

# HMYOI Aylesbury

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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' 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. HMYOI Aylesbury (the prison) is a closed young offenders Institution holding convicted young men aged between 18 and 21, normally serving sentences of two years or longer. Approximately 60 have mandatory life sentences and 150 an indeterminate sentence. The prison acts as a national resource for long-term young, adult male offenders, many presenting a high risk to the public. Offenders' main home area is London and the south east. The current population is approximately 440, of whom 81 are 18 years old and the remainder 19–21 years old. All those who left the prison in the last six months had spent at least six months there. During this period, of 138 offenders assessed for literacy and numeracy levels, 39% had skills at or below entry level 3.
2. Offenders participate in learning and skills and work full-time, although some in work are released to attend part-time education classes. During the inspection, 37 offenders followed education programmes full-time and 90 part-time, 81 attended vocational training and around 140 were in work.
3. The LSC's contracted provider is Milton Keynes College (MKC). This contract includes information advice and guidance (IAG) and vocational training in motor vehicle maintenance, painting and decorating, information and communications technology (ICT), brickwork and industrial cleaning. Courses are provided in literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and personal integration and social development subjects.
4. The prison offers recreation and vocational training in physical education (PE), and work such as cleaning, gardening and recycling.
5. Other partner providers include John Laing Construction Ltd providing brickwork training and the Shannon Trust, offering Toe-by-Toe programmes. Buckinghamshire County Council provides the library.

## Summary of grades awarded

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

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

Inadequate: Grade 4

6. The overall effectiveness of the provision is inadequate. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The quality of provision is inadequate. Leadership and management are inadequate. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory

### Capacity to improve

Inadequate: Grade 4

7. Capacity to improve is inadequate. The effectiveness of steps taken to improve since the previous inspection and subsequent reinspection is inadequate. At the reinspection in 2005, provision was inadequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it, leadership and management was very weak as were two of the five subject sector areas inspected. In the past few months the prison and MKC have placed a clear emphasis on improvement. MKC has produced a recovery plan designed to tackle major problems within its provision. Although some improvement has followed, overall progress has been too slow, and a significant proportion of the weaknesses identified at the reinspection remain. Collaboration between the prison and MKC is not sufficiently effective in key areas such as day-to-day operations and strategic and development planning. Both have separate development plans and no clear arrangements for coordinating their implementation
8. Success rates on programmes leading to accreditation, while remaining satisfactory, fell between 2006/07 and 2007/08 on employability, literacy, numeracy and ESOL programmes, although they rose significantly for the smaller number of learners working towards personal development and social integration qualifications.
9. Quality improvement measures are not sufficiently effective. For example observations of teaching and learning carried out by MKC overestimate the proportion of teaching that is good or better. Similar systems to observe training provided by the prison are not yet in place. Arrangements for sharing good practice are too recent to judge their effects.
10. Self-assessment is inadequate. The self-assessment process is not sufficiently developed. The prisons self-assessment report relies too heavily on judgements from MKC's self-assessment of its provision. It is too descriptive and not sufficiently evaluative. It cites as strengths areas that are normal practice and underestimates the effect of key areas for improvement. Most inspection grades were lower than those in the report. Actions in the associated development plan clearly link to self-assessment judgements, but do not always prioritise sufficiently improvement needs identified during the inspection.

## Key strengths

- Productive links with external organisations
- Clear recent emphasis on improving the provision

## Key areas for improvement

- Insufficient planning of individual learning
- Insufficient range of provision
- Slow progress to remedy weaknesses identified in previous learning and skills inspections
- Insufficiently effective collaboration across learning and skills provision
- Much provision closed, under-used or cancelled
- Insufficiently developed self-assessment process

## Main findings

### Employability training

#### Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

11. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. This is identified in the self-assessment report. Achievement on some substantive vocational training courses in 2007/08 is good or very good. Success rates in painting and decorating, motor vehicle mechanics' courses, level 1 cookery awards and on some courses run by the physical education department were high at 90% or over.
12. On short courses in health and safety and in health and hygiene, which together account for approximately half the accreditations in vocational provision, success rates are satisfactory at around 85%.
13. On all ICT programmes, achievement is unsatisfactory. On level 1 courses, success rates in 2007/08 were low at 42%. Achievement in level 2 cookery was very poor.
14. Learners following motor vehicle training courses demonstrate good knowledge and skills. Learners on painting and decorating level 1 programmes produce good work, often above the standard required for the award. In the bricks workshop, standards of brick-work are satisfactory, but learners do not demonstrate the tidiness or clean working practices needed for employment. On ICT level 1 courses, learners' work is generally satisfactory, but standards of behaviour are sometimes poor.

#### Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4

15. The quality of provision is inadequate. This is lower than the grade recorded in the self-assessment report. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Motor vehicle training is good. The motor vehicle workshop is well established and benefits from the good vehicle resources the Toyota motor company supplies. Training sessions are well planned and delivered. Across the provision as a whole training staff have suitable occupational experience and qualifications, and most have or are working towards teaching qualifications. Teaching in ICT is satisfactory. Learners receive appropriate support while working at their own pace on exercises from commercially produced training manuals.
16. Assessment practice is appropriate. Monitoring of learners' progress is regular and suitable. Target-setting, reviewing and recording systems are good. Vocational tutors have a satisfactory understanding of learners' literacy and numeracy support needs.
17. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners and employers is inadequate. Too much of the provision is not operating, or is



operating below full capacity. In motor vehicle and bricks workshops, programmes do not provide sufficient entry points for new learners to take up places when others leave early. Learner numbers in painting and decorating are reduced and industrial cleaning provision and level 2 brickwork are closed due to insufficient staffing. The inadequacy of arrangements to cover staff absence in vocational areas was a weakness at the previous inspection. The MKC kitchen for level 1 training in catering is temporarily closed for refurbishment, as is the prison laundry. At the time of inspection, the number of learners receiving vocational training was under two-thirds of the planned capacity.

18. Some learners work towards wider key skills awards as part of their training, particularly in motor vehicle workshops and vocational PE. However, overall the recognition and recording of employability skills is not sufficient, particularly for offenders working in the prison. Work in areas such as recycling or the prison garden does not lead to accreditation of vocational skills. Much of the work offenders carry out is mundane and repetitive, particularly in cleaning, but their useful acquisition of general employability skills such as team-working is not sufficiently promoted or celebrated.
19. Progression opportunities to higher level awards are inadequate. Most vocational provision offered is at level 1. Training to reach level 2 awards, which most employers require when taking on staff, is not sufficient and represents less than a quarter of substantial programmes. Only motor vehicle training offers progression beyond level 2.
20. Guidance and support for learners is inadequate. Procedures for allocating offenders to work and vocational training are adequate. An activity allocations panel meets regularly to discuss applications for these areas. Decisions are well informed and appropriate, and draw well on the expertise of a multi-disciplinary team of offender management, education and psychology staff. However, offenders are not present during the process. Training and work opportunities are not sufficiently well promoted during induction, and arrangements to publicise them through brochures are poorly coordinated across the prison. Pre-release support for employment and/or further training is inadequate. A pre-release employability skills programme no longer runs, although just under 25% of offenders are released into the community each year. The prison does not systematically support offenders in making job and training applications before release.

## Literacy, numeracy and ESOL

Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

21. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. This is identified in the self-assessment report. Success rates on literacy and numeracy qualifications are satisfactory. Overall they fell from 72% in 2006/07 to 60% in 2007/08, but are showing signs of improvement in the current year. In 2007/08, pass rates on literacy programmes at level 1 and 2 were good at 85% and very high on

numeracy programmes at level 1 and 2 at 96%. However, retention on numeracy programmes was low at 65% and very poor at 19% for the small number of learners following entry level literacy programmes.

22. Learners enjoy their classes. They generally work with application and good humour during activities, which involve the class as a whole. Literacy learners speak confidently and enthusiastically during discussions. Numeracy learners demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of mathematical concepts such as fractions and percentages. However, progress was slow in most sessions observed. Attendance is variable and was low in some sessions.

Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4

23. The quality of provision is inadequate. Teaching and learning are inadequate. Support for the small number of learners with dyslexia is good. Following a simple screening test at induction, learners with possible dyslexic tendencies receive a detailed and effective diagnostic assessment to identify specific needs. Individual planning for those requiring support is thorough. Currently nine learners receive support, benefiting from good individual coaching from MKC's trained and experienced dyslexia specialist, with a strong emphasis on the learner developing strategies to tackle areas of difficulty and improve core skills such as reading.
24. Planning and practice in literacy numeracy and ESOL do not place sufficient emphasis on meeting the individual needs of learners. Individual plans for learners are poor. Most are incomplete, contain over general learning goals and do not show clearly when these should be completed. Attached records of work do not form a basis for identifying clearly where goals have been achieved, and planning future learning. Despite wide attainment ranges in the mainly mixed-level classes, and continuous enrolment into the classes, tutors rarely include individuals' goals when planning lessons. Lesson plans and classroom practice predominantly involve all learners working together. Although such activity often occupies learners, sessions do not offer sufficient challenge to the most able, or sufficient support for those who struggle with tasks set for the group. Links between learning in previous sessions and those to follow are not always sufficiently clear.
25. The extent to which programmes meet the needs and interests of learners is inadequate. The prison does not offer a sufficient range of literacy, numeracy and ESOL provision. Offenders too vulnerable to attend classes in the education centre receive only one session a week, provided individually in their residential unit. The prison does not offer support for adult literacy and numeracy in vocational or work areas. It has made modest extensions to supporting key skills development for some vocational programmes and releases those in work who apply to attend one or two sessions a week of general literacy and/or numeracy training in the education centre. However, it has yet to develop alternatives to the mixed-level general programmes it offers, such as provision which integrates vocational training with literacy and/or numeracy learning. The prison does not offer appropriate accreditation to ESOL learners. Most work towards non-

accredited outcomes, while a few inappropriately follow literacy classes. Too many literacy and numeracy classes are cancelled or taught by untrained staff in the absence of the regular tutors. No provision is made during the evenings or at weekends.

26. Guidance and support are inadequate. Arrangements for the initial assessment of needs are poor. At induction to the prison, offenders receive initial assessment test papers in literacy and numeracy, which they are left to complete unsupervised in their residential accommodation. No procedures are in place to establish whether results of the assessments are reliable, and in particular whether offenders have completed them unaided. The subsequent use of diagnostic assessments is not routine, and the results not regularly recorded in learning plans. Initial and diagnostic assessment practice is not sufficiently thorough to ensure offenders receive adequate guidance about learning programmes and qualifications that present appropriate challenge. Applications for literacy and numeracy fall outside the main prison wide placement process, and criteria for assigning offenders to specific classes are not well enough developed. Arrangements to identify the minority of offenders who might have ESOL needs are weak.

## Personal development and social integration

### Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

27. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The acquisition of skills and confidence is good in many sessions. Learners demonstrate good speaking and listening skills when participating in group activities which are an integral part of many programmes. Achievement rates in accredited programmes are mixed. In 2007/8, the achievement rate was high in art, assertiveness and family relationships programmes. At below 50%, achievement rates were low in budgeting and decision making, Family Man and teamwork programmes.
28. Standards of work are satisfactory overall and good in art portfolios. Learners on non-accredited programmes, such as citizenship and speaking with confidence, complete them successfully and develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem. Learners' skills in practical subjects such as music, art and radio production are good. Progress was at least satisfactory in all the sessions observed. Learners understand and adopt safe practices when using technical and specialist equipment. Attendance is satisfactory across the range of accredited and non-accredited programmes.

### Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Inadequate: Grade 4

29. The quality of provision is inadequate, a lower grade than contained in the self-assessment report. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Tutors and learners have good rapport and enjoy positive relationships based on mutual respect. Tutors manage occasional incidences of inappropriate language or behaviour effectively and minimise disruption. They give regular praise and encouragement,

which motivates learners and helps them to maintain their concentration during the long classroom-based sessions. The best sessions observed provided interesting tasks and activities which were well matched to learners' needs and prior attainment. Learners on an assertiveness course developed good negotiation skills in a problem solving task which required cooperation, communication and compromise. Learning was reinforced during a lively and well managed discussion which gave everyone a chance to have their say and reflect on their contribution. However, across the provision as a whole, planning and recording of individual learning and achievement are not sufficient. Work in some sessions is pitched too low for more able learners. Targets in most individual learning plans are not precise enough and do not identify personal development goals alongside subject-specific targets. Resources and accommodation are adequate. Some classrooms have newly installed ICT equipment.

