

# HMP Rye Hill

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317918

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## Background information

### Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

#### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements are made on [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

### Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)), reports from the inspectorates' quality monitoring or annual assessment visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- preparation for life and work programmes:
  - employability training
  - literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)
  - personal development and social integration

## Description of the provider

1. HMP Rye Hill is a private contracted Category B training prison situated on the border of Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. The prison is operated by Global Solutions Ltd (GSL) it has eight residential units and holds up to 600 male adults that have a sentence of over four years. During the week of inspection the prison was holding 640 offenders. The prison has a diverse population, with 128 foreign nationals, 150 lifers, and two wings house up to 150 vulnerable offenders. A high number of offenders do not have English as their first language.
2. The education is provided by City College Manchester (CCM) through a private contracting arrangement, and includes provision for information, advice and guidance, and initial literacy and numeracy testing. CCM also has responsibility for initiating the individual learning plans at induction.
3. There are three contract workshops providing 147 places. Offenders demolish computers, make hair nets, carry out telephone repairs and there is some electrical assembly work. Other than a media workshop run by an external organisation and providing 22 places there is no formal accreditation of skills.

## Summary of grades awarded

<b>Effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Inadequate: Grade 4</b>
<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Inadequate: Grade 4</b>
<b>Achievement and standards</b>	<b>Inadequate: Grade 4</b>
Employability training	Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4
Personal development and social integration	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3
<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>Inadequate: Grade 4</b>
Employability training	Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4
Personal development and social integration	Contributory grade: Satisfactory Grade 3
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Inadequate Grade 4</b>
<b>Equality of opportunity</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4</b>

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

#### Inadequate: Grade 4

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate. More specifically, the quality of provision in employability training, literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes is inadequate. Strand 3, personal development and social integration is satisfactory. Leadership and management and equality of opportunity within learning and skills are inadequate.

#### Capacity to improve

#### Inadequate: Grade 4

5. Learning and skills provision is in a poor position to make improvements. Development planning for improvement is ineffective, as is the self-assessment process. Very few of the failings identified in previous inspection reports have been remedied. The prisons approach to quality improvement is ineffective.
6. The self-assessment process is ineffective. The self-assessment process covers all areas of the prison, including external partners and contractors, and they do contribute to the report. The self-assessment report was critical and correctly identified most programmes as unsatisfactory; however, the report underestimated the significance of the areas for improvement in leadership and management. Most of the areas for improvement are the same as those identified in the previous report. The self-assessment, action and development planning process has failed to bring about sufficient improvement.

## Key strengths

- Good range of opportunities for the development of personal and social skills
- Good arrangements for learning support through peer mentors
- Successful employability skills development in the media centre

## Key areas for improvement

- Accommodation and learning and environments
- Specialist assessment and support for offenders with learning difficulties
- Planning and review of individuals' learning and progress
- Information, advice and guidance
- Skills for life strategy
- Strategy to develop learning and skills across the prison
- Education, training and accreditation
- Quality assurance and improvement systems
- Management of equality and diversity in learning and skills
- Management information systems

## Main findings

## Employability training

### Achievement and standards

Inadequate: Grade 4

7. During the inspection, learners employed by Summit Media in the media workshop quickly develop and display high standards of computer skills and knowledge. Retention rates are high and many are given responsibility for managing contracts with external employers. In these instances, learners show good communication skills particularly when using the telephone. A few learners have progressed to full time employment upon release.
8. Learners observed on information and communication technology courses during the inspection were making satisfactory progress with their written and practical work. In some industrial workshops some learners were developing a wide range of basic practical skills through the assembly of light units. Other learner's progress to work as quality monitors and this role is effectively carried out.

