

# HMP Bullingdon

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**Inspection date**

18 January 2008

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**Inspection number**

318293

## Contents

<b>Background information .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Inspection judgements .....	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
<b>Description of the provider.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Summary of grades awarded .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Overall judgement.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Effectiveness of provision .....	6
Capacity to improve .....	6
<b>Key strengths .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Key areas for improvement.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Main findings .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Employability training .....	8
Achievement and standards .....	8
Quality of provision .....	8
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL .....	9
Achievement and standards .....	9
Quality of provision .....	9
Personal development and social integration .....	10
Achievement and standards .....	10
Quality of provision .....	11
Leadership and management .....	12
Equality of opportunity .....	12
<b>What learners like .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>What learners think could improve.....</b>	<b>15</b>

## 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 ESOL
  - Personal development and social integration

## Description of the provider

1. HMP Bullingdon is located near Bicester in Oxfordshire. It is an adult category C prison that includes a category B local function. It is made up of five units including those for remand, drug dependency, sex offenders and prisoner support. There is also a health care centre and segregation, support and challenge unit. Work is currently being carried out to extend the prison by building a 120 place accommodation wing, as well as additional workshop and education facilities. The prison has capacity for 963 offenders and operates close to that limit on a regular basis. There are 149 remand prisoners and approximately 175 foreign nationals. The average sentence length is 3.9 years. Approximately 19% of the population constitutes vulnerable prisoners.
2. The education contract provides 22,700 hours from Milton Keynes College. This is funded by the LSC and consists of accredited programmes in information and communication technology (ICT), literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), key skills, barbering, art, music, creative writing, bricklaying and the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS). The prison offers 380 education spaces that are predominantly part-time and offered during weekdays each morning and afternoon. The 114 accredited vocational training opportunities available include; horticulture Level 1 and 2, physical education (PE), industrial cleaning Level 1, 2 and 3, laundry and dry cleaning Level 2, water utilities operations and construction, with an intermediate brickwork programme, and food hygiene. Industrial workshops provide work opportunities in recycling, packaging and processing. Specialist interventions include those for sex offenders, prisoners with drug and alcohol dependency, enhanced thinking skills and healthy relationships programmes. The prison has a full-time adviser and guidance adviser provided by the college. In addition, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) provides a part-time adviser. Open and distance learning courses are available for those who wish to participate in higher-level learning. Library services are provided by Oxfordshire County Council.

## Summary of grades awarded

<b>Effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Satisfactory: 3</b>
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<b>Capacity to improve</b>	<b>Satisfactory: 3</b>
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<b>Achievement and standards</b>	<b>Good: Grade 2</b>
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<b>Employability training</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Satisfactory: 3</b>
<b>Literacy, numeracy and ESOL</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2</b>
<b>Personal development and social integration</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2</b>

<b>Quality of provision</b>	<b>Good: Grade 2</b>
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<b>Employability training</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2</b>
<b>Literacy, numeracy and ESOL</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2</b>
<b>Personal development and social integration</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Satisfactory: 3</b>

<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>Satisfactory: 3</b>
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<b>Equality of opportunity</b>	<b>Contributory grade: Satisfactory: 3</b>
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## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

#### Satisfactory: Grade 3

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. More specifically, achievement and standards are satisfactory in employability training and good in literacy, numeracy and ESOL and personal development and social integration programmes. The quality of provision in employability training and literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision is good. In personal development and social integration programmes the quality of provision is satisfactory. Leadership and management and the prison's approach to equality of opportunity are satisfactory.

#### Capacity to improve

#### Satisfactory: Grade 3

4. The capacity to make further improvements is satisfactory. There have been adequate actions since the previous inspection to promote improvements. Strengths identified at this time have generally been maintained and the prison has made satisfactory progress to address most key weaknesses. The quality and use of education and training data has improved and is now satisfactory. Quality improvements have been introduced to rectify shortfalls in internal verification. Success rates have been maintained or improved. However, in arts and music, the number of accreditations remains low. Access to accredited learning has improved though there are still insufficient vocational training places.
5. The inspection team is broadly confident in the self-assessment process. Both the prison and provider staff are appropriately involved in the self-assessment process. Staff understand how their actions contribute to the achievement of aims noted in the report. However, in some key areas the report was a descriptive narrative of the provision rather than an evaluation of quality. Inspectors agreed with most of the areas for improvement that were identified although some strengths were not sufficiently focused to improve all learners' achievements.

