



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP Send**

**For reporting year  
1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024**

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## Introductory sections 1 – 3

### 1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board, appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively, its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison, and also to the prison's records.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that States designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

## **2. Description of the establishment**

HMP Send is a closed prison for adult women and transgender prisoners, with no remand prisoners or prisoners sent directly following sentencing. During the reporting year, two new wings were opened, with a total of 64 cells for prisoners on the enhanced (top) level of the incentives scheme. At the end of the reporting year, Send had an operational capacity (the maximum number of prisoners that can be held without serious risk to safety, security, good order and the proper running of the planned regime) of 255<sup>1</sup>. The prison had 177 prisoners at the beginning of the reporting year and 247 prisoners at the end, of whom three had imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentences, and very few had sentences of less than one year. At the end of the reporting year, there were 22 foreign national prisoners. There were five transgender prisoners.

The opening of the new wings and pressure from HM Prisons & Probation Service (HMPPS) to transfer prisoners to open prisons meant that there was a higher turnover of prisoners than in the previous reporting year.

Send is the only women's prison to have a democratic therapeutic community (DTC). It also offers a preparation psychologically informed planned environment (pre-PIPE) unit and a progression PIPE unit.

The prison is situated in the Surrey countryside, with well-spaced residential wings. All wings in use have single cells, the majority with a shower and a toilet, while ten single cells in one block share bathrooms.

Salaries of the prison's staff do not attract the London weighting allowance. This, combined with a lack of public transport to the prison, affects the prison's ability to recruit and retain staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Figures included in this report are local management information. They reflect the prison's position at the time of reporting, but may be subject to change following further validation and therefore may not always tally with Official Statistics later published by the Ministry of Justice.

### **3. Key points**

#### **3.1 Main findings**

##### **Safety**

- The Board continues to consider Send to be a prison in which the management and staff make a great effort to try and ensure the safety of prisoners, including those who have complex needs (4).
- The approach to induction paperwork was inconsistent (4.1).
- Self-harm reduced in the reporting year (4.2).
- One prisoner died in hospital shortly after release on compassionate grounds having been diagnosed with a terminal illness (4.2).

##### **Fair and humane treatment**

- The 64 new cells on the incentivised substance free living (ISFL) wings are very popular with the prisoners and provide a rehabilitative environment. There have been some teething issues connected with water and power supply (5.1).
- There were complaints regarding the storage and preparation of halal food (5.1).
- Way Out TV was available in all cells but did not appear to be used effectively as a means of communicating with prisoners (5.1).
- The delay in refunds from DHL was the subject of a number of applications (prisoners' written representations to the Board) (5.1).
- Overall, the Board has seen positive relationships between staff and prisoners, who have been treated with respect and compassion (5.3).
- The handling of discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs) changed frequently in the reporting year, which limited the Board's ability to monitor the content and process (5.4).
- Prisoners frequently told the Board that the issuing of incentives and earned privileges (IEPs) was inconsistent and unfair (5.6).
- The Board is concerned about the time taken by some other prisons to respond to prisoners' complaints (5.7).
- Reception was often closed during the reporting year due to staff being cross-deployed to other departments (5.8).
- Prisoner property continued to be a problem, particularly for those prisoners transferring from other prisons (5.8).

##### **Health and wellbeing**

- From feedback provided by prisoners, the Board believes the provision of primary healthcare services has, largely, been good (6.1).
- There were 51 complaints submitted to the prison about healthcare, and a number of complaints submitted directly to healthcare. Due to the confidential nature, the Board has no knowledge of the content or outcome of these complaints (6.1).
- Some prisoners told members of the Board that some nursing staff were rude (6.1).

- Waiting times for dental treatment decreased during 2023-24, with the introduction of four sessions each week, and the recruitment of a dental therapist (6.1).
- Those prisoners who had breast-screening examinations outside the prison were subject to the possibility of being chained or handcuffed to an officer during this process (6.1).
- A mid-year report identified that 48% of prisoners at Send were classed as obese (6.1).
- The Board questions whether the catering budget per prisoner permits a healthy diet (6.1).

### **Progression and resettlement**

- The Board observed various classes throughout the year; prisoners appeared engaged, and the tutors seemed to have a good rapport with the learners (7.1).
- As in previous reporting years, the Board would like to see more prisoners engaged in education (7.1).
- With no comprehensive strategy to tackle functional skills, some prisoners have not improved their English and maths (7.1).
- There has been no progress in the provision of IT (7.1).
- There were persistent comments from prisoners regarding low local pay levels (7.2).
- Staff shortages within the offender management unit (OMU) affected services to prisoners, although the OMU staff are knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of individual prisoners and their needs (7.3).
- Only two prisoners had release on temporary licence (ROTL) placements in the community; the prison has been under pressure to transfer eligible prisoners to open prisons (7.3).
- There were three IPP prisoners at the end of the reporting year, one of whom has served 14 years over the original tariff of two-and-a-half years (7.3).
- Extended family and 'lifer' visit days proved popular, and prison staff put in considerable effort to arrange these (7.4).
- The shortage of community offender managers (COMs) continues to make it difficult to plan effectively and impacts on progression and release planning (7.5).

