industry. Many of the learners have the ability and enthusiasm to progress beyond foundation level and they are disappointed that this is not possible. For those learners completing their courses well in advance of their release it is difficult for them to maintain the currency of their practical skills. In their long-term training strategies, managers have included plans to extend training opportunities.

50. Offenders do not have sufficient opportunities to undergo construction industry training. The range and number of current courses do not meet the demands of a prison with over a 1,000 offenders. Each course has a lengthy waiting list and learners may wait several weeks before being enrolled. The foundation construction skills programme is targeted at those offenders who are within three or four months of release. Many offenders have expressed dissatisfaction and frustration at not being able to begin training, or to progress to higher levels.

### **Leadership and management**

51. All new learners are inducted into workshop practices at the beginning of their training and are given a clear understanding of expectations for behaviour and attitude. Instructors manage workshop sessions well and they reiterate and reinforce health and safety practices. The learners behave well. They wear appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing at all times, and use the equipment and materials appropriately.

52. Instructors hold appropriate vocational qualifications and have had extensive occupational experience. The painting and decorating instructor holds a level 4 teaching qualification. The arrangements for assessing and internally verifying learners' work are adequate to meet learners' demands and to meet the requirements of awarding bodies. The prison makes good use of the services of an external verifier for the construction and painting and decorating courses. The instructor for the multi-skills course, however, is not qualified as an assessor and he is not registered for training.

53. Workshop session time is considerably reduced by late starts and early finishes, in order to clear away tools, and interruptions to learners' attendance by other regime activities. Sessions frequently begin 20 minutes late, and these late starts to sessions occur without comment from instructors. It is also common practice to start to clear up the workshops 30 minutes before the scheduled end of sessions, with little meaningful use being made of the final 15 minutes of sessions. In some cases, learners were absent or arrived late because they had been attending other regime activities.

54. The self-assessment report provides an accurate evaluation of the strengths of the provision. Inspectors' findings matched the good practices identified in the report. The report does not identify the effects on learners of inadequate progression routes, or evaluate the potential consequences of not providing opportunities for learners to achieve vocational qualifications in multi-skills and construction. The report over-values the quality of provision and inspectors gave a grade lower than the self-assessed grade.

**Information and communications technology****Grade 3**

| <b>Contributory areas:</b>        | <b>Number of learners</b> | <b>Contributory grade</b> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b><i>ICT for users</i></b>       |                           | <b>3</b>                  |
| Other government-funded provision | 65                        | 3                         |

55. Sixty-five learners are enrolled on ICT courses. Learners work towards nationally recognised qualifications at level 1, 2 and 3. All learners attend sessions in computer rooms in the main education block during the day. The sessions operate on a workshop basis. Most learners attend five sessions each week. Learners work at their own pace using textbooks and are supported by a tutor and a peer tutor. There are five tutors. Two of them are on fractional contracts and three are on hourly paid contracts working for between three and five days each week. The ICT curriculum is co-ordinated by one of the fractional tutors.

***ICT for users*****Grade 3***Strengths*

- good achievement rates on level 1 computer courses
- good development of learners' skills
- good use of peer tutors to support learning

*Weaknesses*

- insufficient planning of individual learning
- inadequate range of programmes for beginners
- insufficient software update training for tutors

**Achievement and standards**

56. In the 12 months to October 2005, 313 learners have begun ICT programmes. One hundred and sixty-two learners began level 1, 67 began level 2 and 84 began an examination-based qualification in IT. Achievement rates on level 1 are good. In the 12 months to October 2005, 162 learners began the programme, 66 per cent of whom achieved the full qualification, and 15 per cent of learners are still in training. Twenty-four of the 29 learners who left the programme before achieving their goals did so for operational reasons. Achievement rates at level 2 and for the examination-based qualification in IT programmes are satisfactory. Of the 67 learners who began the level 2 programme, 43 per cent achieved the qualification, another 7 per cent achieved some units and 22 per cent of learners are still in training. Ten of the 18 learners who left the programme before completing their goals did so for operational reasons. Eighty-four learners began the examination-based qualification in the IT programme. Of these, nearly 20 per cent achieved the full qualification and 35 per cent achieved part of the qualification. Forty-two per cent of learners are still in training. Fourteen of the 20 learners who left the programme before completing their goals left for operational reasons. All the remaining learners are making satisfactory progress.