30. The range of provision is poor and does not meet the needs and interests of learners. Current provision is largely based on historical practice and is fragmented. No suitable strategy is in place to provide a coherent curriculum for personal and social development across the prison. At level 1, the range of accredited provision has improved and is satisfactory. However, the prison has continuing shortages of tutors and a planned refurbishment of the kitchen. Not all provision was available during the inspection week. The range of programmes available to vulnerable offenders in their residential unit has improved but remains narrow. Provision at level 2 and above is not sufficient, and does not offer sufficient opportunities for progression. The prison has made good use of partnerships and external funding to expand the range of extra-curricular activities, but these developments have been largely unsystematic. The range of enrichment during weekdays is satisfactory but too little is on offer in the evenings and at weekends. The prison provides a good range of indoor and outdoor recreational physical education, but too few offenders use this more than once a week.
31. Guidance and support are inadequate. IAG arrangements rely too heavily on offenders' initiative in applying for personal and social development programmes. Offenders do not receive sufficient guidance or advice to make informed choices from what is available or plan a coherent programme for the length of their stay. The programmes learners follow rarely meet their individual needs identified in sentence and other plans. Learners receive satisfactory personal support from their tutors.

## Leadership and management

Inadequate: Grade 4

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

32. Leadership and management are inadequate, a lower grade than contained in the self-assessment report. The prison has maintained its productive links with external organisations, identified as a strength in previous inspections. Toyota

continues to sponsor and actively support the motor vehicle mechanics provision. At the time of inspection the delivery of five, more-up-to date, cars was imminent. Laing's construction training has increased its presence, more than doubling the brickwork training capacity. The PE department maintains good links with local sports clubs who visit regularly to play football and rugby matches against offender teams. Trailblazers continue to provide a successful mentoring service to offenders approaching and following release. Organisations such as Connexions and Jobcentre Plus routinely offer pre-release information on employment and benefits. A range of charitable and other organisations provide occasional, well received enrichment activities such as drama and music workshops.

33. The prison and MKC have placed a clear recent emphasis on improving the provision. Following a prolonged period without a head of learning and skills, and more recently with no MKC education manager, the current head of learning and skills took up the post in summer 2008 and the education manager in January 2009. In the last few months the prison has developed a strategic plan for learning and skills with clear and appropriate priorities, accompanied by a detailed three-year development plan. As well as its own development plan, MKC drew up a recovery plan for its provision in November 2008, with consultancy support to aid implementation. MKC has made improvements to the refurbishment of the education centre and its teaching resources, including the very recent installation of interactive whiteboards. With partners, it has newly established a radio station to provide vocational and personal development training. Recently recruited new teaching staff receive suitable support and professional development.
34. Progress has been too slow to remedy longstanding weaknesses identified in previous learning and skills inspections, despite improvement in formerly inadequate aspects such as equality of opportunity. The management and planning of individual learning programmes remains a key area for improvement. Significant areas for improvement in the management of learning and skills still exist across the prison, and in the coordination and development of specific areas such as ICT and literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Although the collection of data has improved, and its analysis and use is good in PE, across the prison as a whole data analysis and evaluation are not yet sufficient. Quality assurance and improvement arrangements, such as the observation of teaching and learning and good practice sharing, are still not sufficiently developed.
35. Collaboration across learning and skills provision is not sufficiently effective. Despite regular quality improvement group meetings, too much planning for improvement is fragmented. The prison and MKC work to separate and poorly aligned development plans. Arrangements to publicise provision are not well enough coordinated. For example, attractive publicity materials MKC has recently produced do not cover most programmes provided by the prison. Links between the MKC IAG team and the prison's resettlement staff are not sufficiently effective in the planning and operation of induction and resettlement. MKC and the prison do not liaise sufficiently to accredit the employability skills offenders develop while in work at the prison. Collaboration between tutors, workshop staff and librarians

on the choice of stock is not sufficient to ensure library resources support learning effectively.

