



# **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMP/YOI Chelmsford**

**For reporting year  
1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025**

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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, every part of the prison, and 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 IMB is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

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

Prisoners have been held at this site since 1825. The original prison (A to D wings) was built on the traditional 'spokes of a wheel' design, with three storeys.

Two new residential units were added in 1996 (E and F wings), and a third (G wing) was opened in 2006. There are a variety of other facilities, including a 12-bed healthcare centre, educational facilities, a gym and artificial grass sports pitch, multi-faith room, library, kitchen, laundry, various workshops, visitors' centre, and coffee shop, plus a variety of offices housing prison and agency staff.

The care and separation unit (CSU), where prisoners are kept apart from the rest of the prison population, is on A wing, while vulnerable prisoners have separate accommodation on G wing (supplemented by use of the third floor of B wing). E-wing houses the drug and alcohol treatment programme, and B wing is the 'first-night' wing and induction unit.

HMP Chelmsford is a category B local prison (which houses prisoners who do not require maximum security but still pose a significant risk to the public) serving local courts, and holds those who are sentenced, on remand (held in custody while awaiting trial or sentencing) or on trial. It houses adult and young adult prisoners, and some foreign national prisoners.

At the end of the reporting year, the prison's operational capacity, or OpCap (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) was 660<sup>1</sup>. HCRG Care Group (also known as CRG Medical) was the main health care provider, subcontracting substance misuse services to charity, Forward Trust. Time for Teeth was commissioned separately to provide dental services.

The Government-owned facilities management company, GFSL (Gov Facility Services Limited), was responsible for the maintenance of the prison.

In February 2025, a new No.1 Governor was appointed. In March 2025, a new No.2 Governor was appointed.

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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**

#### **Background to the report**

As a category B local prison, HMP Chelmsford houses prisoners who are sent directly from courts in the south Essex area (sentenced, on remand or on trial). Depending on the length of sentence and the individual prisoner's security category (established after initial assessment), it is possible a convicted prisoner may spend his entire sentence at Chelmsford. However, the majority will not. The prison population constantly changes, because of transfers to other establishments and releases, so stability is difficult to achieve. For example, the average time a prisoner stays at HMP Chelmsford, post sentencing, is 12 days. Since the Covid pandemic, the focus of HMP Chelmsford has shifted from being a prison predominately holding sentenced prisoners to one mainly holding remanded/unsentenced prisoners. At the end of the reporting year, 71% were unsentenced, with a further 19% sentenced but having outstanding charges. The remainder were sentenced.

#### **3.1 Main findings**

##### **Safety**

There were three deaths in custody during the reporting year: one each in October 2024, March 2025 and August 2025.

The number of incidents of self-harm was lower than in the previous reporting year, although, in the Board's view, 884 incidents is still high. It should be noted that the vast majority were classed as being of minor severity, and most were carried out by a small number of prisoners. The number of violent incidents has fallen for the third year running. In our judgement, the prison is a safe place for most of the prisoners, for most of the time.

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

Overcrowding is the main issue. Two prisoners jammed into a cell designed for one person is a recipe for constant problems.

The Board has serious concerns about the processes for safeguarding prisoners' property (particularly during intra-Chelmsford moves). However, this is mitigated somewhat by the instigation of regular runs to other prisons to deliver 'lost' property.

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

Healthcare-related IMB applications (prisoners' written representations to the Board), also referred to as 'apps', remain the most common, even though their number fell by 25% from the previous year.

The importance of the gym in maintaining the physical and mental wellbeing of prisoners cannot be overstated. The facilities at HMP Chelmsford are very good and the staff are excellent, in the Board's view. The gym is understandably a pride-point at the prison.

##### **Progression and resettlement**

Family visits are vital in maintaining prisoner morale. The visitors' centre is very well organised, which is appreciated by prisoners. Monthly children's social visits were popular, enabling 20 prisoners to receive visits from one adult and any number of

children under 16, with play equipment provided throughout the hall. Central booking also seems to be working well, making it easier for loved ones to book a visit.

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

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

- Overcrowding is the root cause of many issues in our prisons. Urgent action is needed to address this serious problem. What specific and immediate action will the Minister take to tackle this serious problem and make it your highest priority?
- Many prisoners entering prison have mental health problems - some of them severe - and they urgently need care in a specialist unit. However, there are not enough secure places to meet the needs of the prison population, creating a 'log-jam' in local healthcare units, where facilities are taken up by prisoners who should be elsewhere. This obviously impacts on prison staff - especially those in the CSU - who are forced to deal with very mentally unwell individuals daily. What immediate steps will the Minister take to increase the availability of secure specialist mental health units, reduce the pressure on local healthcare facilities, and ensure prison staff are not left managing severely unwell individuals without adequate support?