57. Learners develop a good range of skills in the classrooms and are able to use software with confidence. Many learners have increased their confidence levels since beginning the programme. Some learners had not used a computer before, but quickly gained confidence in using the keyboard and develop good mouse control skills. Learners are able to enter complex formulae, carry out queries, and insert and manipulate images. All learners make good progress in using software applications and many achieve nationally recognised qualifications and progress from level 1 to level 2 programmes. Some of them progress to the recently introduced level 3 programme.

### **The quality of provision**

58. Good use is made of peer tutors to support training. A peer tutor is based in each of the three classrooms and they work well with the tutor to support the learners. Learners who find it difficult to ask the tutor for help feel more able to ask their peer tutor. The peer tutors provide support to learners to avoid delays when the tutor is busy with another learner. They provide discrete support to learners and act as role models. Peer tutors have a good knowledge of the software applications and have already achieved the qualifications that the learners are working towards.

59. Teaching is satisfactory. In some sessions there is some good individual coaching and checking of learners' understanding, but in other sessions insufficient use is made of verbal questioning to check learners' understanding. In the lessons observed by inspectors, most learners were involved and working independently. They work through exercises in textbooks. Some learners practise their skills using supplementary exercises devised by the tutor. Most tutors allocate a sufficient amount of time to individual learners and encourage and motivate them. Standard lesson plans are used which are not sufficiently detailed. They are tutor-focused and do not take differentiation into account. Tutors plan group activities which are usually based around a generic topic such as ergonomics, internet safety, or hardware recognition. Handouts are well produced and contain detailed information to broaden learners' knowledge. However, some handouts contain too much closely typed text and not enough illustrations. Standard schemes of work are used which are adequately detailed and linked to qualification outcomes.

60. Resources are satisfactory. Learners are taught in three ICT classrooms which are furnished adequately. Health and safety posters are displayed on the walls. Learners use a range of textbooks, which are linked to their target qualifications. Learners use up-to-date software and print their work using colour printers. All tutors are appropriately qualified, and they all have, or are working towards, teaching qualifications. Additional hardware has been purchased recently which will replace some of the older monitors and processing units. All learners have a floppy disk on which they can store their work. They also have a cardboard folder in which to keep their printed and marked work. The floppy disks are stored in locked boxes. Learners with mobility problems can use facilities on the ground floor of the education building.

61. Assessment is satisfactory. Learners receive adequate verbal feedback about their work. Test papers are marked in accordance with awarding body requirements. Arrangements for testing have been changed following the recent visit by the external verifier.

62. Support for learners is satisfactory. They receive support in the classroom from tutors and peer tutors. When learners raise personal support issues the tutors encourage them to



follow the correct reporting procedures in order to obtain help from the most relevant person.

63. All learners have reached level 1 in literacy and numeracy before beginning ICT programmes. Tutors are given copies of the individual learning plans and details of the support given to learners by literacy and numeracy support tutors. Learners do not receive any literacy and numeracy support in ICT lessons.

64. Individual learning programmes are not planned sufficiently. Every two weeks, tutors review learners' progress and make written comments. However, tutors and learners are unable to measure progress made towards timely achievement of the units. The feedback is not always supportive and is not always directed to the learner. One learner working towards the internet and e-mail unit on the examination-based qualification in IT has not previously used the internet or e-mail, and finds it difficult to visualise carrying out web searches. The learner has not been referred to the learndirect centre where a suitable, interactive short course is available. There are no timescales for the lesson plans. All learners have an individual learning plan which in most cases records the target qualification, but does not record which units the learner is working on. Target dates are not recorded for the achievement of units or the full qualification. Units achieved are not recorded in the individual learning plan. Learners complete a record of the tasks they have completed in each session, and tutors record activities or tasks to be completed during the next session. The tasks or activities focus on the completion of exercises or mock tests, and do not always refer to skills development.

