

REINSPECTION REPORT

HMYOI Stoke Heath Reinspection

03 August 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. HMYOI Stoke Heath (the prison) in North Shropshire is a closed prison holding young male adults aged 18 to 21, and sentenced and unsentenced juveniles. The prison's catchment area includes Liverpool, Manchester, West Midlands and Wales.
2. The prison operates as a shared site for the education and training of juveniles and young adults. There are training workshops for engineering and construction programmes, a physical education (PE) facility and two education blocks. The prison's operational capacity is 690, and the prison currently has 667 offenders, 174 juveniles and 481 young adults. Of these, 135 juveniles are sentenced, four are awaiting sentence and 35 are on remand. All young adults are sentenced. Approximately 22 per cent of the prison population are from minority ethnic groups. Foreign national offenders comprise 3 per cent of the prison's population and there are 60 Welsh offenders, 14 of whom are juveniles. The average length of stay for offenders is 129 days.
3. The head of learning and skills has responsibility for the education department, library, gym, kitchens, the training workshops, the chaplaincy, recycling and the gardens throughout the prison. Education is contracted to Manchester City College (the college). From 1 August, information, advice and guidance, including initial assessment and induction, is contracted to Fern Training. The education department is managed by an education manager who, with the deputy education manager, is responsible for four co-ordinators, 25 full-time tutors, 30 sessional tutors, eight outreach support tutors, 23 classroom assistants, seven advice and guidance staff, one technician and eight administrators.
4. The education department contracts to deliver 46,000 hours of education each year, of which 30,446 hours are to juveniles. Juveniles are entitled to 30 hours of education, training and purposeful activity each week. Young adults attend education and training by choice for formal education, vocational training and supported learning provision in the workshops and the wings.
5. The education department offers young adults 86 places and juveniles 202 places each day over five days. Teaching sessions take place in the morning and afternoons. Evening provision is takes place for three evenings a week for learndirect learners only.
6. One principal officer, two senior officers, eight PE instructors, one part-time PE instructor, one gym assistant and one part-time administrative assistant are responsible for recreational PE and training. A catering manager, two head chefs, five assistant cooks, and 12 young adults staff the kitchen.
7. The workshops provide opportunities for 167 learners to work in tailoring, laundering, and production and manufacturing. Nine occupationally experienced instructors teach on vocational courses that include industrial cleaning, welding, engineering,

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manufacturing and woodworking.

8. The library, which is subcontracted to the Shropshire County Council Library Service, is the responsibility of a full-time librarian, supported by a part-time library assistant, a wing escort officer, and one prison orderly. The library contains approximately 6,000 books. It is located within the new education block and accessible to offenders during morning and afternoons for five days each week. It is not available at weekends or in the evening.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Construction

9. Currently, 34 learners are working towards national qualifications at level 1 in the construction trades of woodwork, painting and decorating, electrical installation and plumbing. Most programmes last for 10 weeks. Learners attend the craft workshops in the morning and afternoon for four days a week for practical activities, and to gain background knowledge relevant to their chosen vocational area. One member of staff is responsible for teaching each vocational area. Specialist staff from the education department provide individual learner support. All learners receive an induction on entry to the programme. Some learners also work towards a nationally recognised foundation certificate in health and safety.

ABOUT THE REINSPECTION

Number of inspectors	6
Number of inspection days	17
Number of learners interviewed	49
Number of staff interviewed	27
Number of subcontractors interviewed	26
Number of partners/external agencies interviewed	1

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

10. The previous inspection in January 2005 judged the provision to be satisfactory in engineering, technology and manufacturing, and hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, information and communications technology (ICT), and foundation programmes. However, it found the prison's construction programmes and the leadership and management, including its approach to equality of opportunity and quality assurance, to be unsatisfactory. Reinspection confirmed that standards in engineering, technology and manufacturing, and hospitality, sport, leisure and travel, ICT, and foundation programmes had been at least maintained. Construction programmes are now satisfactory. Leadership and management, quality improvement, and equality of opportunity are also 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

Construction		4
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts		
- Other government-funded provision	11	4