## Key strengths

- Clear strategy for learning and skills
- Good working partnership
- Good development of brickwork skills
- Outstanding training in industrial cleaning programmes
- Good pass rates in entry level ESOL, literacy and numeracy programmes
- High success rates on social and life skills courses and behavioural programmes
- Good teaching in many areas
- Well planned and managed accredited vocational programmes

## Key areas for improvement

- The improvement of aspects of provision judged to be satisfactory
- The underdeveloped systems for information advice and guidance
- The inadequate induction to learning and skills
- The low pass rates on music, art and creative writing courses
- The lack of mentors to support learning
- The poor attendance in many classes
- The poor use of individual learning plans for PE learners
- The insufficient number of available accredited vocational training places

## Main findings

### Employability training

#### Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

6. Learners demonstrate a good range of skills in a variety of bricklaying projects in the prison workshop. Portfolios are of a high standard. Tutors make good use of photographic evidence to identify improvements in learners' standard of work and their progress in developing relevant skills. Key skills are appropriately integrated with learners' programmes. Many learners are able to successfully demonstrate skills through appropriately designed assignments.
7. Overall achievement rates for learners on vocational programmes are satisfactory. On vocational programmes achievement rates range from 17% to 97%. In industrial cleaning programmes, learners' achievement rates are high at all levels.
8. Attendance on accredited vocational programmes is poor. During the inspection only 40% of learners attended a health and safety course and brickwork sessions. ICT class attendance was better at 53%. Punctuality is satisfactory with learners arriving at learning and skills sessions within the planned timescale.

#### Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

9. Training in industrial cleaning is outstanding. During inspection 32 learners were working towards Level 1, 2 and 3 accredited qualifications. Staff and learners are enthusiastic and committed to providing an excellent work and learning environment where learners demonstrate newly acquired vocational skills. Peer group support and assessment is particularly well planned and managed. Experienced learners from previous groups provide reinforcement of learning through a series of well taught small group sessions. Learners trained as assessors provide good accurate feedback. Monitoring of learners' performance is regular and thorough. Training in specialist cleaning techniques is good. Learners demonstrate excellent skills in relevant occupational settings. Resources are good and well maintained. Instructors adapt their teaching methods effectively to suit individual learners.
10. ICT sessions are well planned and managed. Learners benefit from progression routes from entry level to CLAIT plus. Typesetting and printing programmes provide further training options. Good use is made of a daily diary for individual learners who record their progress which is effectively assessed by tutors. During sessions, learners receive good individual coaching while working at different levels, modules and pace. Learners are effectively supported. They are focused on their work and enjoy their studies.
11. Brickwork learners develop a good understanding and knowledge of health and safety through the completion of the CSCS. On release this allows them to approach construction sites for employment and further training. Learners benefit from setting their own challenging short term targets on learning plans which meet their needs. Identification of preferred learning styles is effectively used to deliver training.
12. Land based instructors have good links with schools and external organisations and develop close partnership working arrangements. In land based activities learners



experience a good range of activities in which to develop relevant occupational skills. The partnership with Blue Sky, a charitable organisation, provides a good range of opportunities for learners who have completed water utilities training in the prison workshop. Learners acquire vocationally relevant skills during an eight week intensive course in water utilities operations. They develop effective working practices. The charity provides employment and further training opportunities for ex-offenders in a range of industries. To date, 46 learners have enrolled on the course and 8% have obtained full-time jobs through the partnership. Instructors in the laundry provide NVQ training in laundry operations and have close links with commercial laundries. Over the last two years five learners have obtained full-time employment through these links. Instructors make good use of a well qualified learner in the laundry to provide mentoring support and feedback to instructors on the quality learners' work.