65. The range of courses for complete beginners is inadequate. Plans are being made to offer more courses for complete beginners. During the inspection, no courses for complete beginners were available. All programmes are accredited. Sessions have recently begun for vulnerable offenders. They attend just two sessions each week, on consecutive days. These learners find it difficult to remember the skills that they have learnt from one week to the next. Plans exist to offer learners a third session each week. No short courses are available to extend learners' skills and knowledge in specific software, programming or hardware maintenance. The education department has identified this weakness.

66. There is no software update training for tutors. There is a learning plan for generic training, such as dealing with learners, but there are no plans or arrangements for tutors to update their knowledge on software applications. During one observed session the tutor was unfamiliar with mail merge techniques. The education department has identified this weakness.

### **Leadership and management**

67. Leadership of the curriculum area is satisfactory. Regular meetings are held and all tutors receive a copy of the minutes and feel well informed. There are no standard agendas for meetings. Minutes do not always identify the person responsible for an action, or any target dates for the completion of actions. The minutes are very brief and do not always record the progress made in completing actions agreed at previous meetings. A recent curriculum review identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This information was detailed, but did not identify all the weaknesses found during inspection. The collection and analysis of achievement and retention data is satisfactory, but data has only recently been collected for learners' individual qualification aims. Tutors feel well



supported and levels of communication are adequate enough to keep them informed. Equality of opportunity is being promoted and monitored satisfactorily on ICT courses. The self-assessment process is satisfactory for this area of learning.

**Leisure, travel and tourism****Grade 4**

| <b>Contributory areas:</b>                  | <b>Number of learners</b> | <b>Contributory grade</b> |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b><i>Sport, leisure and recreation</i></b> |                           | <b>4</b>                  |
| Other government-funded provision           | 12                        | 4                         |

68. Twelve learners are currently following a 12-week fitness for life qualification at level 2. The PE department offers three units of the award and the education department offers six units. Learners attend the PE department in the morning and the education department in the afternoon. The 12 learners are also following a non-accredited programme in 'walking to health'. A peer mentor supports learners with their work. A principal officer and a senior officer, supported by a team of seven PE officers, are responsible for the PE recreational and training programme. Three of the PE officers are qualified assessors. Seven orderlies help to clean and maintain the facilities. Two facilities are in use, one is equipped with a large sports hall, a fitness suite, a weights room and a large classroom, the other is equipped with a weights room. There are links with other departments to support the prison's drug strategy and offending behaviour programmes. Forty-seven per cent of the prison population access recreational PE and a further 25 per cent are on the waiting list. Vulnerable offenders have separate evening sessions and also attend mixed recreational sessions.

***Sport, leisure and recreation*****Grade 4***Strengths*

- good recent initiatives to improve learning

*Weaknesses*

- low retention and achievement rates
- insufficient opportunities to gain skills and qualifications to enhance employability
- inadequate planning of learning
- insufficient support for literacy, numeracy and key skills

**Achievement and standards**

69. The PE department has identified the low retention and achievement rates, and that there is insufficient analysis to find out why learners leave programmes before completing their training objectives. Of the 20 learners who began the current fitness for life programme, eight have already left the programme. Fifty per cent of learners on the previous fitness for life programme did not complete it. Traditionally, the programme recruits 20 learners, with the expectation that the group size will reduce to 12 in the first two weeks. Of the 12 learners who began the level 1 qualification course, 50 per cent did not complete the programme. Although there is a policy to protect learners from being transferred from the prison while they are in training, this sometimes still happens. Some learners leave the programme for disciplinary reasons, but the reasons for other learners leaving are unknown.

## The quality of provision

70. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners enjoy the practical sessions and have good opportunities to plan and coach sports sessions. However, some sessions are not sufficiently structured and focused. In theory sessions, tutors use a range of activities which includes practical demonstrations and video films to maintain learners' interest, but these are not always used effectively and learners become bored. Some learners are frustrated by the large amount of theory teaching on the course. Theory sessions start late and are interrupted by tea breaks.