Engineering, technology & manufacturing		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Mechanical engineering		
- Other government-funded provision	22	3

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Using IT		
- Other government-funded provision	67	3
- learnirect	50	3

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Hospitality and catering		
- Other government-funded provision	22	3

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Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Literacy		
- Other government-funded provision	57	3
Numeracy		
- Other government-funded provision	47	3

Grades awarded at reinspection

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

Construction		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts		
- Other government-funded provision	34	3

Leadership and management

Strengths

- good strategies to develop learning and skills
- good curriculum management
- good celebration of learners' achievements
- good use of equal opportunities monitoring data
- good evaluation of learning programmes

Weaknesses

- insufficient access to shower facilities for learners on practical learning activities
- insufficient learning opportunities in sport
- insufficiently structured support for new staff in vocational areas
- insufficient monitoring of the quality of learning
- slow implementation of equality of opportunity in the curriculum

Construction

Construction crafts

Strengths

- good development of practical skills
- well-planned practical training
- good achievement rates in painting and decorating and woodwork

Weaknesses

- insufficient progress to rectify poor working conditions in painting and decorating
- poor resources for theory work

DETAILED REINSPECTION FINDING

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Grade 3

Strengths

- good strategies to develop learning and skills
- good curriculum management
- good celebration of learners' achievements
- good use of equal opportunities monitoring data
- good evaluation of learning programmes

Weaknesses

- insufficient access to shower facilities for learners on practical learning activities
- insufficient learning opportunities in sport
- insufficiently structured support for new staff in vocational areas
- insufficient monitoring of the quality of learning
- slow implementation of equality of opportunity in the curriculum

11. The prison's strategies to develop learning and skills are good and managed well. The prison has worked effectively to rectify many of the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. Learning and skills opportunities in the prison have increased significantly. The range of provision is good and has been expanded to include learndirect and distance learning at levels 3 and 4. Senior managers have a clear commitment to learning and skills and fully understand the value to offenders of employability training. Vocational training opportunities have been expanded. Education programmes have been redesigned and now focus effectively on issues to reduce re-offending. For example, newly introduced programmes to improve literacy and numeracy skills also contain sessions on employability, personal development, ICT, and art. The management of foundation programmes is very good and has improved significantly since the previous inspection. The prison is making good progress to develop an appropriate work ethic within learning and skills, and to challenge poor behaviour and poor attendance. Resources have improved and are now good in many departments. For example, facilities for PE are good and the work environment in manufacturing is very good. ICT resources in education have also improved and are now good. However, learners on practical activities do not have sufficient access to shower facilities. Learners attending PE do not have adequate access to drinking water.

12. Curriculum management is good. The curriculum is being adjusted to accommodate changes to the average length of learners' stay in the prison. The prison has introduced an effective strategy to help reduce the number of learners who are transferred out of the prison before they have completed their learning programme. The number of lesson cancellations are now low, as are staff turnover and staff sickness. Staff

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receive good support. Communications are good and keep staff up to date with developments and other issues. The college has introduced effective systems to record information about learners and their progress. Staff performance management is good. Many staff make good use of the prison's arrangements for professional development. The prison has a good working relationship with the college. Managers of the prison and the college work well to improve the provision. Achievement rates are good in engineering, and ICT and have improved in hospitality, where they are now satisfactory. Training is planned well in most areas of learning and many learners achieve good standards of work, especially in engineering and ICT. Assessments practices are satisfactory and the monitoring of learners' progress has improved significantly. However, the use of individual learning plans to identify individual learning targets, plan learning activities, and record learners' progress, is still insufficiently developed.

13. The skills for life strategy is satisfactory. This is the government's initiative on training in literacy, numeracy and the use of language. It includes appropriate arrangements to identify and support the literacy, language and numeracy needs of all learners. The strategy is included as a standard agenda item for the senior management team and the quality improvement group meetings. The prison has a comprehensive action plan for the implementation of the strategy, which is reviewed every six months. Satisfactory training is provided to raise staff awareness of learners' literacy and numeracy needs and the prison's strategy to meet these needs. The prison is making good progress to fully integrate literacy and numeracy support in to all learning programmes.