### Quality of provision

Inadequate: Grade 4

9. There is very poor reinforcement of a work ethos in the contract workshops. Those in the workshops on piece work are not encouraged to work to realistic start and finish times. Some offenders were observed sleeping or resting for long periods during working hours. Offenders in some workshops were provided with appropriate personal protective equipment but were not sufficiently encouraged to use it. Many offenders do not use the eye protection or ear defenders provided. Most industrial workshops fail to pay sufficient attention to housekeeping. Working areas are cluttered and untidy and some workstations are positioned in the walkways. Staff and learners showed a good understanding and knowledge of health and safety regulations in the Summit Media department.
10. Opportunities for employability training and the progression of learning and skills are extremely limited. The prison has offered a small range of nationally recognised qualifications in the past, for example national vocational qualifications in catering and programmes. There are insufficient assessors and verifiers for the performing manufacturing operations qualification and this is no longer offered. Training courses have been offered which provide a lift truck driver's licence. A member of prison staff is qualified to provide the training at basic level. No other formal recognised training is available.
11. Learners develop some practical skills while working in the contract workshops. Other than some information captured on the prison record there is no recording of progress and competence. The Summit Media employment programme provides a good well structured company training course. Learners who work in the electrical assembly workshop are assessed and awarded a certificate by the external company providing the contract.
12. Information, advice and guidance for resettlement and support for employment are very weak. Learners are not provided with a pre-release course and there are no links with external support or jobsearch agencies. Learning plans are sparse with little information about learners' progress. Offenders receive little opportunity to review their progress and there is no systematic analysis of where offenders are being released, employment opportunities or skills required by industry and commerce

## Literacy, numeracy and ESOL

### Achievement and standards

Inadequate: Grade 4

13. Learners observed during the inspection were making satisfactory progress in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. Basic skills assessments offered at induction highlights where support would be beneficial and offenders are encouraged to participate in education to address this. Many black and minority ethnic offenders take this opportunity but the take up by white offenders is low, particularly in the main education department. For those offenders where English is not their first language progress with literacy and numeracy is slow. Achievement data is based on meeting performance targets and gives no reliable indication of successful outcomes of individual or groups of offenders.
14. Although there has been an improvement in attendance monitoring, class numbers are low and courses under-subscribed. The measurement of classroom efficiency is flawed as it does not give a view of attendance, it merely shows that the teacher was in attendance and the class was running. The mixed ability groups mean that those learners at higher levels became disinterested and their progress is limited.

### Quality of provision

Inadequate: Grade 4

15. A successful programme of peer mentoring is available. At the time of inspection another six learners adding to the nine in place already were due to qualify and gain a nationally recognised qualification in peer support. Good progression is available for the peer mentors, firstly raising their own levels of literacy and numeracy and then supporting fellow offender's progress.
16. Insufficient specialist assessment and support is available for offenders with learning difficulties. Support for dyslexia is inconsistent, some tutors provide alternative or adapted teaching and learning aids when they discover the condition, other learners struggle to manage it themselves. When learners declare learning difficulties at induction this information is not readily available to tutors.
17. Only two classes of specialised ESOL support are available each week on the main education department. There is no ESOL support on the vulnerable offender wings. The insufficiency means that some offenders whose English is not their first language struggle in classes that are unsuitable for their immediate needs.
18. There is poor planning and review of learning and progress. The individual learning plan generated at the induction is rarely revisited even though there was a written policy that offenders were penalised if they failed to bring them to lessons. Guidance and advice is only available at induction. Offenders have insufficient opportunity to discuss and plan suitable learning and resettlement programmes for their time in custody and beyond. The skills for life strategy is insufficiently developed. It was introduced recently and does not address the needs of the prison population. There are insufficient links between the strategy and the skills for life department within education. The skills for life co-ordinator was not consulted in its development.



## Personal development and social integration

### Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Satisfactory Grade 3

19. For those offenders who engage in activities and interventions that encourage the development of personal and social skills, there is a positive impact. Learners enjoy the recently developed lifestyles course which explores topics that are relevant to coping better with their time in custody and communicating with their peers. Attendance at this course is good.

### Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Satisfactory Grade 3

20. A good range of opportunities are available for some offender's to develop their personal and social skills. Some offenders are effectively deployed to work alongside teachers in education classes as peer mentors. Within the contract workshops some offenders progress to supervisory roles and some deal effectively with external customers. The writer in residence has worked effectively with offenders and developed a range of innovative projects such as a 'soap opera' and drama group. The prison has a number of pro-social roles such as listeners and offenders involved in the toe by toe project who engage with and support other offenders.
21. Much of the teaching accommodation and learning environments are not conducive to learning. Classrooms have poor ventilation, are hot and stuffy and the use of electric fans is ineffective. The classroom used for art on the wing does not have enough space to work or display work. The cookery room is unhygienic.

