

# HMP Garth

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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. HMP Garth, situated near Leyland in Lancashire is a male category B training prison, opened in October 1988. It has capacity for 847 offenders. Currently the prison population is 805. Offenders are sentenced and are aged over 21. Offenders are serving long custodial sentences of four years and many indeterminate sentences for public protection (IPP) and life sentence offenders. Within the last twelve months the prison population has increased and now has approximately 450 IPP offenders.
2. The head of learning and skills is responsible for learning and skills across the prison. The education contractor is Lancaster and Morecambe College of further education. The college provides information, advice and guidance and initial literacy and numeracy testing. It provides a range of literacy, numeracy, language and personal development courses and National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) training in catering, construction, industrial cleaning, light engineering, motor vehicle and sport. Approximately 230 learners participate in education part-time. A further 558 offenders are in full-time work where they can access a range of vocational, Skills for Life and learndirect courses. The prison service offers work activities that include farms and gardens, NVQs in performing manufacturing operations, accredited physical education courses, Braille materials, computer recycling and a prison information and communication technology academy (PICTA) workshop. Literacy and numeracy courses are offered in all prison contract workshops and in vocational training provided by the education contractor and learndirect. A work-based learning provider carries out assessment for offenders in prison contract workshops. The Shannon Trust delivers Toe-by-Toe programmes. The library is provided by Lancashire County Council Library Service.

## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Good: Grade 2
Capacity to improve	Good: Grade 2
Achievement and standards	Good: Grade 2
Employability training	Good: Grade 2
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	Good: Grade 2
Personal development and social integration	Good: Grade 2
Quality of provision	Good: Grade 2
Employability training	Good: Grade 2
Literacy, numeracy and ESOL	Good: Grade 2
Personal development and social integration	Good: Grade 2
Leadership and management	Good: Grade 2
Equality of opportunity	Satisfactory: Grade 3

## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

Good: Grade 2

3. The overall effectiveness of the provision is good. Employability training, literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), and personal development and social integration programmes are good. Overall achievement and standards and the quality of provision are good as are leadership and management. The prison's approach to equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

### Capacity to improve

Good: Grade 2

4. HMP Garth has a good capacity to improve. The prison has clear and shared objectives with its external partners to provide broad education and training which supports the national strategy to reduce the likelihood of re-offending. The strategic planning process is good. Particularly good partnerships between the prison, the offender learning and skills service (OLASS) contractor, learndirect and a work-based learning provider are developing education and training programmes that enhance provision and meet offenders' needs effectively. The education contractor's management information system is accurate and, along with data kept by the prison, provides a range of reports and information on performance that is measured and used for improvements. The regime functions across the prison work very effectively and collaboratively to meet offenders' needs. Activity allocation is fair and regular. Unemployment is low. Risk assessment concerning security and safety when allocating offenders to activities is planned well and does not act as an unnecessary barrier to participation in education, training or work.
5. Quality improvement processes are thorough and good improvements are evident since the previous inspection. All areas for improvement have been resolved. For example, unemployment has improved and is now low, and the range and breadth of provision has been extended and meets the range of learners' individual needs well. Accommodation and resources are very good. Significant improvement in the results of the observation of teaching, learning and training process is supported by high success rates across the provision. The self-assessment process is thorough and inclusive. The grades and judgements in the report reflect inspection findings.

## Key strengths

- High success rates
- Good teaching, training and learning
- Very good learning resources and accommodation

- Extensive range of provision
- Strong management of education, learning and skills
- Particularly effective prison strategy to reduce unemployment and increase participation in education, training and work
- Good quality improvement

## Key areas for improvement

- Weak reviewing of learners' progress
- Negative impact of the prison regime on some education provision
- Insufficient access to some OLASS training workshops