### **3.2 Main areas for development**

#### ***TO THE MINISTER***

- The Board reiterates that the needs of complex individuals with multiple mental health issues are not served well in prison. Such prisoners also take up a great deal of staff time (4.2).
- The Board continues to believe that the continued detention of IPP prisoners is unfair and inhumane (7.3).

#### ***TO THE PRISON SERVICE***

- The Board is concerned about the practice of potentially using an escort chain or handcuff of a prisoner to an officer during a breast screening (6.1).

- The Board remains concerned about the absence of in-cell technology at Send. There has been no progress on this subject and no evidence available of plans for future change (7.1).
- There have been persistent comments to the Board from prisoners about low local levels of pay. There is a lack of consistency of pay across the female estate (7.2).
- The shortage of offender managers, both at Send and in the community, has a damaging effect on prisoners and on their ability to successfully reintegrate into society (7.3) (7.5).

### **TO THE GOVERNOR**

- The Board would like to see a consistent approach to induction paperwork (4.1).
- The Board is concerned about the increased number of applications received concerning delays in refunds from DHL (5.1).
- The handling of DIRFs changed frequently in the reporting year. This limited the amount of work the Board was able to do in connection with the management and fairness of DIRFs (5.4).
- The initiative to tackle obesity in prisoners needs to be followed through (6.1).
- The Board would like to see more prisoners in education (7.1).
- The long-term absence of a computer in the library impacts on the provision of this valuable service (7.1).
- Staff shortages within OMU need to be addressed (7.3).

### **3.3 Response to the last report**

<b>Issue raised</b>	<b>Response given</b>	<b>Progress</b>
<b>To the Minister</b>  1. The Board continues to believe that prison is not an appropriate place to rehabilitate traumatised individuals and that prisoners with severe mental health issues should be accommodated in secure mental health units.	<b>Full details of responses in a letter from Ministry of Justice (MoJ), dated 5 October 2023</b>  1. HM Prisons & Probation Service (HMPPS) continues to aim to have fewer women entering custody, including the ending of remand for own protection solely on mental health grounds. HMPPS is engaging with sentencers and those who work in courts to raise awareness of specific issues faced by women who offend. In addition, HMPPS is investing £15 million until 2025 to improve community support for women in the criminal justice system, including investing in new	1. No progress to report on this subject.

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
<p>2. The Board noted the Justice Select Committee (JSC) recommendation, of September 2022, that a re-sentencing exercise is the only way to address the injustice of imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentences and found the response of the Government in rejecting this recommendation in February 2023 disappointing.</p>	<p>services and interventions that will act as alternatives to custody.</p> <p>2. The Government accepted the recommendation of the JSC to review the Action Plan. The refreshed Action Plan will be a strong driver to provide the best possible opportunities for those serving an IPP sentence to progress towards release. The Government is reviewing the department's work to help more IPP prisoners progress towards release.</p>	<p>2. There were three IPP prisoners at the end of the reporting year. One has served 14 years over the original tariff of two and a half years and has had their parole decision overturned twice by the Secretary of State. A second has served eight years over tariff. The third prisoner had a tariff expiry date of 2010 and was first released in 2017 but has since been recalled three times (7.3).</p>
<p><b>To the Prison Service</b></p> <p>1. The continuing failure to roll out digital technology to Send is unacceptable and amounts to unfair treatment for prisoners at Send.</p> <p>2. The shortage of probation officers, both at Send – where four of the six full-time equivalent probation officer posts are currently vacant – and in the community, has had a damaging effect on prisoners' progression and prospects for successful reintegration into society.</p>	<p><b>Full details of responses in a letter from MoJ dated 5 October 2023</b></p> <p>1. The ambition remains to provide in-cell technology as soon as funding allows by prioritised need.</p> <p>2. To improve retention of probation officers across Kent, Surrey and Sussex, several initiatives are now in place, e.g. improving the pay and reward package, prioritising employee health and wellbeing. In the interim, there are plans to utilise probation support officers to support probation work across</p>	<p>1. There is no progress to report on the roll out of in-cell technology (7.1).</p> <p>2. The shortage of probation officers, both at the prison and in the community, continues to impact on offender management and resettlement planning (7.3) (7.5).</p>



