

HMP Kennet

Inspection date

4 September 2008

Inspection number

322940

Contents

Background information	3
Inspection judgements	3
Scope of the inspection.....	3
Description of the provider	4
Summary of grades awarded	5
Overall judgement	6
Effectiveness of provision.....	6
Capacity to improve	6
Key strengths	7
Key areas for improvement	7
Main findings.....	8
Employability training	8
Achievement and standards	8
Quality of provision	8
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL.....	9
Achievement and standards	9
Quality of provision	10
Personal development and social integration	11
Achievement and standards	11
Quality of provision	11
Leadership and management	12
Equality of opportunity	12
What learners like.....	15
What learners think could improve	15

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.

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), reports from the inspectorates' monitoring 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. HM Prison Kennet is a category C adult male training prison located on the outskirts of Liverpool in Maghull. All offenders are convicted and none are held on remand. The prison opened in June 2007, being the first public sector prison to be commissioned in 15 years. Activities at the prison were not fully operational until November 2007. It was anticipated that the population would consist of offenders in the last nine months of their sentence. The curriculum was designed to provide 'bite sized' programmes to develop and accredit work related skills in preparation for release and employment. The pressures of the prison population have led to the allocation of offenders who have much longer to serve on their sentence. The operational capacity is currently 342. Prison sentences range from less than six months to ten years. Most offenders are from the Merseyside area. At present no offenders are serving life sentences. However, two have indeterminate sentences. Around 5% of offenders are foreign nationals.
2. Education is subcontracted to Mercia Partnership, who provides mainly part-time courses. A small number of learners follow full-time provision. Approximately 76% of offenders access education. Courses are available in literacy, numeracy, business studies, information technology (IT), art and catering. Mercia Partnership also provides accredited vocational training in painting and decorating, bricklaying, plastering, joinery and industrial cleaning. The prison instructional officers offer accredited courses in physical education. Currently 33 offenders work on the prison estate in amenities, gardens and waste management. Offenders are also employed as orderlies in other areas of the prison, such as the chapel, wing serveries and painting.

Summary of grades awarded

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

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Satisfactory: Grade 3

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievement and standards and the quality of provision in employability training, personal development and social integration programmes, and literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) are satisfactory. Leadership and management of learning and skills are satisfactory as is the prison's approach to equality of opportunity.

Capacity to improve

Satisfactory: Grade 3

4. The prison's overall capacity to improve is satisfactory. The senior management team has been re-structured, with the head of learning and skills' responsibilities being extended to include all interventions and the offender management unit. Learning and skills is now better represented within the overall prison structure. The strategic planning for the development of learning and skills is central to the prison's reducing re-offending through employment objective. Many actions to improve learning and skills have been introduced. However, many are recent and it is too early to assess the effectiveness of these measures. The prison has only been open for just over a year and learning and skills have been operational since the latter part of 2007.
5. Development plans are well understood by staff. Senior managers have a clear focus on improving learning and skills and regularly monitor the development plan. Much work has been completed to change the curriculum to best meet the needs of the current prison population. New courses have been introduced and the range improved. Data is used effectively to contribute to curriculum planning. Links with the education provider are effective and productive. Overall, quality assurance is satisfactory. However, some procedures are new and not fully established in all areas.
6. Self-assessment is satisfactory. The self-assessment process forms part of the prison's overall continuous improvement strategy. The process is inclusive and most staff have an opportunity to contribute to the report. Generally staff understand how self-assessment links to continuous improvement. The report is evidenced by good data analysis and offender feedback. Course reviews are carried out by both staff and learners. The process is used effectively as a tool to improve the quality of the provision as a whole. The self-assessment report is critical and identifies most of the strengths and areas for improvement found at inspection. Strengths and areas for improvement are supported by a good range of evidence. The grades awarded at inspection in all but one area matched the grades proposed through self-assessment.

Key strengths

- Good skills and personal development linked to employability
- Good information, advice and guidance
- Good partnership working
- Good implementation of actions to improve the provision

Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient opportunities to gain vocational qualifications and accreditation beyond level 2
- Some aspects of quality assurance not fully established
- Insufficient access to the library

Main findings

Employability training

Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

7. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Retention and success rates overall are satisfactory. Very high success rates have been achieved in industrial cleaning at level 1, painting and decorating at level 1, food hygiene and European computer driving license (ECDL). Success rates on the construction skills safety card are high. Success rates are good on accredited physical education courses and in catering. However, in business studies and computer literacy and information technology (CLAIT), success rates have been low. Most learners who complete their courses achieve. Learners are making good progress for the length of time on programme. Current data indicates that success rates are improving across all courses.
8. Learners develop good employability skills. They participate in real work projects that make a significant difference to the prison environment. Learners are encouraged to build on their prior vocational experiences and work successfully in teams. While the teams are managed by tutors, the learners develop the confidence to work independently and productively manage operations with a degree of autonomy. Learners competently use industrial machinery and have a good understanding of health and safety requirements in the equipments' use. In workshops learners develop exceptionally good skills in brick laying and joinery and their work is of a good commercial standard, as identified in the self-assessment report.

Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

9. Training is satisfactory. Learners receive good individual support from tutors who know their learners well. Tutors take time to explain things to each individual and to ensure that they understand. Learners with identified needs in literacy and numeracy receive discrete support within workshops. In physical education good use is made of power point and practical activities to promote better concentration. In catering the mix of practical demonstration, verbal reinforcement and tutor and mentor support with visual imagery is highly successful. Generic schemes of work and session plans are in place. However, in some sessions little planning takes place for individual learning.
10. Resources to support learning are good. Workshops, working parties, education and physical education have access to a good range of industrial standard equipment and a range of useful teaching aides. Tutors' up-to-date knowledge, experience and wealth of industrial and business expertise is exceptionally well used to enhance learning and prepare learners for work in external organisations. Classrooms are well equipped with IT facilities, whiteboards and projectors. Learners have adequate access to reference and course materials. In the better sessions additional learning materials are available that have been produced to a high standard by the tutor.

11. Learners' needs are satisfactorily met. Significant changes have been made over the last nine months to develop a wider range of courses and a curriculum that best meets the needs of offenders serving both short and long sentences. Tutors play a significant role in helping develop the curriculum. Improvements have been made to workshops to enable a higher level of accreditation to be offered. A range of lower level short courses have also been developed to meet the needs of offenders serving short sentences. The development of the mentor scheme has been positively received by learners and gives good opportunities for learners to progress into supervisory roles. Tutors have taken every opportunity to share good practice and visit other prisons to establish how best to develop the range of provision.
12. The number of vocational training places in workshops is insufficient for the current prison population. Insufficient courses are available above level 2. Although the prison's working parties provide good real work project opportunities for learners, they are not formally accredited. Many of the good personal, social and work ethic skills that learners develop go unrecognised. Physical education orderlies cannot obtain additional qualifications to recognise the good supervisory skills they develop.
13. Support and guidance for learners are satisfactory. Learners have much individual time with tutors and receive both pastoral and employment support. The ratio of tutors to learners is good and allows good opportunities for individual support. Learners are inspired by the hard working staff and value the help and encouragement they receive. In workshops tutors give valuable advice and guidance. Staff are good role models and a high level of mutual respect exists. Learners on distance learning programmes are well supported.

Literacy, numeracy and ESOL

Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

14. Achievements and standards for literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. For the most recent three month period where learners were retained, pass rates for literacy and numeracy programmes at level 1 and 2 were good. Pass rates for literacy at entry levels and numeracy at entry level 1 are low but show an improving trend. Rates for numeracy at entry level 2 are satisfactory and good at entry level 3. Pass rates for the ESOL programme are unavailable as the programme has only recently started. Most learners make good progress from one qualification to another and between levels. Standards of work are satisfactory.
15. Learners effectively develop a good range of personal and social skills. Many have not attended education for many years and often have poor literacy and numeracy skills when they enter prison. Learners demonstrate good commitment to their studies. They develop good study skills that facilitate individual and group learning. Learners develop increased personal confidence and self-worth. Most

learners are able to appropriately link their newly acquired skills and knowledge to their employment goals on release. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

16. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. In most cases tutors make appropriate use of the initial assessment outcomes to individualise learning programmes.
17. All tutors appropriately plan sessions and include a suitable range of activities to maintain learners' interest. Classrooms are clean and well maintained. However, they are generally too small to accommodate the number of learners and range of activities planned. Tutors work hard to develop a good working relationship and mutual respect between themselves and learners. This is well used to motivate learners and encourage progress through their learning programme. Tutors give learners regular and useful feedback during sessions. Assessment practice is satisfactory.
18. In the weaker sessions checking of learners' understanding and actions to reinforce learning are insufficient. Opportunities to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills within vocational programmes are often missed. ESOL sessions usually provide satisfactory opportunities for learners to practise their spoken English. However, sessions are not taught by an appropriately qualified tutor. Learning resources are generally satisfactory. However, learning activities and materials are not always contextualised to reflect learners' experiences or future literacy and numeracy needs. Some sessions place an over-reliance on learners completing worksheets.
19. All learners have individual learning plans that include short- and long-term targets. Regular progress reviews are carried out to monitor learners' progress and set agreed future actions. However, few short-term targets are written in sufficient detail to allow the learner to assess the progress they have made. Targets are not routinely time constrained. Learners are not always clear about what they must do to demonstrate adequate progress, or when they will complete their programme. Targets for personal development are not set.
20. The prison offers a suitable range and number of education places that adequately meet demand. However, provision for learners who wish to pursue learning opportunities above level 2 is inadequate, as identified in the self-assessment report. Appropriate arrangements are in place to provide literacy and numeracy support in workshops. The rate of progress to embed literacy and numeracy learning in other prison activities is satisfactory. Library opening times are insufficient to ensure that learners have good access to the facilities. Few links are in place between the library and the education department to effectively promote literacy. Arrangements for independent study are insufficient to support individual learning in literacy and numeracy.

21. Support for learners is satisfactory. Take up of the Toe-by-Toe mentoring system, to teach people to read, is satisfactory. The programme is appropriately advertised within the prison. Suitable referral processes are available. Mentors provide short and frequent sessions for learners in the accommodation wings, helping learners grow in confidence as their understanding and skills develops. A satisfactory range and quantity of appropriate learning materials are available and used. Suitable use is made of former learners as classroom mentors to support learning at all levels.
22. All learners receive an appropriate induction that includes good information, advice and guidance. Specialist support for learners with dyslexia is good. All learners receive an effective screening to identify those with potential dyslexia needs. Appropriate specialist support is available for those identified. Tutors make effective use of the outcomes of the assessment to provide tailored individual learning opportunities in the education department or accommodation wings. Good use is made of specialist learning aids to enhance learning opportunities. Adapted equipment for the visual or hearing impaired learner is available if required.

Personal development and social integration

Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

23. Learners develop good personal and social skills linked to improving their employability through a range of activities. Staff, tutors and instructors are positive role models. Prison and education staff are skilled at encouraging learners to progress. Learners quickly grow in confidence and self-esteem. Learners develop good communication and active listening skills taking part in discussion and debate. They work well in group activities and respect others. Many of the accredited social and personal development courses have only been recently introduced. However, progress is generally good, and most learners who complete courses achieve. Standards of work in art are good and many pieces of work are exhibited externally. In creative writing sessions learners develop good literacy skills, and confidently work independently demonstrating sound research and critical skills. Level 2 enhanced creative writing learners produce a good quality magazine which is distributed throughout the prison. Learners training to be listeners or peer mentors effectively develop their self-esteem and confidence in working with people and feel able to take over roles requiring responsibility and self motivation. Standards of behaviour, attendance and time keeping are good.

Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

24. Teaching provides good opportunities for individual support. Learners are encouraged to work independently and at a pace to suit them. Tutors have a good understanding of their learners and their needs. Most sessions are lively and fully engage learners in helping them explore their previous life experiences. Learning sessions are well planned and supported by an appropriate lesson plan. Learning materials to support learning are produced to a good standard. Tutors

have a good working relationship with learners and work hard at creating a good learning environment. Tutors encourage learners to participate in discussion and are skilled at using learners' experiences to illustrate key learning points. Tutors and instructors are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and inspire learners to engage with learning. Learners are motivated and enjoy their learning sessions. Classrooms are welcoming and help create a good learning environment. However, some are generally small and in art restrict all but small project work.

25. The range of courses is small, as identified in the self-assessment report. However, all staff have a common focus on developing personal and social skills throughout the prison in all the courses available. The formal courses that are available are appropriate for the learners and are very effectively linked to employability. The thinking skills course uses situations and scenarios in the workplace to help develop learners' personal skills and help integration in the workplace. A good range of physical education activities, including specific programmes for the older community and those that are recovering from injury are offered. Courses such as citizenship help promote social integration encouraging learners to consider differences between cultures and how these can be valued. An employability skills course helps learners build confidence in job applications, curriculum vitae building and dealing with disclosure.
26. Considerable development has taken place recently in the quality and quantity of initial advice and guidance given on the learning opportunities available at HMP Kennet. Guidance is effectively linked to realistic job opportunities on release and is reviewed with learners regularly to reflect their changing needs. Pre-release advice and guidance is good. Courses which focus on developing wider employment skills before release have been successfully introduced.
27. Learners engaged in non-accredited work develop a range of personal and social skills linked to improving their employability. However, recognition and recording of these skills are insufficient. Individual learning plan targets and reviews are not used effectively to record the development of personal and social skills. Many learners have previously not been employed and the prison does not sufficiently recognise or celebrate their development of good working practices including punctuality, attendance and team work. Some learners achieve supervisory positions working independently at a good level of responsibility. However, many of these skills remain unrecognised by the prison.