## Main findings

### Employability training

#### Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

6. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates are good, as the self-assessment report identifies. The rate of learners achieving qualifications is 100% on computer courses in prison workshops and satisfactory in the OLASS provision. Success rates on all courses have improved since 2006/07. The NVQ level 2 in performing manufacturing operations was introduced in October 2007 to cover seven workshops and to give learners a valuable generic qualification. Fifty-one learners have started the qualification, 20 have achieved it and a further 19 are still working towards it. Of the learners who left the programme due to transfer to another prison, most have gained units towards the NVQ.
7. Learners gain useful technical skills in a wide range of vocational areas. Learners gain confidence and become accustomed to the discipline of work. In the OLASS construction workshop, some joinery learners are able to make complex furniture designs. In the motor vehicle workshop, learners produce a high standard of work.
8. The prison has a contract to refurbish rental hand tools. Learners are skilled in repairing and rebuilding them. It also has a contract to assemble lighting units which develops learners' electrical skills. Computers are recycled, and some learners are able to construct working computers from the discarded units.
9. In workshops, many learners complete work which makes a contribution to the community. Some of them learn Braille to translate books for blind people. In another workshop that refurbishes wheelchairs, learners design and build modifications to the wheelchairs to meet specific needs of individuals. Construction learners build toys and play equipment for a charity for disabled children.

#### Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

10. The quality of provision is good. Teaching, training and learning are good. The training in the education workshops is planned well and supported by detailed and effective schemes of work and lesson plans. In prison workshops, officers give good training to develop learners' skills. Good teaching materials are used. For example, in the Braille unit, materials have been produced to enable learners to progress by stages, assessing their progress as they go. The learning resources and accommodation are very good. A training area has been created in the kitchen for catering learners. The prison workshops have modern commercial machinery. Large numbers of computers are available for learners to use in the computer network training workshop and in the media centre, which is run by learners to improve communications throughout the prison. All workshops have screened areas where learners can develop their literacy, numeracy and key skills.



11. Progress reviews are not recorded adequately. Learners receive verbal feedback on their progress but insufficient written feedback. Targets are negotiated and set for learners with dates for completion and these are recorded in detail. When learners' progress is reviewed against these targets the records are too brief or non-existent. This is identified in the self-assessment report as an area for improvement.
12. Learners are able to choose from an extensive range of vocational provision, as the self-assessment report identifies. Nineteen different workshops and training facilities are available. Security does not act as an unnecessary barrier to some medium risk assessed work and training being accessed by offenders. learndirect programmes have been introduced within the previous 12 months. Many learners in work have not taken the opportunity to participate in an NVQ. In one workshop, where 75 offenders are working, only four of them are enrolled on an NVQ. A work-based learning provider has been engaged to improve both the amount of learners accessing qualifications and their assessment opportunities. Some of the OLASS facilities are underused. For example, the welding, motor vehicle and construction workshops are only being used to approximately 50% of capacity due to the restriction on learners that they must be within two years of completing their sentence to participate in these activities and to ensure that the NVQ qualification is still current at their release.
13. All learners participate in a four week prison induction process during which they receive good information, advice and guidance on education, training and work opportunities. The outcome of the assessment of literacy and numeracy needs is used to identify targets for offenders' sentence plans. Good guidance is given on health and safety issues by the provider.

## Literacy, numeracy and ESOL

Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

14. Achievement and standards are good. Success rates for learners are high on Skills for Life and key skills courses. This strength was acknowledged in the self-assessment report. During 2007/08, 84% of learners gained key skills qualifications and 88% gained Skills for Life qualifications. Achievement rates in numeracy at levels 1 and 2 are high at 89% and 88% respectively. In literacy, at levels 1 and 2 achievement rates are good at 83% and at entry level 3, are high at 92%.
15. The standard of learners' work is good and learners' progress well from initial starting points. Learners' work indicates that many learners progress to improved levels of skills development. Learners' skills development motivates progression to higher-level study and independent learning. Attendance at courses is good.

## Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

16. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. Sessions are planned well and make specific references to schemes of work. Tutors plan a range of motivating activities to meet learning styles and to maintain interest. Interactive learning technologies are used creatively to demonstrate theory, provide practise activities and to assess learning. Most lesson plans show clear references to differentiated activities for learners working at different levels. Tutors make good use of a range questioning techniques. Learners participate well in individual, paired, and group exercises. Tutors make good use of learners' personal life experiences in ESOL sessions to develop speaking and listening skills. Literacy sessions focus well on the development of employability skills.
17. Learning resources and accommodation are very good. Classrooms are spacious, professionally presented and all contain interactive learning technologies and computer equipment. Information and communication technology (ICT) resources in screened learning areas in workshops are new and do not yet contain sufficient software to develop literacy and numeracy skills.
18. The use of targets to review learning is incomplete. Detailed and specific targets set on learning plans are not always updated at subsequent reviews to show achievement. Some learners have not had a formal progress review for many months. Tutors use monitoring documents effectively to record learning activities, attendance and behaviour and in some cases achievement of qualifications. This information is not always used in updating targets to show where achievement has taken place.
19. Offenders benefit from a comprehensive induction that involves a range of staff from different functions of the prison. As part of the induction, learners gain unit accreditation in essential employability skills such as assertiveness, equality and diversity, improving communication skills and managing personal stress. Induction training improves learners' self-awareness of behaviour patterns related to working relationships. Comprehensive resettlement advice is provided in induction. Eight peer mentors provide effective additional support to learners in education. Reading support is provided effectively by Toe-by-Toe mentors across the prison. Information provided to learners is detailed and professional.
20. The range of provision in literacy and numeracy is good. Courses are available from pre-entry to level 4. Key skills are integrated effectively into four workshops and key skills standards are matched closely to vocational qualifications. Learners residing in the evaluation and reallocation unit, which prevents them from accessing main stream provision and work, have access to dedicated literacy and numeracy courses through learndirect provision. Learners from other workshops can access learndirect provision in the joinery

workshop. In 2009, the prison received a national award for the innovative use of ICT in learning.

21. Learners receive good support to help them achieve their qualifications. Extensive outreach literacy and numeracy provision is available across workshops, on wings, and in segregation and healthcare. Initial and diagnostic assessment of literacy, numeracy and language is comprehensive. Dyslexia screening is weak and not routinely carried out as part of initial advice and guidance. A dyslexia specialist is available in the education department if learners are subsequently identified as requiring assessment and support.

## Personal development and social integration

### Achievement and standards

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

22. Achievement and standard are good. Overall success rates for 2007/08 are high at 90%. In-year achievement rates for 2008/09 compare well with those for the same time last year. In open and distance learning, pass rates for those who complete their courses are good at 79%.
23. Learners develop good skills and confidence. They participate fully in discussion and debate, making relevant and considered contributions. Learners display good teamwork, practical skills and discipline in cookery. Artwork is often of a good standard and some show technical skills above the level of accreditation. Learners on open and distance learning programmes develop good independent learning skills. Offenders from the therapeutic community and the Supporting Offenders through Restoration Inside (SORI) programme, show marked attitudinal and behavioural change and develop the skills to support others.
24. Attendance is satisfactory overall. However, tutors are often unaware of the reasons for absence. Tutors do not consistently receive information from the wings detailing reasons for learners' absence. Some learners have never attended their class, potentially blocking places for others.

### Quality of provision

Contributory grade: Good: Grade 2

25. The quality of provision is good. Teaching and learning are good. Detailed planning shows good links to the adult core curriculum for literacy and numeracy and to qualification outcomes. Teaching is structured and paced well with a good range of learning strategies. Tutors use information and learning technology extensively to enrich learning. Learning activities provide many opportunities for learners to develop literacy, communication and numeracy skills. Good initial assessment of drawing skills helps establish learners' different starting points in art and effective coaching helps to develop their skills. Tutors make regular checks of learners' understanding and challenge them effectively when required. In a minority of sessions, not enough time is

allowed to discuss the outcomes of each activity before moving to the next one.