## Leadership and management

### Inadequate: Grade 4

#### Equality of opportunity

Inadequate: Grade 4

22. Leadership and management of learning and skills within the prison are inadequate, and so is its approach to equal opportunities.
23. Since the introduction of an officer to monitor attendance in the education department there has been a significant improvement in the management of learners' attendance at classes. Although there is poor attendance at some classes, the number of learners who do not attend without good reason is minimal. However, the take-up of education places is low. Less than half of the possible places are used by learners.
24. The strategy to develop learning and skills across the prison is inadequate. The three year development plan does not contain sufficiently clear implementation plans. The plan is overly ambitious and fails to address the needs of offenders. The strategy is not based on a detailed analysis of needs and does not adequately consider the long stay nature of the offender. Insufficient thought has been given to how education and skills should be structured to meet the needs of learners throughout their stay at HMP Rye Hill. The education department is not given clear direction to develop an appropriate curriculum.

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25. There is insufficient education and training provision. There is insufficient provision for offenders for whom English is not their first language, social and life skills programmes and vocational training. There is little structured vocational training and at the time of inspection no learners were following accredited programmes. The work ethic is poor and learners do not develop appropriate employment skills and behaviours. There has been insufficient consideration of the education and training needs for the diverse population, including the high proportion of lifers and foreign national offenders.
26. The arrangements for quality assurance and quality improvement are inadequate. Within the education department there are a range of processes including the observation of teaching and learning and annual course reviews, however, these are ineffective in bringing about improvement. There is not an adequate, systematic approach to quality assuring education and training. Weaknesses identified in the 2003 inspection and issues raised at the inspection monitoring visit in 2005 have not been rectified. A formal review of the learning and skills needs of offenders was carried out in December 2005, but this has resulted in little or no improvement. The quality improvement group meet monthly, although there have been some gaps due to staff absence.
27. The self-assessment process is ineffective. The report is produced by the head of learning and skills with input from all areas of the prison, including external partners and contractors. However, the process including action and development planning has failed to bring about significant improvement. The latest report is almost identical to the previous report and most of the identified areas for improvement remain unresolved. Judgements on the achievement of learners are insufficiently supported by evidence.
28. There is fair and equitable provision of education and skills across the prison. The provision for vulnerable offenders is similar as that for the rest of the prison and the allocation of places at induction is robust and fair.
29. There is inadequate management equality of opportunity within education and skills. There is no analysis of the relative performance of different groups of learners. For example the prison is not aware how learners from different ethnic groups perform on courses. The prison has sufficient data on the attendance of different groups and this highlights where this differs significantly from the population norm. However, it is over reliant on the complaints system to identify where there may be problems or concerns. Equality and diversity was a standing item at staff meetings until November 2005, however, this has now ceased. The education department uses CCM's equal opportunities policy, which is detailed and comprehensive, but not applicable to the prison or its context. The staff handbook makes no reference to the policy. Equality of opportunity is superficially covered in the self-assessment report. The wages system is a significant disincentive for learners to engage in education. In some classes teachers engaged more with white offenders, and some black offenders felt disadvantaged when applying for courses.
30. There is inadequate management information. Inspectors were unable to make judgements on the progress and achievement of learners due to a lack of data. Achievement and attendance data collected in the education department is inadequate to make judgements on course performance. There is little data available in other areas about the achievements of learners or the quality of learning. Management of learning and skills is based around

compliance of contracts and key performance targets. Information on the quality of programmes and learners experiences is given insufficient regard.

## What learners like:

- The rates of pay in the workshops
- Opportunity to attend physical education each day
- Self-employment course
- Working with the peer mentors
- Information technology

## What learners think could improve:

- The length of time waiting for employment - 'Getting a job quicker'
- 'The quality of teaching'
- The number of training courses - 'I have come here to progress from courses I have done at other prisons and I can't'
- The transparency of the course allocation process
- The communication regarding education applications - 'I have had my name down for months, and no-one gets back to me'
- Having mixed ability classes - 'Some offenders are struggling, others are bored'
- The support for ESOL learners - 'They sit in literacy classes and can't understand a word'