

REINSPECTION REPORT

HMP Bristol Reinspection

06 July 2006



ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

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.

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REINSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. HMP Bristol (the prison) is a local prison situated in Bristol city centre. It has an operational capacity of 606 and a certified normal accommodation of 472. During the inspection it held 602 offenders, 163 of whom were on remand and trial, and 433 of whom were convicted. Forty of them were young offenders. Seventy of the convicted offenders were serving life sentences, despite the fact that they should have been moved since the previous inspection. The prison receives a minimum of 35 men each week and 40 men had started education classes during the three months preceding inspection. The prison serves the needs of the local courts of the city and the surrounding area, and it has a constantly changing population.

2. The prison's regime currently provides work for 299 offenders at any one time in the kitchens, on the wings, as well as in a variety of workshops. At the time of the inspection, one workshop was closed due to the loss of a contract. In education, there are 72 full-time equivalent places for offenders. The regime has been under constant review for the past two years, with changes to staffing, management at all levels, the prison profile and the core day. The prison offers programmes in information and communication technology (ICT), which was not inspected or graded as this was satisfactory at the previous inspection. The courses in sports were not offered at the time of reinspection, and there were too few learners in hospitality to be inspected, although this area of learning was graded as unsatisfactory at the previous inspection. Foundation programmes, leadership and management, quality assurance and equality of opportunity were inspected and graded at reinspection, as all of these were graded unsatisfactory at the previous inspection.

3. The head of learning and skills took up the post in September 2003, and manages the programmes with a learning and skills co-ordinator, a principal officer for learning and skills and two full-time learning and skills officers. There are 11 full-time education centre staff, 10 part-time staff and a number of supply staff to cover training and leave.

4. HMP Bristol was part of the development region for the Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS). The delivery model has moved away from a single contractor for each prison and the curriculum is divided among three contractors. Information, advice and guidance is contracted to Tribal Hubs, life skills and arts are contracted to Action for Employment, and foundation and vocational programmes, and distance learning, are both contracted to Strode College.

5. Education classes are offered over five days of the week for five and a quarter hours each day. There are no evening or weekend classes. Offenders attending classes are paid the same as those attending any other work and the prison encourages all of them to access additional pay triggers linked to learning outcomes.

6. The main library holds mainly recreational stock, with few books supporting learning

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activities. The library is located in the education department and offenders have access to the library in small groups for 20 minutes each week. The library is staffed by a professional librarian for 28 hours each week and a full-time learning and skills officer.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Foundation programmes

7. One hundred and eighteen learners are currently on foundation programmes, of whom 41 are attending literacy and numeracy classes, 17 are on social and life skills courses, 26 are studying creative arts, 28 are accessing foundation provision on the safer custody wing, and six learners are on English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) programmes. Eleven learners are working at literacy and numeracy at entry level or below, 17 are working towards level 1, and 13 are working towards level 2. Provision is available to individuals in the segregation unit, although on an individual referral basis. In addition to the dedicated foundation programme, learners are able to access the provision through outreach programmes in workshops or other work areas. All offenders receive an initial assessment on arrival in the prison and an induction in the assessment centre.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	3
Number of inspection days	10
Number of learners interviewed	25
Number of staff interviewed	16
Number of subcontractors interviewed	2
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	1

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

8. The previous inspection, in January 2005, judged the quality of provision to be satisfactory in ICT, and unsatisfactory in hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, and foundation programmes. The leadership and management of education and training were unsatisfactory at HMP Bristol, as were the arrangements for equality of opportunity and quality assurance. The reinspection confirmed that the standards in ICT are being at least maintained. The foundation provision is now satisfactory. Hospitality, sport, leisure and travel was not inspected, as there was very little accredited provision, with too few learners. Leadership and management, equality of opportunity, and quality assurance are now satisfactory.