26. The art room is spacious. Most resources are good. Learners produce good two dimensional painting and drawing. Problems with storage and media resources restrict the development of larger three dimensional work. Learners make insufficient use of primary source material such as books to develop observational skills to help them progress their skills and ideas. In cookery, the range of appropriate knives for preparing food is poor. Only plastic knives are available making the preparation of raw meat and vegetables difficult.
27. The use of individual learning plans to monitor and review learning is weak. All individual learning plans record literacy and numeracy assessment scores, but these are not used consistently to set targets and review progress. Many targets are vague and insufficiently personalised. Some are too long-term or described as 'ongoing'. Review arrangements are not always clear. Some target-setting and review involves little active involvement by learners. The prison has identified this area for improvement in its self-assessment report. In the better learning plans, clear and personalised targets are set and reviewed regularly.
28. The provision meets learners' needs and interest well. Provision is broad and offers flexible learning and progression opportunities from entry level to level 4. In cookery, progression is to NVQs. The good range of social and life skills modules is relevant to the prison population and some subjects link to higher level learning. A wide range of distance and open learning provision is available. Programming takes the needs of different groups, such as those of retirement age, into account. Discrete provision for the therapeutic community enables them to contribute to the life of the prison. The sale of handmade cards helps offenders to maintain links with family and friends. The SORI programme helps learners recognise, change, and make reparation for criminal behaviour. The range of accredited gym courses is good. The provider has plans to extend art to include levels 2 and 3.
29. The prison provides good support to meet offenders' needs. The chaplaincy supports participants on the SORI programme effectively by providing personal counselling. Prison officers and peers provide good support for those in the therapeutic community, where a holistic approach supports offenders to tackle self-destructive tendencies. Learners on open and distance learning programmes are supported effectively to maintain motivation. A thorough induction process includes information, advice and guidance and links effectively with sentence planning and allocations to work, education and training.

## Leadership and management

Good: Grade 2

Equality of opportunity

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

30. Partnership working is strong, a strength identified in the self-assessment report. The head of learning and skills, with the education provider, learndirect and a work-based learning provider, work collaboratively to provide a wide range of provision that very effectively meets learners' needs. Learners' needs are met effectively through a wide range of provision available at work, on wings and in vocational training. Achievement rates are high. Collaboration between different functional areas of the prison is good. The offender management unit, gym, industries, education, learning and skills, and information, advice and guidance staff work together very well to meet offenders' individual needs. All parties, including representation from security and prison officers, attend a weekly allocation board to effectively review offenders' employment and training requests to place them in appropriate activities. Security does not act as a barrier to employment or training. Many workshops categorised as medium risk take up to 25% high risk learners.
31. The learning and skills strategy to support the national strategy to reduce unemployment and increase participation in education, training and work is particularly effective and is aligned to the prison strategy. The Governor and senior management team strongly support the learning and skills strategy. Since the previous inspection, workshops have been extended and offer learners a range of 19 workshops where they can access vocational accredited qualifications. Currently 92% of offenders are engaged in training, education or work. Unemployment in the prison has reduced and is less than 2% of the total population. Until January 2009, the take-up of vocational qualifications in prison workshops was relatively low. However, a new partner has been brought in that is now increasing the take-up of formal learning and approximately 60 learners are now signed up to a vocational qualification. The regime has a negative affect on some education provision. Some offenders are resistant to the regime's attendance pattern required for education classes of either morning or afternoon sessions for the whole week. Learners cannot just attend the sessions they want to and have to add other programmes to their primary learning aim. This affects attendance in some personal and social development sessions. The provider and prison have extended Skills for Life in workshops across the prison for those who do not attend formal education.
32. The management of education, learning and skills is strong. The monitoring and management of resources and accommodation, participation, attendance, behaviour and punctuality are good. Data is used well to monitor performance and set improvement targets. Accommodation is very good and learners benefit from good quality training and learning resources. Staff are well qualified and experienced and are enthusiastic in their approach to learners to motivate them both within their job and on their NVQ. Good communication

enables the integration of education, work, offending behaviour programmes and other activities.