71. The assessment of learners' progress is satisfactory. In practical sessions, good use is made of verbal self-evaluation and peer and tutor feedback to develop learners' skills. However, written records do not set targets for improvement or show how learners have improved. Learners are unsure how to record their self-assessment. In anatomy and physiology sessions they receive useful information about how to improve their grades for written assignments, and receive written feedback about the quality of their assignments. Learners do not receive overall reviews of their progress on the course and have no short- or long-term targets to work towards.

72. The library has a good stock of sport- and fitness-related books. The PE department has some books, but they are not kept at a centralised point and learners do not know what resources are available to help them with independent study. Learners cannot access information learning technology (ILT) in the PE classroom or the sports facilities. The principal officer has ordered new computers, but the prison is not sure where they are.

73. There are not enough resources. Overhead projectors are not available in the afternoon sessions, so that the tutor has to draw complex diagrams on a small whiteboard before each session, and this is hard for learners to see. There are no models of the human body for anatomy and physiology sessions. ILT is not used in the learning sessions.

74. Learners do not have sufficient opportunities to gain the skills and qualifications needed to improve their employability. Although a good range of training was planned for last year, only one fitness for life course and one gymnasium instructors' course were held. In the previous year there were no accredited courses. The prison's activity target is given greater importance than training, and staff are frequently diverted to deliver recreational sessions. Not enough emphasis is given to providing the skills and qualifications that employers require. Staff have identified that employers require coaching and customer care skills and want to restructure programmes to include these. However, too much emphasis is currently given to unnecessary knowledge development, such as a detailed understanding of enzymes. There are not enough progression opportunities. Level 2 coaching qualifications, which are recognised by employers, are not available even though the department would like to offer them and has the skills and experience to do so. NVQs are not offered and there is no accreditation of the skills that orderlies develop through their work.

75. Learning is not planned adequately. A new system identifies if learners have previously achieved any sport- and fitness-related qualifications, and what qualifications they would like to achieve in prison. However, this system is not being used to identify learners' suitability for the programme. There are no clear criteria for recruiting learners from waiting lists. Learners do not have the opportunity to take part in taster sessions to help them to

decide if the course is right for them. Learners' aspirations and abilities are not assessed before they begin their programmes. Communications between the PE department and the education department are unsatisfactory.

76. There is no overall scheme of work for the fitness for life award. PE and education staff are unclear of each other's role and are unable to link or reinforce each other's teaching. Individual learning is not planned or recorded sufficiently. The education department records learners' grades and end-of-course feedback on a discrete form. The PE department has developed a new booklet to record learners' work, learners' self-assessments and tutors' feedback. The booklet has only recently been introduced and it is too soon to judge its effectiveness. Its late introduction has delayed progress through the course and the unit which usually takes two to three weeks to deliver, has so far taken five weeks.

77. The prison does not provide sufficient literacy, numeracy and key skills support. Although the education department initially assesses all new offenders' literacy and numeracy levels, the PE department is not always aware of the results. Two PE officers have recently attended literacy and numeracy skills awareness training, but they are unsure of how to apply their knowledge. The education department has provided the PE department with a skills for life support pack, but again they are unsure of how to implement it. The fitness for life course offers good opportunities for learners to gain communication and application of number key skills, but the opportunities are not used. Who has responsibility for offering key skills training is unclear. Literacy and numeracy support is not provided within PE sessions, but learners can access separate support sessions.

### **Leadership and management**

78. The PE team has introduced good initiatives recently to improve learning and to create a clear vision for the future of training. Over the past two years the department has had low staffing levels and staff changes. The newly recruited team is eager to expand the training provision and to develop links with employers. The team has a good awareness of the skills and qualifications that employers want, and are planning to restructure the PE training programme accordingly. An employer link day was conducted recently in partnership with a national training provider, to help build links with employers and to raise awareness of the skills that learners achieve. Jobcentre Plus, Connexions and other prisons also attended. The principal officer meets with other PE managers in the Northwest to share good practice.

79. A well-structured 'walking to health' programme has been developed with the health promotion officer. Staff are working towards having the programme accredited. Members of the PE team work well together and have good relationships with learners and gymnasium users. The staff have a good range of vocational qualifications. None of them have adult education qualifications but training is planned for them.