GRADES

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

Grades awarded at previous inspection

Leadership and management		4
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		4
Quality assurance		4

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Using IT</i>		
- Other government-funded provision	27	3

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Leisure, sport and recreation</i>		
- Other government-funded provision	7	4

Foundation programmes		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
<i>Literacy and numeracy</i>		
- Other government-funded provision	61	4

Grades awarded at reinspection

Leadership and management		3
Contributory grades:		
Equality of opportunity		3
Quality assurance		3

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Other government-funded provision	118	3

KEY FINDINGS

Achievement and standards

9. **Achievement rates for learners in ICT on an examination-based qualification in information technology (IT) in the Prison's Information and Communication Technology Academy (PICTA) workshop are good.** Achievement rates on an externally accredited IT course at level 1 are satisfactory. Since the PICTA project started in May 2004, 91 learners have started programmes. Of those, nearly half have obtained a nationally recognised qualification and another 16 per cent are still in learning. Just over two-thirds of learners who started an examination-based qualification in IT achieved the level 1 award, and nearly half of the learners achieved the full qualification. One third of the learners who started the examination-based IT programme at level 2 have achieved the qualification.

10. **Learners gain a good range of communication, numeracy and life skills in the foundation provision.** This has been maintained since the previous inspection. Learners practise and acquire skills that enable them to write effective letters to their families and to employers. They comment on improvements in their self-confidence in communications and numeracy that have enabled them to pass national tests.

11. HMP Bristol has offered learners working in the kitchen the opportunity to work towards a generic training certificate, known as the foundation training certificate. At the time of the inspection, no learners were on this programme. Since August 2005, 158 offenders from across the prison have achieved a foundation certificate in food hygiene, 139 have achieved a manual handling qualification, 72 have achieved a certificate, relating to the regulations of the control of substances hazardous to health, and 37 have achieved a foundation health and safety certificate. There are currently no accredited qualifications offered in sport.

Quality of education and training

12. **The range of programmes available at level 1 and level 2 in ICT is good.** Learners are able to work towards externally accredited units in computer maintenance, software and hardware fault resolution and networking. Plans are well advanced for the installation of appropriate resources to enable learners to work towards cabling qualifications. There are still insufficient programmes available at level 3.

13. In foundation programmes, good engagement of learners in teaching sessions has been maintained since the previous inspection. Learners show a good level of interest and concentration in classes and they are confident in seeking out help when it is required.

14. Resources for ICT learners are satisfactory overall. Resources for learners attending the PICTA workshop are good. Learners use up-to-date equipment and build personal computers using industry-standard resources.

15. Initial assessment is now satisfactory in foundation and this was a weakness at the previous inspection. Learners receive supervised initial assessments in a new assessment centre, which is in a quiet and comfortable location. Tests are marked and the results are recorded on their individual learning plans, a summary of which is then passed on to the relevant tutors.

16. Induction is satisfactory in foundation programmes and learners receive adequate information to help them choose their learning programmes. Programmes currently meet the learners' needs and interests. Information on some individual learning plans is poorly recorded in foundation programmes. Targets are not individual or cross-referenced to the relevant module or referenced to the curriculum.

17. **Resources in sport remain poor.** The current weights room is too small to ensure that learners can work safely. However, there are advanced plans for the relocation of the weights to another room, which will also contain cardiovascular and resistance machines.

18. **Insufficient qualifications are available to learners in the kitchen.** Of the 24 offenders employed in the kitchen, none are working towards a catering qualification. No catering qualifications are available for learners. Resources in hospitality are satisfactory. There is an adequate range of industrial equipment, but the drainage system is inadequate. Good training records are kept in the kitchen. Each offender has a training record, which identifies training received on equipment and procedures in the kitchen, and achievement of externally accredited qualifications.

19. **Tutors make little use of information learning technology (ILT) in teaching literacy and numeracy, which was a weakness at the previous inspection.** No audiovisual aids, videos or use of computers or packages to encourage individual learning were used in learning sessions.

Leadership and management

20. **Significant changes at HMP Bristol have been managed well.** The recent re-profiling exercise and re-contracting with three providers has been managed well, and the prison has recovered well from the disruption. Staff shortages have not prevented some good initiatives.

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21. **Access to education and training has improved.** At the previous inspection, it was a weakness. Access is now managed centrally and it is based on assessment of offenders' needs and fits in with the reducing reoffending pathways.

22. **The implementation of quality assurance procedures has been much improved since the previous inspection.** The quality assurance framework is complete and covers all aspects of the provision. The quality assurance calendar is up to date. Observations of teaching and learning are taking place and the prison uses them to plan continuing professional development. Lesson plans and schemes of work are available for all accredited provision.