Issue raised	Response given	Progress
<p>the prison estate where there are longer-term vacancies. HMP Send is part of a pilot scheme launched by HMPPS that involves supporting trainee probation officers to take up placements. The pre-release satellite provision for HMP Send is also being discussed, with a view to this support coming online to enhance the resettlement outcomes for prisoners released from HMP Send.</p> <p>3. The offender management in custody (OMiC) model cannot be implemented successfully with current staffing issues.</p> <p>4. The delays and losses of property on transfer from one prison to another need co-ordinated action by the whole female prison estate and the contracted transfer service providers.</p>	<p>the prison estate where there are longer-term vacancies. HMP Send is part of a pilot scheme launched by HMPPS that involves supporting trainee probation officers to take up placements. The pre-release satellite provision for HMP Send is also being discussed, with a view to this support coming online to enhance the resettlement outcomes for prisoners released from HMP Send.</p> <p>3. The national OMiC team has published a workload management strategy that can be deployed where probation prison staffing levels are at 90% or below the target staffing level. It is likely that staffing levels will not be resolved for some time. Each prison's 2024/25 Regime Progression Plan will set new expectations for the delivery of key work.</p> <p>4. The Prisoners' Property Policy Framework (PPPF), implemented in September 2022, places an emphasis on ensuring compliance with volumetric controls. It provides instructions to ensure consistency across different establishments. The framework sets out that Governors must ensure that property complaints are investigated, with prisoners offered appropriate compensation where items are lost or damaged.</p>	<p>3. The prison reported that compliance with the OMiC model was 74% - a significant improvement on the previous year (48%) (5.3).</p> <p>4. Despite the PPPF, prisoners frequently arrived with either incomplete personal items, an excess of items, or property cards (the list of all of a prisoner's belongings) of poor quality which were not comprehensive (5.8).</p>

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
<p>5. Some prisoners identify plaiting/braiding as an important part of racial identity, yet this hairdressing module is not offered under the current education curriculum.</p>	<p>5. The prison has plans to employ a prisoner for 'commercial hairdressing', which could include braiding. The prison is currently awaiting a quote to alter the salon.</p>	<p>5. Funding has been approved for work in the salon and work has commenced (5.4).</p>
<p><b>To the Governor</b></p> <p>1. The Board would like to see an improvement in the number and timeliness of use of force (UoF) debriefs.</p> <p>2. The Board is concerned about the impact of prison staffing issues on delivering regular key work as intended in the OMiC model.</p> <p>3. The overall impression of the Board is that the management of discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs) is disorganised. Furthermore, there is no longer an independent scrutiny of DIRFs.</p> <p>4. The Board would like to see an increase in the number and diversity of prisoners accessing ROTL.</p> <p>5. Hair and beauty/skincare have been raised in applications by black, Asian and minority</p>	<p>1. Governance to move from security to safer custody, which will implement a more robust process for debrief.</p> <p>2. The prison acknowledged the concern about the impact of staffing shortages.</p> <p>3. The shortcomings in the management of DIRF were acknowledged.</p> <p>4. The ability for more prisoners to access ROTL was an important objective.</p> <p>5. More suitable products to be available.</p>	<p>1. Weekly UoF meetings are handled by safer custody. Staff members are asked to complete debrief forms with prisoners (4.4).</p> <p>2. Some improvement in the role of key workers has been observed, but the staff shortage continues to have an impact (5.3) (7.3).</p> <p>3. The management and recording of DIRFs was subject to frequent changes in the reporting year (5.4).</p> <p>4. The number of prisoners accessing ROTL continued to be very low (7.3).</p> <p>5. Some new, more suitable products are now available. This issue has arisen in</p>

Issue raised	Response given	Progress
<p>ethnic prisoners, who complain that there is inadequate provision of suitable products for them on canteen.</p> <p>6. The Board would like to see more prisoners engaged in education.</p> <p>7. The Board would like to see the teaching of beauty resumed.</p>	<p>6. Education was acknowledged as a priority.</p> <p>7. This was to be reviewed in light of the provision of all courses available in other local prisons.</p>	<p>very few applications to the Board in the reporting year.</p> <p>6. The Board has been told that the prison sees education as important and that participation in other types of purposeful activity is as important to prepare a prisoner for life back in the community (7.1).</p> <p>7. This course is offered in nearby HMP Downview. Prisoners may be able to transfer there to undertake this course.</p>

## **Evidence sections 4 – 7**

### **4. Safety**

The Board continues to consider Send to be a prison in which the management and staff make a great effort to try and ensure the safety of prisoners, including those who have complex needs.

Safety data is presented and discussed at the monthly safer custody meeting and an action plan is monitored. In addition, the weekly safety intervention and high risk meetings focus on individuals who require a high level of support.