80. Internal verification of the units offered by the education department is satisfactory and is carried out by qualified internal verifiers. The PE team verifies its units internally, but no-one in the team is a qualified internal verifier. There is no formative, planned internal verification of units. Although the principal officer carries out some brief and informal observations of teaching and learning, he has identified that there are no criteria for observations and that the system is not planned or very thorough. Staff do not understand

the establishment's quality assurance procedures.

81. Equality of opportunity is being promoted and applied satisfactorily in the department. The PE department has a good understanding of the provision's weaknesses. The self-assessment report over-emphasised some of the strengths, which the inspectors found to be normal practice. Inspectors awarded a lower grade than that of the self-assessment.

**Preparation for life and work****Grade 3**

| <b>Contributory areas:</b>          | <b>Number of learners</b> | <b>Contributory grade</b> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b><i>Literacy and numeracy</i></b> |                           | <b>3</b>                  |
| Other government-funded provision   | 329                       | 3                         |

82. There are 329 learners on foundation programmes in the education department. Of these, 217 learners attend programmes in literacy, numeracy and language skills, 59 learners are on social and life skills programmes, and 53 are on foundation art programmes. This total includes support for learners in workshops and vocational training. Programmes are offered from pre-entry level to level 2. Social and life skills modules are provided in subjects which include parenting, behaviour, assertiveness and art. A separate foundation programme is provided on the wings for vulnerable offenders. Classes are provided on a part-time basis and sessions last for three hours, some learners who follow more than one programme attend on a full-time basis. Learners can work towards national tests in literacy and numeracy, key skills, and modules in social and life skills and art. learndirect courses include literacy, numeracy, language and basic IT.

83. This area of learning is managed by the education manager and two deputy managers who are employed by the college. A team of co-ordinators leads various functions within the department, which include key skills, skills for life and outreach work. These co-ordinators are responsible for a range of part-time and sessional tutors.

***Literacy and numeracy*****Grade 3***Strengths*

- good achievement rates for literacy and numeracy level 2
- good use of peer support
- good access to literacy and numeracy support

*Weaknesses*

- insufficient planning of individual learning
- insufficient use of information technology (IT) to support learners
- slow implementation of the skills for life strategy

**Achievement and standards**

84. Achievement rates are good for literacy and numeracy level 2 national tests. In the period October 2004 to October 2005, 76 per cent of the learners who began the programme passed their national test in numeracy at level 2, and 69 per cent passed the test in literacy at level 2. Achievement rates in literacy and numeracy at level 1 are satisfactory for the same period, at 64 per cent for numeracy and 41 per cent for literacy. Twenty per cent of learners successfully progressed through entry level 1 to level 3 in numeracy, and 15 per cent did so in literacy.

85. Most learners complete their social and life skills courses, art modules and entry level

assignments successfully. A small number of learners also complete key skills portfolios. Seven learners are making satisfactory progress towards a recently introduced preparation for employment qualification. The standard of learners' work and skills development is satisfactory. Learners progress steadily through the activities. Tutors encourage learners to participate fully in discussions that further develop their understanding and skills. Learners who are disruptive in class are supported well by tutors, which encourages them to settle quickly into learning. The standard of learners' work in art is good.

### **The quality of provision**

86. Peer support for learners is good. Many classes have offenders who have been well trained and have achieved their adult learners' support certificate. Peer tutors have achieved their literacy, numeracy and language qualifications, and the peer tutors in art courses have also achieved their art module qualifications. Tutors liaise closely with peer support tutors in classes to provide the most appropriate support for learners. The same level of support is provided on an individual basis on the wings. Peer support tutors work well with learners to overcome some of the barriers that learners face in asking for help in a group situation. The work of the support tutors is monitored closely by tutors.

87. Access to literacy and numeracy support is good. Sessions are available from entry level to level 2 in the education department, on the wings and in the workshops. Separate provision is made for vulnerable offenders. Good support is provided in construction, art and hairdressing workshops for literacy, numeracy and key skills, and is specifically linked to these subjects. learndirect courses are available in basic literacy, numeracy, language and IT.