13. The range of vocational programmes is satisfactory. However, the prison has insufficient accredited vocational training places for learners. When all training workshops are in operation there are only 114 places available. The prison is planning to offer further vocational accreditation in other sector. In assembly and packaging workshops offenders do not have access to accredited vocational programmes but, they are offered the opportunity to participate in key skills sessions.
14. Learners' short-term targets are too general and the tasks described on their individual learning plans are the same for all learners. Literacy and numeracy initial assessment results are not always appropriately recorded. Instructors often have little knowledge on whether learners require support.

## **Literacy, numeracy and ESOL**

### **Achievement and standards**

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

15. Pass rates for literacy, numeracy and ESOL at entry level are high for those learners who complete the course. In addition, pass rates for key skills communication at Level 1 and 2 and application of number at Level 1 are high. Learners are able to appropriately progress from one qualification to another and between levels. Rates of achievement on key skills programmes are at least satisfactory. The standard of work and rate of attainment is generally good. Attendance rates are satisfactory overall.
16. Many learners have not undertaken a learning programme for some considerable period of time. They quickly acquire appropriate study skills that allow them to effectively participate in learning on an individual and group basis. Most learners are able to effectively link their newly acquired skills and knowledge to wider contexts. However, some classes demonstrate erratic attendance patterns and have relatively small numbers of learners.

### **Quality of provision**

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

17. There is good teaching in most classes. All lessons are well planned and include detailed end of session reviews that are effectively used to improve class practice. Tutors use the good rapport they develop with learners to effectively encourage learning. In the better sessions activities are well paced and include an adequate range of activities for learners with short attention spans. ESOL classes provide good opportunities for learners to

practise their spoken English. Tutors give learners regular and useful feedback during sessions. There is effective use of question and answer exercises to check and reinforce learners understanding. Mixed ability classes are usually well managed. Tutors make appropriate use of opportunities to celebrate learners' success during classes and on completion of their programme. In many classes the learning activities and materials are well contextualised to reflect learners' experiences. For example one numeracy class made good use of an exercise about purchasing goods from the prison shop to develop a range of relevant numerical and analytical skills. Learning resources are at least satisfactory. Most tutors have access and use of an adequate variety of learning materials and equipment that supports the range of learners' abilities. Handouts and worksheets are well designed and of an appropriate level. Classrooms include colourful wall displays and are clean and well maintained. However, there is insufficient availability and use of computer facilities in all classrooms to support learning. In addition, tutors make insufficient use of the outcomes from the assessment of learning styles to inform the scope and content of teaching strategies.

18. The range and numbers of education places is adequate to meet current demand. Waiting lists are low. The education department has responded effectively to the increase in demand for ESOL classes. Access and support arrangements for learners pursuing learning opportunities above Level 2 are narrow. Good use is made of former learners as classroom mentors to support learning at all levels who act as positive role models for other members of the class. However, there is not enough use of the mentors across all the provision offered by the education department. Take-up of the Toe-By-Toe mentoring system to teach people to read is satisfactory. The referral process is widely advertised throughout the prison. Mentors provide short and frequent sessions that are valued by learners. The learning materials used are appropriate and available in a satisfactory range and quantity.
19. The education department provides appropriate outreach literacy and numeracy support in all parts of the prison. A classroom that supports outreach activities has recently been established within a workshop. Recently introduced changes to how learners access the support has started to improve support take-up rates. However, the use of the classroom facility is still to be fully exploited. Tutors work well with learners to identify barriers to learning. Much of the learning is effectively contextualised to fit with the qualification aim. Opportunities to demonstrate and be accredited for key skills by participating in workshop activities are satisfactory. Appropriate specialist support is available for learners with dyslexia. However, as recognised by the education department, learners do not have access to a detailed assessment of their dyslexia support needs.
20. All learners have individual plans that outline their short and long-term targets. Targets are regularly reviewed and used to monitor learners' progress. Learners are encouraged to take responsibility for setting their own targets and assessing the progress they have made. However, short-term targets are not always written in sufficient detail to be useful to the learner or include a time constrained deadline for completion.