#### **4.1 Reception and induction**

There were 178 arrivals during the reporting year, compared with 126 in 2022-2023. On at least four occasions, 10 or more prisoners arrived on the same day, putting significant pressure on reception staff.

The Board found that the approach to induction paperwork was inconsistent. The documentation changed during the year and wing staff were sometimes uncertain of the requirements or unable to locate paperwork.

Towards the end of the reporting year, Send accepted arrivals on Fridays. There were several occasions when arrivals after 4pm caused problems with implementing parts of the 'first 24 hours' process, which is an integral part of the seven-day induction programme.

Due to frequent staff shortages, a full-time 'room ready' orderly position<sup>2</sup> was created at the end of the reporting year to ensure that all cells were properly equipped for new arrivals. The prisoner-led induction process was observed by the Board to be impressive.

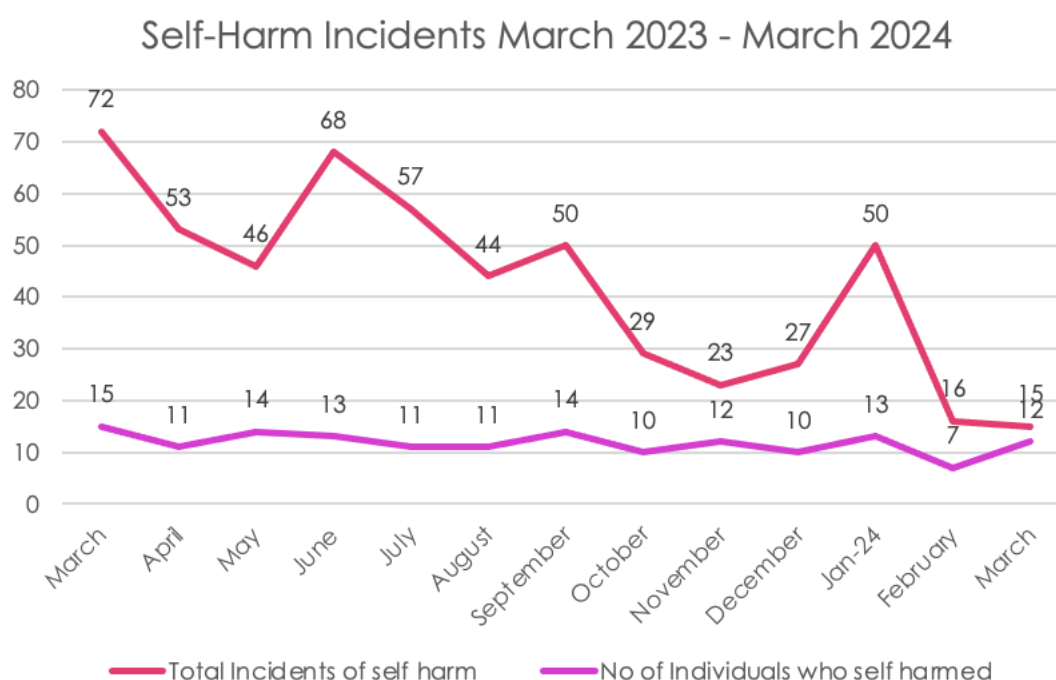
#### **4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody**

In common with the rest of the female estate, Send is a prison where the women direct most violence at themselves rather than others. There were two incidents that led to hospital admission, due to an overdose of medication.

Incidents of self-harm fell in the reporting year. The total number was 479, compared with 867 in the previous reporting year. The main triggers for self-harm were reported to be conflict with peers, mental health and trigger dates.

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<sup>2</sup> These are roles given to trusted prisoners who take on work to provide services that contribute to the running of the prison.



The average number of self-harm incidents per month for the reporting year was 39, of which 24 were carried out by prisoners whose self-harming behaviour was classed as prolific (five or more incidents a month).

The Board reiterates that the needs of complex individuals with multiple mental health issues are not served well in prison. They also take up a great deal of staff time. The staff are to be commended for their compassionate care and support of these prisoners.

The number of assessments, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) documents (used to support prisoners at risk of self-harm and suicide) opened during the year fell from 174 in 2022-2023 to 158 in the reporting year.

One prisoner died in hospital after being diagnosed with a terminal illness. Shortly before her death, this prisoner was granted a release order on compassionate grounds. The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) has investigated the case, as the death occurred within 14 days of release: its report was published on 18 August 2024.

### 4.3 Violence and violence reduction

Send continues to be a prison where the levels of violence are low. There were 20 assaults during the reporting year: nine on staff and 11 prisoner-on-prisoner. This is a reduction from the previous year, when there were 32 assaults: 13 on staff and 19 prisoner-on-prisoner. The Board has observed a culture of respect between most of the staff and prisoners.