88. Learners have a satisfactory understanding of key induction topics which include information about courses available, and how to apply for a course. Learners sign an agreement that promotes positive behaviour in learning sessions, and which incorporates health and safety and equal opportunities. Learners' behaviour is appropriate in most of the sessions. Poor behaviour is dealt with by tutors and peer tutors swiftly and satisfactorily.

89. Standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the better sessions, staff used an appropriate range of teaching methods and activities to meet the needs of individual learners. Tutors check frequently that learners are not experiencing problems. All learners are given individual activities that challenge them and develop their skills progressively. In one session, learners were working on individual activities to meet their needs, while developing a good range of skills which included basic reading, comprehension and the structure of a formal letter. In a parenting session, learners were working on developing their skills in reading children's stories in an enthusiastic and meaningful way, as well as increasing their understanding of how to extend children's language and learning. A wide range of well-prepared materials is used effectively to encourage learners to participate.

90. Arrangements for initial assessment are satisfactory. An initial screening of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills is carried out at the prison induction. Learners attending courses then complete a further diagnosis of their skills in literacy and numeracy. A satisfactory assessment of language needs consists of speaking, listening and writing activities. In addition, dyslexia screening is available, but this is not applied routinely to all offenders who may show signs of dyslexia.

91. The support given to prepare learners for life and work is satisfactory. Courses are

provided in budget management, family relationships, drug and alcohol misuse and parenting, to help prepare learners for their release. A recently introduced pilot programme is being provided in the workshops, where seven learners have the opportunity to gain a qualification in preparation for employment. Other initiatives include 20 learners who have gained a lift truck licence, and six learners who completed an LGV course. A goods vehicle was brought into the prison to cover theory and basic functions. The prison liaised with a local college for the practical training and for driving courses when the offenders were released.

92. Learning for individuals is not planned sufficiently. Lesson plans are too general and do not clearly identify learning activities and outcomes. Nor do they take sufficient account of learners' individual needs. Individual learning plans are vague. Although many learning plans list the learning objectives, these are not broken down into clear, measurable steps to allow learners' progress to be measured over time. Initial assessment is not used adequately to provide details about the development of individual learners' needs, and how and when these needs will be met. Progress reviews are not effective in measuring learners' progress over time and often have only brief comments such as 'making progress'.

93. IT is not used sufficiently to support the learners. Computers are not available in many classes. In the classes that do have computers, they are often out of date and cannot support the software packages. Little use is made of the well-equipped computer room located within the library, although some learners use the computers to type up key skills reports. This weakness in the use of IT was identified in the self-assessment report. New computers have been purchased but are not available yet. Resources are generally satisfactory. However, handouts are used too much and there are not enough alternative resources for learners with low levels of literacy.

### **Leadership and management**

94. Communications within the education department are satisfactory, and subject-specific staff meetings are held frequently. Staff share good practice and support each other with difficult learners. The provision for staff development is satisfactory and many staff have attended short courses in equality and diversity, health and safety, and making effective use of peer support tutors. Some staff have gained degrees and teaching qualifications while working in the education department. All relevant staff met to discuss the self-assessment process for their department, and a short report was completed for each area. The self-assessment report recognised the strengths of achievement and peer support, and the weakness regarding the use of IT. Staff have a satisfactory understanding of equality and diversity. They have regular training in managing behaviour and in promoting the respect agenda. Equality of opportunity is being promoted and applied satisfactorily.

95. The implementation of the skills for life strategy and the response to the national initiative has been slow. The department has a range of current documents, including a strategy document which was produced in April 2005, together with an action plan, and a strategic objective and action plan for the skills for life quality initiative. However, these documents are not linked sufficiently to provide a coherent strategy to support implementation. Several key aspects of the strategy are not planned to take place until after April 2006. Examples of this include the establishment of a steering group to review the action plan, and the development of a staff learning plan to promote awareness of literacy and numeracy in prison staff. As part of the action plan, a review of literacy and numeracy resources was carried out recently, but this did not focus sufficiently on



improving the low level of specialist resources. One objective of the action plan is to improve the support for learners' with dyslexia, but achieving this objective does not include a review of the current provision, which was judged to be poor. Only a small number of staff have achieved specialist qualifications in teaching literacy, numeracy and language skills.