## **Personal development and social integration**

### **Achievement and standards**

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

21. Success rates on social and life skills courses and behavioural programmes are high. 432 awards from entry to Level 2 were achieved by 308 learners between August 2006 and December 2007. All learners who completed the course passed it. Accredited drugs and alcohol awareness courses had the highest participation, with 159 and 127 learners respectively, achieving the awards. Attendance across the courses was generally good.
22. Almost a thousand prisoners participated on behavioural programmes in the 18 month period before inspection. Non-accredited treatment programmes with the highest participation included short duration harm reduction, substance dependency treatment, enhanced thinking skills and the sex offender treatment programme. The accredited restorative justice programme has high success rates, with 63 of the 64 offenders completing programmes in 2007.
23. All learners who complete the programme pass the key skills awards in improving own learning and performance. Retention was good. However, there is insufficient recording of the acquisition of social and workplace skills unless offenders participate in accredited learning.
24. Art and music skills and standards of work are good. Learners in art classes quickly achieve good results, developing their skills in a structured way and using subjects that interest them. Musicians develop a range of instrumental and compositional skills. All abilities are catered for well, carefully building on prior learning or expanding knowledge and skills by learning new instrument techniques.
25. Pass rates on music, art and creative writing courses are low. In the preceding 18 months only 86 of the 256 learners starting an accredited art course at Levels 1 or 2 achieved the awards, with 21 still in learning. Achievement of accredited qualifications for music and creative writing programmes at Level 1 and 2 are low. Punctuality in all classes is satisfactory within the allowed free-flow movement period. However, attendance at classes is too varied.

### Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: 3

26. Most teaching sessions are well planned and managed. Accommodation and resources overall are satisfactory. The music room has good resources including practise booths, a range of musical instruments and two computers with specialist composition software. Social and life skills teachers take a pride in preparing good quality materials designed to meet the preferred learning styles of learners. The range of learning activities used by tutors to engage learners is usually good. Learners' literacy and numeracy initial assessment scores are used well to plan individualised activities. However, the pace of learning in weaker sessions is too slow.
27. Twenty-nine offenders have good opportunities to develop and demonstrate their skills through supporting others. For example, ten peer mentors help on behavioural change programmes and give presentations at induction and seven mentors help in education classes. However, only mentors linked to the St Giles Trust gain accreditation for their training.
28. There is good recording of information to support learning on education courses. Individual learning plans are detailed and record learners' reasons for joining courses,

their own targets and related aspirations. Learner session diaries are used well to record individual learning at each session. Tutors evaluate each session, often annotating lesson plans with prompts for changes and follow-up points for individual learners.

29. A broad range of behavioural change programmes are offered, managed by specialist treatment teams. Eight programmes are currently running with a total of 119 offenders. The well managed and popular Sycamore Tree (victim awareness and restorative justice) programme is held in the chapel by Prison Fellowship volunteers. It has 16 places on accredited courses at Level 1 and 2 that are offered four times a year. However, there are significantly long waiting lists to participate on the programme.
30. Attendance is monitored systematically and reviewed regularly. However, the personal and social development courses in education provision are operating below capacity. Courses are offered on demand and waiting lists are small. In particular the preparation for work/pre-release course only has five learners, of which only two are due for release, despite 5 to 15 sentenced offenders being released from HMP Bullingdon each day.

## **Leadership and management**

**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

### **Equality of opportunity**

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

31. HMP Bullingdon has a clear strategy for learning and skills which is supported by a three year development plan. This plan appropriately links education and training activity to the prison's resettlement agenda and clearly identifies areas for improvement in the provision. Managers effectively monitor these improvements. They discuss them in staff appraisals and reflect them in individual targets. However, the development plan is not regularly updated and it is not possible to identify progress clearly or to see what needs to be done next. The head of learning and skills is well supported by senior staff and the management team work together to progress key objectives informally. However, managers do not have sufficient opportunity to discuss and decide on joint action formally and some developments take place in isolation.
32. Working arrangements between the learning and skills and the education provider are good. Formal and informal communication is good. Managers meet regularly to review the contract targets and take action to rectify problems. For example, systems to monitor attendance and requirements have recently been introduced to improve value for money. Managers jointly develop strategies such as those for ICT and skills for life and share effective processes and procedures. For example, the prison is just beginning to use the education provider's systems for the observation of teaching and learning to support vocational workshop staff. The prison and the provider are working closely together to introduce ICT and key skills provision into the vocational workshops. The education provider carries out a useful and detailed needs analysis annually and managers use this, along with feedback from learners to develop the curriculum. The prison has a number of external partnerships which work effectively to support learners into employment. For

example some prisoners are effectively prepared for work in the water and laundry industry. DWP provides a 'job club' service and information, advice and guidance for offenders.