Leadership and management

Satisfactory: Grade 3

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

28. The leadership and management of learning and skills are satisfactory. The strategic development of learning and skills is well linked to the prison's overall reducing re-offending strategy. Learning and skills is central to the prison and key in helping it achieve its overall objectives. The senior management team have a

clear focus on learning and skills and a strong commitment to continually improving the provision. The prison and the education provider responded well to the significant changes in the expected prisoner profile and are working hard to develop new courses to meet the current population's needs. Good use has been made of a recent needs analysis to contribute to curriculum development. Staff are clear about the role they play in quality improvement. Staff morale is high. The management of attendance in learning and skills is good. Attendance officers work effectively with each wing.

29. Learning and skills staff have developed strong partnership links with the prison and the education provider with a clear focus on improving the provision. The prison and the education provider work well together to develop a curriculum to best meet the needs of offenders with a range of sentence lengths. Information, advice and guidance staff work well with Jobcentre Plus developing links with employers and improving offenders' employment prospects upon release. The prison has successfully exceeded its target for offenders gaining employment on release. Employer fairs have been held within the prison to help develop links with local employers. The prison has developed a good understanding of local employment needs. Employers are invited to help develop courses that provide the skills they need. Currently an external construction project is being developed with advice from employers.
30. The prison has implemented a range of actions to improve learning and skills within the prison. It is responding well to the significant change to the planned prisoner profile. Significant changes have been made to the planned curriculum. Entry level qualifications and qualifications that are more appropriate for offenders serving long sentences have been introduced. The curriculum focus has changed from a high number of short courses to level 1 and 2 National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) courses. Staff development has been put in place to build capacity in assessment and internal verification. Improving teaching has a strong focus. Tutors who do not have formal teaching qualifications are working towards recognised qualifications.
31. The quantity of vocational training to support the development of employability skills for all of the current prison population is insufficient. The prison is aware of this and plans have been developed to introduce additional accredited vocational work opportunities in projects within the prison estate. An activity allocation board meets every week to allocate offenders to activities. Although the process is fair offenders are not always able to access the most suitable vocational course. Data is insufficiently used to inform the length of time offenders spend on other courses before accessing their first choice of course.
32. Quality assurance processes are not yet fully implemented. Recent changes and improvements have taken place to develop and implement quality improvement arrangements for all education and training activities. New quality assurance measures have been developed and introduced during this year to respond to the changes in the prisoner profile. Comprehensive quality assurance processes cover all the key aspects of learning and training. However, reviews and evaluations of

some of the learning process have not yet happened. Observations of teaching and learning are routine and recently the process has been improved to better link with staff development.

33. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Offenders and tutors demonstrate a high level of respect for each other. Staff are good role models and challenge inappropriate language and behaviour to create a positive learning environment. Difficult subjects such as immigration are dealt with well in citizenship classes using discussion and learners' experiences to help promote social inclusion. The chaplaincy run successful courses that explore different beliefs and practices helping celebrate diversity and raise cultural awareness. Learning and skills have a comprehensive policy which covers all the relevant legislation and gives clear guidance on how the prison will respond to learners with specific needs. Learners receive a screening test for dyslexia at their induction and those requiring support have good access to specialist help. Data is routinely collected about those from minority groups who access education and work. Where groups are under-represented the reasons are investigated. However, data is not used to analyse achievement of qualifications of minority groups accessing education and work against other groups of learners. Access to education and work is equitable and processes are in place to identify and protect vulnerable adults.

What learners like:

- 'The best gym I've ever had'
- 'Fantastic support from tutors'
- 'The cooking class and being able to eat what you cook'
- 'The opportunity to work outside'
- 'The opportunity to send home pieces made in woodwork'
- 'The respect from physical education staff'
- 'The creative writing course is brilliant'
- 'The opportunity to get skills you can use on release'
- 'Tutors who really care'
- The support from tutors

What learners think could improve:

- More vocational courses with qualifications
- 'Being able to get on courses you really want to do'
- More access to computers
- More offending behaviour courses
- More advanced courses
- 'It takes too long to get a request interview'