23. **Management of teaching time in foundation programmes has improved since the previous inspection.** The establishment now has prison officers who are involved in learning and skills. They follow up all learners who are late and do not attend classes in the education department.

24. The monitoring and promotion of equality of opportunity, which was insufficient at the previous inspection, is now satisfactory. The prison uses data relating to ethnicity and disability, and in some cases to plan courses. Marketing material is now available in languages other than English. The promotion of diversity with the actual teaching provision is still insufficient.

25. Management of the ICT provision is satisfactory. The prison keeps comprehensive records of each learner's module achievements. Plans to offer additional qualifications in cabling are well advanced.

26. Most qualifications are still gained by external assessment or examination. Internal verification is planned satisfactorily for the social and life skills provision. There are three full-time and nine part-time staff in the provision, which is now better co-ordinated.

27. **The provision of education and vocational training is insufficient to meet the prison's needs.** This was a weakness identified at the previous inspection. Only 16 per cent of the prison population receives education at any one time. The range of courses has expanded since the previous inspection, but it is still too narrow. There is very little vocational training.

28. **Current staffing levels in sport are inadequate.** The senior officer has been absent for several months. A recent analysis has been carried out of offenders accessing the gymnasium by minority ethnic group and wing. Using the results of this analysis, staff have been able to target under-represented groups and have encouraged them to use the gymnasium facilities. Management in the kitchen is satisfactory. The prison keeps detailed training records for each offender, which include induction checklists.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good management of change

Weaknesses

- insufficient provision of education and vocational training
- no opportunity to negotiate contracts

Foundation programmes

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good attainment of communication and life skills
- good learner engagement in classes

Weaknesses

- some poor recording on individual learning plans
- insufficient use of ILT in teaching sessions

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDING

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

Strengths

- good management of change

Weaknesses

- insufficient provision of education and vocational training
- no opportunity to negotiate contracts

29. The prison has managed significant changes well since the previous inspection. It continues to make progress in changing staff attitudes and there is less preoccupation with security issues and a greater emphasis on the identity and role of the prison. The change management programme has promoted the importance of the needs of the offender to move from custody to community. The prison carried out a staff re-profiling exercise, which resulted in significant staff cuts, and it managed this well. The OLASS re-contracting exercise identified three different providers for the prison and it took several months before the staff were in place to deliver all aspects of the provision. The prison managed this well and the achievement rates on courses have increased significantly over the past two quarters. Currently, the gymnasium is short of staff but some good initiatives are taking place. For example, the prison is relocating the weights room and it is replacing the unsatisfactory equipment identified at the previous inspection.

30. Operational management was judged to be inadequate at the previous inspection. This is now much improved. The head of learning and skills now has a learning and skills co-ordinator, a learning and skills principal officer and two officers to help manage the provision. This has enabled time for strategic planning and better control of attendance and punctuality, which was identified as a problem at the previous inspection. The conflicting scheduling of work, education and training no longer occurs as all activity is co-ordinated centrally. Learners now have more information and are better assessed to ensure that the right learners are allocated to the most appropriate courses. The prison's management of literacy, numeracy and language skills support is now satisfactory. Initial assessment takes place and some volunteer support is available for those with dyslexia.

31. Resources at the prison are still insufficient. The library is well stocked but it is too small to meet the needs of the establishment. The computer link with the outside library service has now been established. ICT resources have improved since the previous inspection, with all computers refurbished or replaced after a recent audit. Classroom accommodation remains inadequate, as the rooms are too small and not fit for purpose. Staff are still well qualified, with a well-established staff appraisal system identifying opportunities for continuing professional development.

32. The provision of education and vocational training is still insufficient to meet the learners' needs. Sixteen per cent of the prison population now receives education at any one time, in comparison with 12 per cent at the previous inspection. There are still 70 life sentence offenders with no educational provision apart from distance learning. The prison still offers very little vocational training, little of which is accredited or leads to professionally recognised qualifications. There is slightly more provision above level 2 since the previous inspection, but this is still insufficient.