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

- Launchpad has been a great success in allowing prisoners to check and verify personal information. Will the Prison Service commit to adding a feature so prisoners can book and manage their medical appointments? If so, what timeline do you anticipate for implementation?
- Body worn video camera (BWVC) footage (video and audio) is a huge benefit to internal investigations, but it is only evidential when continuous. If video cannot be shown, such as, for example, for modesty reasons, the audio must remain uninterrupted to be used as proof. Will the Prison Service make this standard practice for all departments, functions, and all officers? And, if so, when?

#### ***TO THE GOVERNOR***

- The Board commends the No.1 Governor and the Deputy for carrying on the excellent work done by their predecessors. While challenges remain at HMP Chelmsford, the prison has achieved significant improvements since being placed under Urgent Notification in August 2021.
- Applications to the Board fell by 23% during the reporting year. This reduction, compared with the previous year, is attributed to several factors:
  - The ongoing impact of Launchpad, which enabled prisoners to quickly find answers to their concerns.
  - Fewer accommodation issues, such as the discontinuation of using damp cells in B wing.
  - Improvements in laundry facilities, including upgraded on-wing washing and drying machines.
  - A decrease in sentencing and transfer issues.
  - Enhanced opportunities for training and education.

Despite the reduction, the number of applications handled by the Board was still the second highest on record.

## Evidence sections 4 – 7

### 4. Safety

#### 4.1 Reception and induction

The Board noted that officers in reception generally had a positive attitude to their job and we received little feedback from prisoners regarding safety concerns.

Although the incident described below was certainly not typical of working practices in reception, it is worth noting, as it shows how problems can arise through thoughtlessness or lack of care.

On a weekday in January 2025, IMB members visited reception at around 2pm and saw five prisoners in a holding cell. The prisoners complained about their treatment, as they had not had anything to eat since breakfast. The Board learned that a late-running bus (operated by Serco, the private company contracted to provide prisoner transport) - which was being used to transfer them out of HMP Chelmsford - was carrying their lunches as is the usual process. Reception officers confirmed the prisoners had not been fed. The Board was later able to confirm with the kitchen manager that he would have been able to provide food if reception officers had made a request on behalf of the five hungry prisoners.

The Board was aware that, due to challenges of scheduling, some vulnerable prisoners (VPs) occasionally had to wait a couple of weeks for their prison induction. This resulted in those prisoners complaining that they were unable to attend education or other meaningful activity. We also received complaints from some prisoners about not being allowed to go to education or other meaningful activity. For many of the complainants, it was because they had chosen not to complete the induction process, thereby disqualifying themselves from obtaining a job or education. In some cases, officers had not made it clear that induction was a prerequisite, while in others the prisoners simply hadn't listened. Once brought to light, these issues were easy to rectify.

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

There were three deaths in custody during the reporting period.

Self-harm data	Recorded incidents in the reporting year	Recorded incidents in the previous reporting year
Total self-harm incidents	848	884
Average number of prisoners re-harming per month	11.1	14.5
Total number of incidents by prisoners who re-harmed	643	656

Method of self-harm		
Ligature	276	184
Cutting	233	383
Scratches	113	161
Other	224	156

There were 848 self-harm incidents in the reporting year, a 4% reduction compared with previous year. During the reporting year, there was a shift in the method of self-harm, from cutting and scratching to ligaturing. This shift was largely driven by the banning of razors within the prison. When the Board randomly picked one reporting month (April 2025) and reviewed the ligature incidents, we were satisfied that, in virtually all the incidents, there was little risk to the prisoner.

Notwithstanding this reduction in self-harming, the Board considers 848 self-harm incidents to be high. The Board does, though, acknowledge both that the vast majority - 72% - of self-harm was assessed as being 'low severity' and that towards the end of the reporting year, the overall number of self-harm incidents was trending significantly lower.

Further, the greatest proportion of self-harm - 643 incidents - was conducted by a limited number of repeat self-harmers (averaging 11.1 in each month). This meant that, on average, 1.6% of prisoners accounted for 76% of all self-harm in the prison.

To enable this reduction, prison managers:

- Adhered to the early days in custody approach, improving support to new prisoners.
- Increased focus on self-harmers entering the prison.
- Increased the number of vulnerable prisoners under constant supervision.
- Stepped up the focus on prisoners who needed extra support, i.e., those who had recently been in care.
- Put in place discussion and team building groups and forums.
- Kept a close eye on debt issues, etc.