### 4.4 Use of force (UoF)

There were 45 use of force incidents in the reporting year, compared with 98 incidents in reporting year 2022-2023. This drop is attributed to a decrease in

deliberate self-harm by prisoners whose behaviour is defined as prolific, as many UoF incidents were to prevent self-harm.

In April 2023, responsibility for UoF governance moved from security to safer custody, and meetings are now held weekly. Board members observed UoF meetings in April, August and November 2023, and were satisfied that incidents were appropriately reviewed. The process of the new debrief form being completed by a staff member and the prisoner has not been fully embedded.

At the start of the reporting year, it was identified that healthcare did not always attend UoF incidents. In November, it was agreed that healthcare should attend incidents immediately to monitor the individual being restrained. The Board understands that healthcare has only attended intermittently.

There was one dirty protest in the reporting year.

#### **4.5 Preventing illicit items**

The Board understands that illicit substances and the trading of prescribed medication continued to be major factors in prisoner bullying and at the root of debt issues. Random mandatory drug testing (MDT) was carried out regularly, as well as specific intelligence-led drug testing.

In the reporting year, 231 random MDTs were carried out, 27 of which were positive and five confirmed as positive after all tests had been conducted. A total of 49 intelligence-led MDTs were carried out, 17 of which were positive and four confirmed as positive after all tests had been conducted.

While healthcare usually reports within 24 hours if the drugs in the prisoner's system match prescribed medication, these results are subject to further confirmation by an external toxicology test, which can take up to a week. This delay can leave the prisoner feeling anxious.

All post was photocopied, with all original mail being passed through the Rapiscan scanning machine to detect any illicit substances.

## **5. Fair and humane treatment**

### **5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food**

The 64 new rapid deployment cells on the ISFL wings are very popular with the prisoners and provide a pleasant rehabilitative environment. The prison put in effort to adopt a fair process to select those prisoners eligible to move to ISFL, and in the management of the project to ensure the completion and opening of these cells. There have been some teething problems, mostly associated with the water and power supply, and the Board has some concerns about the durability of the build.

Prisoner feedback about the food was generally positive, although at one point during the reporting year there was a surge of complaints about portion sizes, which were said to be small. Also see 6.1, concerning food budget.

There were also complaints regarding the storage and preparation of halal food. There was inadequate training given to kitchen workers and no appropriate supervision to ensure halal standards were met. Remedial action was taken by the kitchens, with advice from the Muslim chaplain.

Way Out TV (a TV platform for communication and education) was available in all cells but did not appear to be used effectively as a means of communicating with prisoners.

During the reporting year, the Board received a significant increase in the number of applications from prisoners concerning finance: 22 for 2023-2024 compared with one for 2022-2023. Six of these concerned delays in refunds due from DHL (relating to purchases on canteen – the system to enable prisoners to buy items such as food and toiletries). No other particular trend or theme was noted concerning finance.

### **5.2 Segregation and constant supervision**

Send does not have a segregation wing. Prisoners who are segregated for disciplinary reasons are confined to their cells. There are two constant supervision (CS) cells, plus a holding cell, which is used if both CS cells are occupied.

Over the year, the CS cells were occupied by 19 individuals for a total of 147 nights, which is a slight decrease from the previous year (170). Two prisoners each occupied the CS cell for a total of 36 nights during the year, while another prisoner was in the cell for a total of 24 nights.

The Board has been impressed with the level of care provided to prisoners on constant supervision.

### **5.3 Staff and prisoner relationships, key workers**

Overall, the Board has observed positive relationships between staff and prisoners, who have been seen to be treated with respect and compassion. On the very few occasions where prisoners have raised serious complaints to the Board about members of staff, these have been reported to the Governor.

The prison reported that compliance with the OMIC<sup>3</sup> model was 74%. This is an improvement on the 2022-2023 figure of around 48%.

#### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

The equalities action team (EAT) meets every two months, is well attended by senior members of staff, and compiles comprehensive and relevant data.

For the reporting year, 13 applications were submitted to the Board concerning equality. This represented 5% of total applications, which was almost the same percentage as last year. Race/ethnicity continued to be the protected characteristic featured most frequently. During the reporting year, Black, Asian and minority ethnic prisoners represented approximately 25% of the prison population at Send.

Some black prisoners had complained previously that they did not have access to services in the hair salon for plaiting/braiding. Funding has been approved for work to be carried out in the salon for this purpose and the work has commenced.