33. There is no opportunity to negotiate the providers' contracts. The head of learning and skills has not seen the current contracts and has not agreed the current targets, which have been agreed by the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the providers. There are no sanctions for the non-delivery of the contracted provision. The operational management of the contracts between the prison and the providers is satisfactory.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

34. The prison has a clear equal opportunities policy that contains all of the necessary relevant information. The strategy is clearly displayed throughout the prison, together with posters and information that detail expectations about staff and offenders' behaviour. The head of learning and skills is an active member of the race relations committee and is also chair of the newly formed diversity committee. Disabilities and race relations policies are available across the prison and wing liaison officers are being established for each wing.

35. The poor access to education and work placements, which was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection, is now much improved. Induction is now much better structured and offenders receive more information about the range of education and work that is available. Allocation is now based on assessment and offenders are allocated according to their individual need and on an equal opportunity basis. Allocation also fits in with the reducing reoffending pathways. A mobile induction loop is now available for those offenders with impaired hearing and it can be used wherever it is needed. The prison collects information on offenders with learning difficulties at induction and records this on their central records.

36. Offenders on the safer custody unit have better access to education, as there is now a full-time course available for them to attend. They still do not have the same opportunities to attend the workshops. ESOL classes are now run twice a week, which is an improvement from the previous inspection.

37. The monitoring and promotion of equality of opportunity were identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. This has now improved. The prison now collects equality of opportunity data and uses it to plan the curriculum, for example planning courses for people from minority ethnic groups in the gymnasium. The prison now collects data on learners with disabilities as a matter of course. Marketing material is now available in a variety of languages other than English. A diversity week was held in February, which included contributions from the Royal National Institute for the Blind

and the Royal National Institute for the Deaf, as well as a motivational speaker with a disability. A volunteer with dyslexia expertise now visits the prison every week. There is still insufficient promotion of equality and diversity issues within the education provision, although the curriculum next year includes a diversity module.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

38. The previous inspection identified a weakness relating to the incomplete quality assurance arrangements. This is now improved and the implementation of quality assurance procedures is now satisfactory. The head of learning and skills, in conjunction with the quality improvement group, has produced a learning and skills strategy and a quality assurance calendar which details all of the procedures, responsibilities and completion dates. This quality assurance framework covers all of the learning and skills provision, with review dates for all activities to be completed by the learning and skills co-ordinator. These are all complete and up to date. Audits of delivery are completed by the learning and skills co-ordinator, who reports to the head of learning and skills and this information is used at the contract management meetings. These quality assurance arrangements now extend to the workshops, which was not the case at the time of the previous inspection. Good practice is now shared formally between teams through the use of a good practice folder and also staff presentations of good practice at meetings.

39. Quality assurance within the different providers is the responsibility of each provider and, while this information is shared, it is not managed centrally or monitored by the local LSC. Providers complete observations of teaching and learning, as does the prison, and these observations are used to plan continuing professional development. Lesson plans and schemes of work are available for all accredited programmes, but these are not yet standardised across the whole provision. Individual learning plans are standardised and a new electronic version is being developed. Course reviews are completed annually within the education department and sample surveys are completed with the wider prison population. This information is collated and used to plan future course development. The quality improvement group continues to meet regularly and these meetings are well attended, with detailed minutes and action points.

40. The self-assessment process and staff members' involvement in it continue to be satisfactory. The first self-assessment report was produced in August 2004 and the current report for the year 2004-05 has been updated recently. The report and its updates are thorough and self-critical, and have been used to produce action and development plans. Although the strengths and weaknesses identified in the self-assessment report were over-inclusive, key strengths and weaknesses matched those identified by the inspectors.

41. The slow implementation of targets set through self-assessment was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. Most of these targets, such as the changes to the core day, the revision of offenders' pay, and the revised induction process, have now been completed. All new targets set within the current action plan are now being met in a timely fashion.