33. Information, advice and guidance, provided by the education contractor, are good. Staff achieved Matrix accreditation. Induction is particularly strong and offenders achieve a skills for the workplace qualification which provides them with a range of skills that will support further learning. This strength is identified in the self-assessment report. All offenders have an individual interview and set education and work targets that are added to their sentence plan targets. Access to the library is good and it is stocked with books and materials to reflect the educational and recreational needs of offenders, including foreign nationals. An outreach service is also provided. The library supports open and distance learning.
34. Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. Processes are in place to ensure that vulnerable adults are protected. A range of policies outline the way discrimination will be dealt with within learning and skills.
35. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory overall with some good aspects. The prison has a range of policies and procedures outlining their approach to equality and diversity. However, some of the OLASS providers' policies and procedures have not been updated recently. The prison places a strong focus on delivering and further developing an inclusive provision. In the gym, courses are specifically designed to meet a range of individual needs including older or retired users. Provision has been designed to ensure offenders in the reallocation and integration unit, who do not mix with mainstream offenders, have access to work, literacy and numeracy and some personal and social development programmes. Outreach provision is good and provides education opportunities for those who do not access mainstream education. Access to education and work is monitored closely to ensure that barriers to learning are not preventing groups of learners accessing courses appropriately. The prison is sensitive to the cultural needs of different groups within the prison and appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that cultural practices can be accommodated without prejudicing access to learning and skills. However, some OLASS workshops are underused. They are only available to offenders who are within two years of completing their sentence to maintain the currency of the NVQ on release and as such these very well resourced workshops are often up to 50% empty. No other programmes are offered to enable learners to start to develop their skills in these workshops.
36. The standards of behaviour are mostly good with a high degree of mutual respect between learners and staff. However, in a minority of cases, some poor behaviour by prison staff has not been dealt with sufficiently by the prison. The promotion of equality and diversity within education is satisfactory. Some themed events are run, for example Holocaust remembrance and anti-racism in football promotes equality and diversity well. Promotion in education sessions is less explicit, although staff have helpful tips on how to review lesson

planning to ensure equality and diversity is promoted well. At induction, equality and diversity is promoted skilfully and examples are used to develop offenders' assertiveness skills.

37. Quality improvement processes, identified as a key area for improvement at the previous inspection, are now good. A great deal of work has taken place to develop a thorough and effective quality assurance process that is improving provision. The quality improvement group and the development improvement group are attended well by all providers. Strategies to improve provision are planned well and positive timely action is taken to improve provision. The providers work together effectively and have made significant improvements to the provision. Training and development opportunities are shared and have standardised and improved practice across the prison effectively. The education provider has shared best practice in quality improvement processes with other providers in the prison. For example, the education provider has focused on improving teaching and learning. This good practice has been shared effectively. The observation of teaching and learning process is thorough and has improved the planning and delivery of sessions effectively. The proportion of good or better teaching has increased from 43% in 2006/07, to 70% in 2007/08. The standard of teaching and learning is very good, as identified in the self-assessment report. Quality audits identify areas for improvement effectively and action taken to effect improvement is good. The self-assessment process is thorough and inclusive and the report contains a high degree of accuracy when compared with inspection findings.

## What learners like:

- 'The chance to gain a qualification'
- Gaining qualifications through induction
- Improving confidence in reading and writing
- 'Different methods of learning keeps me interested'
- The wide choice of work and courses
- Particularly good instructors in vocational training
- 'Being treated with respect by staff in education'
- Giving something back by doing work which benefits the community
- 'Art is helping me develop skills so that I can use my time productively now I've retired'
- 'The education here is great'
- 'If you want to learn, the education staff do everything they can to help you'
- 'Without education, I don't know what I would have done'
- 'The SORI course knocked me off my feet. I'd never considered how my crimes affected others before. Now I think before I act'
- The good access to the gym

## What learners think could improve:

- Production pressures in the needle trades workshop
- Missing gardening work too frequently because instructors are transferred to other duties
- Tea breaks in education
- 'It takes too long to get books delivered from the library'
- 'The time it takes to get specialist books for open learning'
- The range of books and materials to use in art
- 'Having to use plastic knives in cookery makes cutting raw meat and vegetables a hard job'
- The ability to do education full-time, or just selecting the courses you want
- The outside sports facilities and more football