There were frequent changes to the management and recording of DIRFs during the reporting year. This prevented the Board monitoring the DIRF process effectively. It was also reported to the Board that some records went missing in April and May. Towards the end of the reporting year, a digital file of DIRFs replaced the manual folder, which addressed the Board's concerns about the confidentiality of DIRF records. During the reporting year, 60 DIRFs were reported; of these, 15 were from one prisoner. Race was the protected characteristic most often identified, followed by disability.

#### **5.5 Faith and pastoral support.**

Following the retirement of the managing chaplain in July 2023, the role was not filled until March 2024. However, good support was given to the prisoners by the chaplaincy staff and volunteers. A diverse programme of faith services, faith festivals and non-faith related events were available in a comfortable environment.

All new prisoners were seen within 24 hours by a member of the chaplaincy team. Courses run by the chaplaincy included bereavement and restorative justice. Prisoners who are due to leave are invited to participate in the Making Connections programme, which encourages them to prepare for release and to develop plans for life beyond prison.

#### **5.6 Incentive schemes**

The perception from some prisoners and staff was that the distinction was not clear between prisoners on the standard level and those on the enhanced level of the incentives scheme. Prisoners frequently told the Board that the issuing of incentive scheme privileges was inconsistent and unfair.

#### **5.7 Complaints**

During the year, the Board received monthly data from the prison on its performance in responding to prisoner complaints. The Board studied these data alongside IMB

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<sup>3</sup> The framework prisons use for delivering the process of managing a prisoner throughout their custodial sentence. It is comprised of two parts: case management (assessment, planning, progressing and plans for release) and key work (support available from staff who are dedicated key workers).



applications and found the themes broadly similar. The Prisons and Probations Ombudsman (now - Independent Prisoner Complaint Investigations/IPCI) upheld one complaint on property and partially upheld one other (on adjudications, disciplinary hearings held when a prisoner is alleged to have broken prison rules).

Following improvement last year, the timeliness of the prison's response to complaints fell during the summer, with only 44% responded to on time in August, but this had improved to 87% by the end of the reporting year. Sample monitoring by Board members suggested that most complaints were responded to in a timely and courteous way, but a small number remained unanswered for significant periods.

The Board is concerned about the time taken by some other prisons to respond to prisoners' complaints, particularly about property on transfer.

## **5.8 Property**

Reception was frequently closed during the reporting year due to staff being cross-deployed to other departments. This situation improved significantly over the last few months of the period under review.

The Prisoners' Property Policy Framework (PPPF) was introduced in September 2022, detailing volumetric control allowances. Despite this, prisoners still often arrived with either incomplete personal items, an excess of items or property cards that were not comprehensive. There continued to be cases where the property left at a previous prison did not arrive at Send within the four weeks stipulated in the PPPF. In some cases, the retrieval of property took several months.

Delays in the issue of 'hand-ins' (articles that are allowed to be provided to a prisoner by family or friends) have been reported to the Board. These have partly been caused by the absence of a sniffer dog to detect illicit items. The typical delay was 14 days, but the backlog was reduced significantly towards the end of the reporting year.

The Board received 24 applications about property related issues arising within the establishment over the reporting year, and 30 concerning property during transfer, with most of these linked to transfers from HMP Bronzefield.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Primary healthcare**

From feedback provided by prisoners, the Board believes the provision of primary healthcare services has, largely, been good.

The Board noted that, for the reporting year, there were 51 complaints submitted to the prison about healthcare and a number of complaints submitted direct to healthcare. Due to the confidential nature, the Board has no knowledge of the content of these complaints or the outcome.

The Board received 30 healthcare-related applications in 2023-2024, two-thirds of which were in the first five months.

On a number of occasions, prisoners told members of the Board that some nursing staff were rude. This was reported to the healthcare unit, which advised the Board that they would investigate this situation. No further complaints of this nature were received towards the end of the reporting year.

Some prisoners reported to the prison that they sometimes felt threatened by other prisoners when sitting in the healthcare waiting room. In response, the prison organised for an officer to supervise the waiting room, although the Board observed that this did not always happen.

An early days in custody (EDiC) process was developed in July for new arrivals, whereby patients should be seen by healthcare within 72 hours. Large numbers of arrivals in 2024 meant that this target was not always met.

There was a well-attended wellness day in December 2023. Prisoners spoke positively about the initiative but felt that 30 minutes was insufficient time to take advantage of the opportunities offered.

Send provides on-site healthcare between 7.15am and 6.15pm on weekdays and 7.15am to 5.15pm at weekends. Waiting times for treatments were sometimes prolonged due to a lack of staff. A new GP service commenced during the reporting year, with sessions increased to seven per week. Waiting times for dental treatment decreased during 2023-2024, with the introduction of four sessions each week, and the recruitment of a dental therapist. Waiting times for X-rays decreased with the introduction of a visiting mobile X-ray and ultrasound unit.