14. Since the previous inspection, the library has improved its service to learners. Staff have introduced a useful diversity policy to help meet the needs of groups and individuals using the library, and to monitor its service. The prison now provides an appropriate range of books that reflect different ethnic and cultural heritages and that also meet some learners' individual needs. This range includes bilingual dictionaries, novels in Welsh, and books about disabilities. Library staff make good use of the detailed statistics they receive on the prison's population to promote diversity. Library staff also work well with the prison's induction and the race relations staff, to help them gain advanced notice of the languages the library needs to cover for. Staff also make good use of a display board to promote diversity. Library staff help learners carry out research for coursework and other learning activities. For example, learners make good use of the good range of suitable reference books about electronics and other crafts acquired specifically for their studies in these areas. A new timetable gives learners better access to the library. However, there is still no access during the evenings and at weekends.

15. Learners attending PE have insufficient learning opportunities in sport. They do not receive enough training to promote healthy living through physical exercise. Prison staff have worked well with education department staff to introduce accredited sports courses for juveniles. However, this has not been extended sufficiently to young offenders. Previously offered accredited training programmes are no longer available.

16. Support for newly appointed instructors in vocational training is not sufficiently structured. New staff receive mentoring support and training on specific procedures

linked to teaching and learning. However, no structured support is provided to help them develop their skills as teachers and to build their confidence in working with offenders, many of whom are reluctant learners.

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade 3

17. The prison continues to celebrate learners' achievements well. Within the education department, managers and staff use a monthly scheme very effectively to acknowledge learners who have demonstrated significant improvement in their work, behaviour or conduct. This scheme identifies the development of learners' personal skills such as supporting other learners, being consistently friendly, polite, hardworking and showing high motivation, as well as more tangible successes, such as the achievement of qualifications. The prominent displays on noticeboards provide learners with good opportunities to take a pride in their achievements, including participation in teambuilding activities in the outdoors and in community service activities. High-profile events to recognise these achievers are well managed and well attended by parents, guardians, siblings, partners, teaching staff and prison managers, and are held every six weeks. Teaching staff promote these events very effectively as an incentive for further learners to achieve. The reward and pay structure is well designed and offers fair rewards to young adults participating in education or training. They can earn comparable payments to those engaged in other prison activities.

18. Learning and skills managers make good use of data to monitor equality of opportunity. This area of work has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Comprehensive data is now collected systematically every month. Clear and well-designed graphs and tables provide detailed information on the ethnicity and background of learners participating in learning and skills provision, as well as retention and achievement rates. The quality improvement group uses this information very well to analyse trends and identify priority areas or needs. Recent changes to the provision have included a wider range of programmes, the additional flexibility to schedules, and the introduction of Halal meat on hospitality courses. However, staff do not record sufficient data on learners with disabilities or monitor their progress adequately. Some education and training facilities are located upstairs, with poor access for learners or staff with restricted mobility.

19. Provision for Welsh learners has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. The recently appointed Welsh curriculum co-ordinator makes good use of the induction process to monitor closely the number of learners who come from Wales and who speak Welsh. They are now systematically offered a basic skills assessment in Welsh. Recent developments include a Welsh focus group and a Welsh language class. A Welsh dimension is currently being introduced into some foundation programmes, such as literacy support, key skills level 1 and numeracy, but this work is still at an early stage of development. The Welsh curriculum co-ordinator keeps careful records of how well learners from Wales achieve during their sentence. However, Welsh learners of all ages do not receive careers advice from Careers Wales advisers. They do not receive sufficient specialist advice and guidance to help them to make a well-planned transition to their communities.

20. The prison has a satisfactory range of equal opportunities policies and statements. For example, the race relations action plan for the prison contains appropriate actions in response to the Race Relations (amendment) Act 2000. The equal opportunities policy relating to learning and skills within the prison describes positive approaches to tackling discrimination on grounds of race, colour, ethnic origin or disability. Although the department does not have a written action plan for implementing this policy, progress towards achieving the objectives is satisfactory. For example, written procedures clearly displayed in relevant education and training buildings and rooms, give appropriate advice on how to combat bullying, and to allow young adults to make complaints or to raise awareness of incidences of racial discrimination. However, although the prison now provides a broader range of programmes, access to some facilities, such as the library and some sports activities, is still inadequate in the evenings and at weekends.