It is also believed that Launchpad (see 5.8) and its distraction games have helped reduce incidents of acquisition-related issues, which are a known trigger for self-harm at HMP Chelmsford.

The number of assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) plans (used to support prisoners at risk of self-harm and suicide) opened each month averaged 77, which was down 3% compared with the previous reporting year.



### 4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

	Recorded incidents in the reporting year	Recorded incidents in the previous reporting year
Prisoner-on-prisoner violence	203	195
Prisoner-on-staff violence	143	167

In the table, above, compiled using the prison's statistics, the number of incidents of prisoner-on-prisoner violence increased by 4%, the first increase in four years. The number of prisoner-on-staff violent incidents fell 14%. The Board notes that the prison has continued to use full control and restraint (C&R) techniques for planned moves as a strategy to reduce violence towards officers. Data suggests this is working.

The Board regularly observed the prison's monthly safer custody and violence reduction meeting, which were extremely well-attended by a strong and wide-ranging cross-departmental group. This group discussed violence, self-harm and ACCTs, etc, and continued to use feedback from the Samaritans and prisoners who are Listeners (prisoners trained by the Samaritans to offer confidential peer support). The focus of the meeting was monthly performance. The Board believes that this meeting should also look at longer-term trends to highlight areas that need special attention, so identifying whether actions undertaken have had the anticipated effect. We would also like to see the meeting adopt a more forward-looking focus (i.e. what actions are planned).

Applications to the Board about staff and prisoner concerns increased from 13% of those received in the previous reporting year to 17% in this reporting year. In the Board's view, the number of complaints about staff is too high. Most generally related to verbal abuse and poor attitude. The Board received complaints about harassment and bullying by officers and reported the worst cases to senior managers. We take particular notice when we receive complaints from several prisoners about the same member of staff. We would like to commend prison management for acting on our reports.

In common with many other UK prisons, gang culture continued to be an issue at HMP Chelmsford. The prison's proximity to London exacerbates the problem. C and F wings are the most affected, and prisoners are rarely moved between the two. Mass moves can also be challenging to organise. From the Board's observations, we believe that staff at all levels mostly do a good job of containing violence and other gang-related issues.

The examples below illustrate that, although rare, things can go wrong, underscoring the need for prison staff to remain constantly vigilant.

- In October 2024, a prisoner on a special regime in C wing was able to gain access to F wing, where he attacked another prisoner. Following attendance at the visitors' centre, the C wing prisoner had been allowed to return to C wing unescorted. However, the prisoner chose, instead, to go to F wing. An F wing officer mistook him for another prisoner and let him in. Once in, the C wing

prisoner had immediately spotted his target and attacked him. Fortunately, no major physical harm was done to the F wing prisoner.

- In May 2025, a senior member of staff was seriously assaulted in the care and separation unit, or CSU (which houses prisoners temporarily removed from the general population). A prisoner saw the member of staff was in the servery and, in the 'blink of an eye', rushed through an open door to launch the assault. Officers reacted quickly, but by then the damage had been done.

#### 4.4 Use of force (UoF)

	Recorded incidents in the reporting year	Recorded incidents in the previous reporting year
Use of force with C&R	330	397
Use of force without C&R	650	622
Total use of force incidents	980	1,019

The openness of the bi-weekly use of force review group, chaired by the Deputy Governor and observed by the Board, continued through the year. The Deputy Governor continued to actively seek IMB input and feedback on the videos of UoF incidents, and the IMB was able to request footage of specific incidents they wished to review. This worked well from the Board's perspective, with senior management using appropriate incidents to both praise officers and demonstrate opportunities for improvement.

Body worn video cameras (BWVCs) and video camcorders play a critical role in the objective analysis of incidents. They provide high-quality visual and audio recordings, and BWVC footage captures the moments leading up to, and during, an event. Staff should be encouraged to activate BWVCs at the earliest opportunity in response to incidents, or pre-emptively where a prisoner is known to be violent. Where an incident occurs during activities such as a full prisoner body search, a use of force (UoF) event, or similar situations, staff should be encouraged to keep BWVCs activated until the incident is fully resolved. If activation is required throughout a search, the camera should be positioned to capture audio only, so preserving the dignity of the prisoner.