36. Arrangements to plan individual offenders' learning and progression are ineffective. The prison has not acted effectively to ensure a suitable range of provision at different levels to facilitate progression. Its arrangements to inform offenders of the progression routes available and support them in systematically developing their skills and employability over time are not well enough developed, despite improvements in the allocations process and the ready accessibility of learners' files to MKC staff. Action to improve the planning of individual learning in classroom based programmes has not been sufficiently effective.
37. Too much provision is closed, under used or cancelled, a weakness at previous inspections. Although more of the provision was working at full capacity for about a year until November 2008, since then the pattern of problems present during the 2003 and 2005 inspections has re-emerged, including problems with staff cover for absence. At the time of inspection too many vocational training places were inactive. In the education centre, numbers in classes are often low, and too many classes are cancelled or covered by non-specialist staff.
38. The self-assessment process is not sufficiently developed. The prison self-assessment report relies too heavily on judgements contained in MKC's self-assessment of its provision. It is not sufficiently evaluative. The process does not make sufficient use of learners' views. Data in the report does not sufficiently include learner performance or any data on teaching standards from areas outside the remit of MKC. It does not sufficiently emphasise the impact of its judgements on the learners' experience. Some items it identifies as strengths are normal practice and it omits some key areas for improvement inspectors found. Most inspection grades were lower than those in the report. Actions in the associated development plan clearly link to self-assessment judgements, but do not always prioritise sufficiently improvement needs identified during the inspection. The MKC recovery plan, while useful, does not link clearly to the MKC self-assessment and development plan or prison self-assessment findings.
39. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory, as identified in the self-assessment report. The prison has an appropriate equality and diversity strategy and policy for learning and skills activities. Its monitoring of race equality suitably combines the use of formal and informal processes. An active race equality action group has prisoner representatives from each wing, and equality and diversity matters are routinely considered at offenders' forums run by head of learning and skills, PE staff and more recently the education contractor.
40. The collection and use of equalities data is satisfactory. Data on the recruitment, retention, achievement and attendance of black and minority ethnic learners is routinely collected across the prison. Monitoring and analysis is monthly. The allocation panel consider appropriately the outcomes of monitoring when making decisions affecting offenders' placement in work or vocational training. Monitoring of participation in recreational and vocational PE is thorough and effective. PE

staff use the findings well in deciding what activities to offer. However, other prison areas do not currently analyse potentially useful equalities data such as the age, or the residential unit of learners.

41. Support for offenders with specific needs is satisfactory. Screening and support for learners with dyslexia is good. The prison provides support for the few offenders with physical disabilities individually. The education centre has lift access to upper floors, and ramp access to ground floor areas is common across the prison. Classes in British Sign Language provided through the chaplaincy in one of the residential units as part of personal development programmes effectively promote understanding of hearing impairment to participants.
42. Safeguarding arrangements meet current government requirements. All learning and skills staff are subject to appropriate vetting, as well as security clearance.
43. Learning and skills provision for offenders considered vulnerable has improved. However, the range of provision the prison offers in their residential unit remains narrower than for the majority population. Only two work areas provide places for this cohort. Plans exist to offer some dedicated vocational training in construction and painting and decorating.
44. Arrangements to increase the promotion of equality and diversity within the curriculum are not sufficiently developed. Observations of teaching and learning do not focus sufficiently on whether the use of resources or learning strategies is suitably inclusive. Learning and skills' wall displays and subject projects do not sufficiently promote equality and diversity.

## What learners like:

- Getting time off work to go to education classes
- Good skills learnt on motor vehicle mechanics courses
- Outside teams coming in to play football matches
- The key skills help I get from my teacher who comes to the workshop
- Supportive and friendly tutors
- Working in groups and learning from others
- Getting qualifications that help get a job

## What learners think could improve:

- The wait between induction and starting a class – it's too long
- The training is boring sometimes (brick work)
- The accessibility of showers - need to get a shower when finishing gardening work
- Education classes - make them more interesting
- Get help 'about the best way to be good at an interview, when going for a job when released
- Stop cancelling our sessions
- The choice of courses (too narrow)
- The lack of activities and things to do in the evenings and weekends
- The length of lessons – too long