21. Many of the arrangements for promoting equality of opportunity to staff and learners are now satisfactory. Most staff have attended relevant training and they have a satisfactory awareness of many of the key issues that may affect learners' opportunities. Similarly, the induction for learners now includes a satisfactory introduction to relevant aspects of equality of opportunity. However, the prison has been slow to implement equality of opportunity as part of its curriculum for learning and skills. Although programme co-ordinators are beginning to monitor schemes of work, lesson plans and materials to help ensure that they meet all learners' needs and promote diversity effectively, this process is inadequately managed. Staff do not have agreed criteria to use when reviewing these documents and the monitoring of this process is little more than an audit. Some lesson plans still do not adequately show how learners' individual learning needs will be met. Although diversity is now included in the social and life skills programmes, the context of many learning materials and activities across the provision is still too narrow and does not promote diversity well enough. Learners do not receive sufficient opportunities to challenge their own assumptions and discuss equality of opportunity issues as part of their development while on a learning and skills programme.

Quality assurance

Contributory grade 3

22. The recently introduced process to systematically evaluate the learning and skills programmes is good and well structured. It is a thorough process and the evaluations are self-critical. Teaching staff and managers use this process well to identify strengths and weaknesses in each programme and appropriate actions to improve the provision. Course reviews are completed at least every 12 weeks. Each review includes a comprehensive assessment of performance relating to enrolments, retention, achievement and attendance. As part of this process, staff use learner feedback effectively. The quality improvement group routinely receives the results of the reviews. Members of the group use this information well to monitor previous action plans and identify further areas for improvement. However, the expected outcomes on some of the action plans are not sufficiently clear.

23. The prison has significantly improved its use of data to monitor the provision. Members of the quality improvement group use monthly data reports effectively to

assess the performance of learning and skills in the prison. The reports are helpful and provide a good and easy-to-use analysis of management information. Graphics are used well in the reports to alert staff to potential problems.

24. Since the previous inspection, a quality improvement strategy has been introduced. An appropriate quality improvement calendar has been developed and published, and includes a comprehensive cycle of relevant activities. The strategy includes information about staff roles and responsibilities for quality improvement, and staff have a good understanding about their contribution to this process. The first cycle of this new strategy is not yet complete and it is too early to judge its effectiveness.

25. The previous self-assessment report was published just before the previous inspection. Managers have used the comprehensive post-inspection action plan effectively to monitor and record progress, and to rectify weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. At the time of reinspection, the draft self-assessment report, including all learning and skills in the prison, was in the final stages of consultation before planned publication in September 2006. All staff have been involved in self-assessment.

26. The quality of teaching and learning is not sufficiently monitored. The college carries out an annual programme of observations of teaching and learning. An improved programme was introduced in January 2006. This is more detailed and covers teaching, learning and attainment. Training to help teaching staff rectify the identified weaknesses are appropriate. However, grades awarded do not effectively reflect the judgements recorded. The process is not standardised or monitored adequately. The programme of lesson observations to assess the quality of teaching and learning in vocational training and sport is at an early stage of development.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Construction

Construction		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Construction crafts		
- Other government-funded provision	34	3

Construction crafts

Strengths

- good development of practical skills
- well-planned practical training
- good achievement rates in painting and decorating and woodwork

Weaknesses

- insufficient progress to rectify poor working conditions in painting and decorating
- poor resources for theory work

Achievement and standards

27. Learners continue to make good progress in developing practical skills. Most learners develop the skills and confidence required to measure accurately, read drawings effectively, and to perform accurate calculations. The standard of their practical work is good. For example, in woodworking, learners work hard on projects and activities, and contribute well to the making of garden gates, toolboxes and cupboards to a good standard. Most learners in all vocational areas quickly learn how to use a good range of hand tools effectively and safely, and they demonstrate an appropriate level of understanding of health and safety in the workshops. Learners also work hard on completing their assessment portfolios to a satisfactory standard.