42. The arrangements for quality assurance are satisfactory, but it is too early to assess the effect of these arrangements on the quality of the provision.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas - Other government-funded provision	118	3

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good attainment of communication and life skills
- good learner engagement in classes

Weaknesses

- some poor recording on individual learning plans
- insufficient use of ILT in teaching sessions

Achievement and standards

43. Learners gain a good range of communication, numeracy and life skills. This has been maintained since the previous inspection. Learners practise and acquire skills that enable them to write effective letters to their families and to employers. They comment on improvements in their self-confidence in communications and numeracy, which has enabled them to pass national tests. Learners can now use measurements and calculate formulae more effectively and they are pleased with their progress. Other learners are proud of the skills and understanding that they have developed and applied, particularly in art. Learners are able to concentrate better and have gained social skills to enable them to work better with others. Many have had their work displayed and celebrated in the prison and at a local museum, and they are also working towards accredited qualifications. The standard of learners' work overall is satisfactory and appropriate to their individual learning goals. Achievement rates were severely disrupted due to the implementation of the new contractual arrangements for the provision. These have now improved significantly over the last two quarters, and in many areas they are approaching the project targets. In social and life skills, 64 learners have successfully completed courses and are awaiting accreditation.

Quality of education and training

44. The prison has maintained good engagement of learners in teaching sessions since the previous inspection. Learners show a good level of interest and concentration in classes. They are confident to seek help when required. Tutors have a strong empathy with learners and there is good co-operation and communication. Classes are well managed and tutors are highly regarded for providing effective individual coaching, enabling learners to understand concepts and improve their skills.

45. Initial assessment is now satisfactory and this was a weakness at the previous inspection. Learners receive supervised initial assessments in a new assessment centre, which is in a quiet and comfortable location. The prison marks the tests and records the results on individual learning plans, a summary of which is then passed on to the relevant tutors. Learners are streamed and placed into appropriate learning groups to improve their literacy, numeracy and language skills. A specialist volunteer attends every week to support learners with dyslexia. A computerised diagnostic assessment programme is currently being made available for learners.

46. Induction is satisfactory and learners receive adequate information to help them choose their learning programmes. Programmes currently meet the learners' needs and interests.

47. The prison has improved the outreach programme. Tutors are now deployed more effectively to support learners with literacy and numeracy needs in the carpentry and textile workshops, and on the wings. Many learners are also engaged in art work on the wings. All learners on outreach programmes have the opportunity to gain appropriate qualifications and to develop their portfolios of evidence.

48. Information on some individual learning plans is poorly recorded. Targets are not individual or cross-referenced to the relevant module or referenced to the curriculum. End dates for achievement of individual targets are not completed and some learning plans, for example, contain comments such as 'ongoing', without giving learners clear indications of when they will complete individual targets or review dates. Other learning plans are well detailed, with clear targets and dates for completion and improvement.

49. The prison makes little use of ILT in teaching literacy and numeracy, and this was a weakness at the previous inspection. No audiovisual aids, videos, or use of computers or packages to encourage individual learning, were used in learning sessions. Although the quality of worksheets and learning materials is satisfactory, there is an over-reliance on written learning materials to support learning. Accommodation is still generally poor in the main education block, with small classroom sizes unable to accommodate a large number of learners.

Leadership and management

50. Most qualifications are still gained by external assessment or examination. Internal verification is planned satisfactorily for the social and life skills provision. There are three full-time and nine part-time staff in the provision, which is now better co-ordinated. The provision for ESOL takes place in the education centre on two days a week. Since the previous inspection, the curriculum has been revised and includes sessions on music production, where some learners are encouraged to improve their literacy skills through writing lyrics. A new two-day workshop is in place, which is delivered in partnership with local community family trusts, to improve relationships between offenders and their families. It has been highly successful, and helps to improve family relationships and links into existing parenting skills courses. Plans are also in place to incorporate the new functional skills into identified pathways from August 2006, which include sessions such as decision-making and financial management.

51. Management of teaching time has improved since the previous inspection. The establishment now has prison officers who are involved in learning and skills. They follow up all learners who are late and do not attend classes in the education department. Any learners who are on the waiting list are now able to replace those who do not attend classes. Learners now have the opportunity to visit the library each day during break times.

52. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Learners receive information on their rights, responsibilities and complaints at their induction. Materials and resources for family relationship programmes reflect good awareness of equality and diversity issues.

53. The self-assessment report listed the main strengths and weaknesses the provision. Although it did not specify key strengths and weaknesses, it listed many strengths and weaknesses against the five questions in the Common Inspection Framework. Staff were involved in the self-assessment process. Since the previous inspection, the management's response to these weaknesses has been satisfactory.