Any prisoner who is offered a breast-screening examination outside the prison undergoes a risk assessment prior to the appointment to establish whether there will be the use of an escorting chain or a cuff to an officer during the examination. In the reporting year, those prisoners who were unwilling to undertake such an intimate examination with the possibility of being chained or cuffed, chose to forgo screening. Some appointments for screening were offered at HMP Bronzefield, but many prisoners declined to go to Bronzefield for this examination.

During the reporting year, healthcare, together with the gym and kitchens, continued to co-ordinate an initiative to tackle obesity. A mid-year report by the multidisciplinary group identified that 48% of prisoners at Send were classed as obese and a significant percentage were overweight. A dietician appointed in August 2023 runs a clinic one afternoon a week to diagnose and treat nutritional issues. Since November

2023, there has been no follow-up to ascertain whether obesity levels continue to rise or whether the initiative to tackle obesity has been a success.

Public Health England (PHE) calculates that the provision of a healthy diet costs £5.99 per day; this contrasts with the prison budget of £2.70 per day, which has remained unchanged during the reporting year, despite the recent inflationary rises in food cost.

## **6.2 Mental healthcare**

The mental health in-reach team supports approximately 25% of the prison population. Staffing difficulties led to the suspension of a programme of 'rolling therapies' in which prisoners participated in sessions on, for example, emotional eating or managing emotions. Access to some psychological therapy remained a concern, again due to staffing issues, with 11 out of 12 months flagged red (more than 18 weeks) for wait times. All of the six positions in neurodiversity team, including the learning disabilities lead, were vacant at the end of the reporting period, although two roles were in the process of being filled.

Screening for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) assessments are undertaken on arrival at Send but not always immediately. The increasing frequency with which prisoners arrive late in the afternoon and on Fridays has resulted in screening delays. There are also delays arising from a shortage of external assessors for ASD and ADHD.

Since November 2023, no psychiatrist regularly attends Send and the prison relied on one remote session per week with a consultant forensic psychiatrist.

## **6.3 Exercise, time out of cell, gym**

The Board has observed that the prison works hard to ensure that prisoners are out of their cells as much as possible, in order to engage in a variety of activities. By the end of the reporting year, the prison reported that about 90% of prisoners were engaged in purposeful activity.

The gym provides a valuable service to prisoners and the Park Run on Saturday mornings continued to be very popular.

## **6.4 Drug rehabilitation**

Drug rehabilitation is managed by The Forward Trust. Approximately 140 prisoners were engaged in programmes at the end of the reporting year.

## **6.5 Soft skills**

The reporting year saw the provision of a variety of activities to help promote the wellbeing of prisoners. One example was the art course run by Watts Gallery. This offered prisoners the opportunity to show and sell works in the annual exhibition organised by the gallery and held in the prison.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

Education is provided by Milton Keynes College (MKC). The prison reported that it was engaging consistently with about 25% of the population, due to competition with many other activities, including psychological interventions. Prisoners are screened on arrival to assess educational needs, with about 20% requiring additional support.

The Board observed various classes throughout the year: prisoners appeared engaged, and the tutors seemed to have a good rapport with the learners. As in previous reporting years, the Board would like to see more prisoners engaged in education.

The Board is concerned that there is no comprehensive strategy to tackle functional skills, a view supported by an annual support visit (ASV) by HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) in December 2023. This means that some prisoners have not improved their English and maths whilst at Send.

MKC has started to roll out a reading strategy across the prison. At the end of the reporting year, it was not fully implemented and there had been no measurement of impact.

An unaccredited English literacy course was created to target the higher-level learners who already held a Level 2 qualification in functional skills English and wished to progress their skills.

The English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) tutor has been replaced with a qualified ESOL peer lead.

The Board received comments from prisoners about the lack of technology at Send. The Board continues to highlight the lack of progress in the provision of IT at Send and concludes, again, that the prison is failing to prepare prisoners for life in a digital society. In previous years, we have urged HMPPS to speed up the plans to implement in-cell technology but can see no evidence that anything is likely in the foreseeable future.

A new librarian started in November. Prisoners on the largest wing only had mobile library access for the first 10 months of the year. About 70% of the prison population borrowed items from the library each month.

The continued lack of a computer in the library made issuing items a laborious procedure and accurate stock taking was not possible. The Board has been told the computer is ready but that the library provider, Surrey Libraries, has still (for over a year) not purchased the required licences.

### **7.2 Vocational training, work**

Vocational training is provided by MKC and other providers, with course provision directed by the prison. Prisoners have commented positively to the Board about courses, such as the barista course, and work areas that teach them new skills and prepare them for employment. However, during the reporting period, the barista course was discontinued, partly due to the tutor leaving but also related to concerns about the course management. It was replaced by a full-time art course, which was

identified through a needs' analysis survey. Courses with qualifications are offered in horticulture, hairdressing and business administration.