33. Systems for quality assurance that lead to improvement are satisfactory. Staff make extensive use of written learner feedback to improve and develop the curriculum. Learner education representatives meet regularly with staff and use their feedback to introduce improvements. The observation of teaching process includes accredited learning in the education department, gym, laundry, as well as for industrial cleaning and land-based provision. It is thorough and well planned. Tutors receive detailed written feedback and are required to reach minimum standards of performance. The self-assessment process is satisfactory. There is adequate collection and use of data. The head of learning and skills effectively uses monthly analysis of a range of data for monitoring and comparative purposes. However, the data for education classes does not always identify individual qualifications and levels of achievement or ensure targets are sufficiently challenging for learners.
34. Resources are satisfactory. Accommodation in education is comfortable, well decorated and furnished. Equipment, software and teaching materials have been updated appropriately to meet programme needs and respond to feedback from staff and learners. Access to ICT in education and work is limited. Most education staff have teaching qualifications but very few staff working in vocational areas are appropriately trained. Managers give staff satisfactory support. Both the prison and the subcontractors' staff have regular and well documented appraisals. Feedback from observations of teaching and learning is used appropriately to inform the overarching staff development plans. The prison and the education provider share and jointly plan some staff development.
35. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Teachers respond effectively to learners' needs and review curriculum materials to ensure that they include an appropriate range of cultural references. The prison hosts events which celebrate cultural differences, for example a Chinese new year celebration. The prison has recently appointed equal opportunities orderlies who support and offer guidance to offenders, particularly to foreign national prisoners. The pay policy has been revised to ensure that offenders are encouraged to attend education programmes and meet the needs of their sentence plan. The system for allocation to education and work is appropriately structured and administered fairly. However, some wings process applications faster than others. Education provision and opportunities for work are different for vulnerable prisoners but the prison seeks to make this equitable. However, the gym has not in the recent past provided equality of access. Many offenders were prevented from joining as induction was slow and a minority of prisoners monopolised the available places. The prison has recognised this problem and is working now to resolve this.
36. Information about education, training and employment is satisfactory. It is widely available throughout the prison. Staff give offenders a useful booklet on arrival and place prominent and attractive displays on wing notice-boards. Staff use additional leaflets during induction. However, the induction programme is inadequate. Information advice and guidance focuses on the education provision and does not provide coherent and complete information about the range of learning and skills including progression routes and employment opportunities. Offenders are not encouraged to join programmes which best meet their individual needs. Much of the presentation is mundane and the

accommodation is not suitable for some of the activities. There is inadequate access to the three electronic information points which translates induction details into six spoken languages.

37. Systems for information, advice and guidance are underdeveloped. The education provider has held the contract for information, advice and guidance provision since August 2006 and has a clear strategy to develop this work regionally. However, progress has been slow and only one information, advice and guidance worker, who is unqualified, is in post.

## What learners like:

- Good teaching in education
- Quality of the industrial cleaning training – ‘industrial cleaning is superb’
- The chance to learn – ‘great to learn for the first time in my life’
- Education department – ‘education is good – best part of the prison’
- ‘The tailoring shop is a great place to work’
- ‘Time to do education, even when on workshops’
- ‘Using real life information to work out budgeting’
- ‘The chance to get a qualification’

## What learners think could improve:

- Access to computers – ‘more chance needed to use computers’
- The rate at which at which actions are implemented – ‘lots of prison procedures, but things don’t get done here’
- The rate of pay in education, training and workshops provision
- ‘Access to the gym is difficult’
- The limited choice of courses – ‘not enough choice of courses to do if you’re here for a few years’
- ‘Too many interruptions to classes’