28. Achievement rates of the basic award in woodwork continues to be satisfactory. Over the past three years, 66 per cent of the young adults in construction trades have achieved a qualification. In some specialist areas, a good proportion of learners successfully complete the course. For example, 70 per cent of the learners attending a course in carpentry achieved the full award, and 80 per cent of learners on a recent course in painting and decorating achieved the required standards for the national award.

Quality of education and training

29. Practical training continues to be well planned. Instructors use schemes of work well to identify relevant activities or projects for each week and appropriate tasks for each training session. They provide good, clear presentations and demonstrations, and use a wide range of questioning techniques to develop learners' understanding and show how much they have learnt. Learners spend most of their time in the workshops carrying out practical exercises and projects relevant to the national award. They focus well on these tasks and receive good individual coaching to help them to develop their construction skills. However, the training learners receive in background knowledge for construction is insufficiently structured. It is not timetabled adequately and learners do not receive sufficient information in advance on when they will receive theory training or what this training will cover.

30. The monitoring of learners' progress is now satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. Learners are clear about their progress and what they need to do to achieve the award. Although most staff now keep satisfactory records of learners' progress, some staff do not routinely update learners' individual learning plans.

31. The range of construction programmes has increased since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Woodworking continues to be available, and newly built workshops for plumbing, electrical installation and painting and decorating now provide learners with an appropriate range of learning opportunities in construction crafts. The prison has identified that most learners' length of stay is less than four months, and has made satisfactory arrangements for learners to work towards a national award in all of these vocational trades, that is normally achievable within 10 weeks.

32. Additional support in literacy and numeracy is now satisfactory. Workshop instructors now receive satisfactory information on learners' individual support needs and most instructors use this information well when planning practical activities in the workshop. All learners attend the education department weekly to help them develop their literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, education staff provide further discrete additional support in the vocational training classroom. The quality of this support has improved since the previous inspection. It is planned more effectively. For example, much of the material relevant to construction and learning activities are now at an appropriate level for each learner.

33. The practical resources in the workshops are satisfactory. They are mostly clean and tidy. Learners use a wide range of well-maintained hand tools that are of a good industrial standard. However, working conditions in the painting and decorating department are poor. The area is not well ventilated and it is too hot for learners to work in. Dust produced as part of normal painting and decorating activities is also a hazard. Staff are aware of these conditions, but no action has been taken to resolve the problem.

34. The prison does not provide adequate resources for training in theory. Staff and learners do not have easy access to a classroom for theory sessions. Current

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arrangements, which mostly involve the use of practical workshops, do not provide an environment that is conducive for theory work. Similarly, the provision of learning materials for this aspect of learners' programmes is also inadequate. Learners have insufficient access to computing facilities, and other relevant teaching and learning aids.

Leadership and management

35. The management of many aspects of the construction programmes has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. The range of the provision has been extended, and learners now have a choice of four craft trades. Managers have recruited new staff to teach and instruct on these new programmes. The prison has identified that some of these staff are new to teaching and have no formal teaching qualifications. It has satisfactory plans to provide them with individual advice and training.

36. Most health and safety practices are satisfactory. Learners all wear appropriate personal protective equipment that is supplied by the prison. Risk assessments are satisfactory in most area. However, the risk associated with dust in the painting and decorating area has not been resolved.

37. Quality assurance arrangements are satisfactory. For example, internal verification is satisfactory. Staff use clear sampling plans well and receive appropriate and constructive feedback on the quality of their assessments. All staff are involved in the self-assessment process and have each completed a self-assessment of their own specialist area. Staff and learning and skills managers now use course reviews and relevant data well to evaluate each course and identify strengths and areas for improvements. However, some new instructors have not been observed and have not received any feedback or evaluation of their teaching skills. The promotion of equality of opportunity at induction is satisfactory. However, issues covered during this aspect of the programme are still not sufficiently reinforced during training activities.