There have been persistent comments from prisoners regarding local pay levels, which, they report, are lower than in other women's prisons. Given the increase in cost of items on canteen, the spending power of prisoners has been seriously eroded.

Most prisoners are initially allocated to kitchens or gardens for work. The ASV stated that this does not always meet long-term aspirations. Staff spoke about some prisoners not wanting to engage with their allocated role.

### **7.3 Offender management, progression**

There were staff shortages within the OMU throughout the reporting year and these affected services to prisoners, although the OMU staff are knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of individual prisoners and their needs. The prison put in place bookable prison offender manager (POM) surgeries to help mitigate the lack of POMs. Also, a remote POM was employed to complete offender assessment system (OASys) assessments for those prisoners who arrived from other prisons without an up-to-date OASys.

The prison's reducing reoffending strategy for the reporting year emphasised the importance of ROTL. However, during the year, only two prisoners had ROTL placements in the community, and eight had placements in the staff mess and outside grounds. The number of prisoners eligible for ROTL during the reporting year varied between four and 15. The pressure from HMPPS to move eligible prisoners to open prisons had an impact on the ROTL numbers.

There were three IPP prisoners at the end of the reporting year. One has served 14 years over the original tariff of two and a half years and has had their parole decision overturned twice by the Secretary of State. A second has served eight years over tariff. The third had a tariff expiry date of 2010 and was first released in 2017 but has since been recalled three times. The Board continues to believe that the continued detention, and repeated recalls of IPP prisoners for relatively small breaches of licence conditions, is unfair and inhumane.

### **7.4 Family contact**

The prison increased the number of social visitor slots from 45 to 60 per week in the final quarter of the reporting year, in line with the increase in the number of prisoners. Train strikes, inclement weather and motorway roadworks affected take up for some weeks, but from August onwards at least 80% of slots were filled almost every week. Extended family and 'lifer' social visit days also proved popular, and prison staff put in considerable effort to arrange these.

Social video calls remained a popular option, with 40 slots a week: between 22 and 39 of these were taken up each week.

Four prisoners went out on child resettlement leave during the reporting year.

### **7.5 Resettlement planning**

A total of 88 prisoners were released from Send during the reporting year and over 90% had accommodation on their first night (89% for 2022-2023). Approved

premises (which provide intensive supervision for those who present a high or very high risk of serious harm) were the most common accommodation. There is no reliable evidence about longer-term accommodation outcomes.

The Board observed OMU's monthly inter-departmental risk management meetings at which it plans for the release of high-risk prisoners from eight months before release. The detailed consideration that was given to each prisoner was impressive. However, the shortage of COMs continues to make it difficult to plan effectively and impacts on progression and release planning.

The employment hub, which aims to make prisoners 'work ready', has enabled 73 prisoners to obtain bank accounts and identification documents, such as birth certificates and driving licences, ready for release. Lack of staff and limited digital connectivity meant there was little provision in place between June and October. There was one 'work ready' course offered in May, but the hub has not yet achieved the Government's aim of replicating a Job Centre. The small number of prisoners released from Send each year makes it difficult to get many large employers to engage with the prison. Data for February 2024 showed only 6% of released prisoners had employment after six weeks, although the figure was 23% after six months.

## The work of the IMB

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	12
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	12
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	11
Total number of visits to the establishment	325

### Total Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year	%	Current reporting year	%
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	6	3%	19	7%
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	13	7%	15	6%
C	Equality	8	4.5%	13	5%
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	10	6%	16	6%
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	24	14%	24	9%
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	1	1%	22	8%
F	Food and kitchens	8	4.5%	11	4%
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	21	12%	30	11%
H1	Property within the establishment	18	10%	24	9%
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	17	10%	30	11%
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	1	1%	5	2%
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, re-categorisation	20	12%	19	7%
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	11	6%	17	6%
K	Transfers	5	3%	4	1%
L	Miscellaneous	10	6%	21	8%
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>173</b>		<b>270</b>	

## **Annex A**

### **Service providers**

- Maintenance: Gov Facility Services Limited (GFSL)
- Education: Milton Keynes College
- Escort contractor: Serco
- Healthcare and pharmacy: Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Foundation Trust (with support from other providers for dentistry, optometry, physiotherapy, podiatry and other services)
- Mental health: CNWL NHS Foundation Trust
- Substance misuse programme: The Forward Trust
- Social Care: Surrey County Council
- Visitors' centre: Prisoner advice and care trust (PACT)
- Resettlement support: the Probation Service





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