In the table, above, which is based on the prison's statistics, the number of use of force incidents fell by 4%, marking the first decrease in three years. Notably, there was an increase in incidents involving use of force without full control and restraint (C&R) techniques. This rise was likely due to a greater number of inexperienced staff resorting to physical interventions - such as guiding holds - sooner than their more experienced colleagues. Despite the prison's shift in the reporting year towards using full C&R, as a strategy to reduce assaults on officers, the number of incidents involving full C&R still fell by 17%. At 330 incidents, this is the lowest annual total in recent history. It is also worth noting that HMP Chelmsford continues to have one of the highest rates nationally for use of force incidents when prisoners fail to follow instructions. The Board considers

UoF (non-full C&R) to be high. The Board is, therefore, encouraged by the roll-out to all officers of five-minute intervention (FMI) training (which teaches prison staff to use short, purposeful conversations - lasting around five minutes - to build rapport, reduce tension and encourage positive behaviour).

The Board would like to note two issues: one positive and one negative.

- Experienced officers regularly demonstrated commendable effort in de-escalating tense situations, such as when a cell was barricaded and/or the observation panel was covered. By using verbal de-escalation, they were able to move prisoners compliantly, prioritising safety and minimising the need for force. This approach benefited both staff and prisoners and is acknowledged as good practice by the Board.
- While the Board understands that HMP Chelmsford's management has little choice in the matter, we remain frustrated by the practice of forcibly transferring prisoners to other establishments just days before their release. This is done to create space for new arrivals from local courts. Such moves can be highly disruptive and distressing, especially for prisoners who have mental health issues.

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

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

Overcrowding is always the most significant issue within HMP Chelmsford and we, again, report that nothing has changed in the last 12-months. A significant - and constantly changing - number of prisoners shared cells designed for one.

Accommodation in E, F and G wings remained reasonable, but the old Victorian wings - A, B, C and D - continued to be a cause for concern.

In February 2025, staff on D wing, which houses 63 prisoners, gradually began moving out prisoners in preparation for much-needed fire safety improvements throughout the prison. Over 10 weeks, the prisoners were gradually decanted to other wings. This process was well handled by the CM in charge and went off with only a few issues. The fire safety work was due to begin on 7 April 2025 but was delayed. Then management was instructed to re-open D wing for a minimum of eight weeks, due to continuing population pressures across the whole prison estate. Again, this was achieved with minimum disruption. D wing was again closed in July 2025 so that work could finally begin.

The roll-out of the Launchpad platform (which provides secure laptops in prisoners' cells, enabling access to a range of digital services and content) made a real difference to the lives of many prisoners. Every prisoner we spoke to said the system made a positive impact on their lives. One said he liked the ability to sort out issues for himself. Another said he enjoyed not having to be reliant on officers. The Board was aware that an increasing amount of data and self-help information was available. We noticed that apps about PINs (personal identification numbers, which allow prisoners to make phone calls, etc), canteen (the system that allows prisoners to purchase items, such as snacks and toiletries, using money from their prison account), ordering food, questions related to sentencing and transfers, etc, fell dramatically and such issues were rare. Launchpad handled around 10,000 prisoner requests a month.

We understand that HMP Chelmsford is part of a pilot programme for Launchpad and the Board would like to endorse the expansion of the scheme into other prisons.

From February 2025, prisoners were able to order clothing and footwear directly from external retail sports companies. While this was a welcome addition, the ordering system was a little unwieldy, as product codes needed to be obtained from prisoners' family.

In July 2025, the prison allowed prisoners to have books sent in by family members, subject to certain conditions. For a small number of prisoners, this had been an issue going back around 18 months, and it was good to see a resolution.

At the end of April 2025, it was reported that rats were, again, seen around the prison. The fact that this issue was quickly stamped on was entirely due to the No.1 Governor's quick actions and taking the matter extremely seriously. The Board received no verbal or written complaints on this issue, unlike the previous outbreak a few years ago.

B wing, the first night in custody wing, had problems with damp, caused by cracks in the B3's showers and roof vents not fully closing, which allowed rainwater to enter. In September 2024, damp saw a dozen B wing cells withdrawn from use. Also, in what seemed a perennial problem, the cell phones were not working.

During February 2025, the Board received an application from a B wing prisoner. He claimed that, on arrival on the wing, he was given no supplies, his bedding was torn, he had no in-cell phone and he couldn't get a phone PIN or order canteen items.

F wing had some issues in September 2024 when Gov Facility Services Limited (GSFL) reported that they were replacing the floors in 15 cells, as the existing flooring material began breaking up.

Despite it being winter 2024-2025, prisoners on F wing consistently complained about excessive heat, caused by vents blasting out hot air. One prisoner reported that he soaked towels at night and wrapped them around hot pipes to keep down the temperature. This issue was still ongoing in March 2025 and continued until the heating was turned off in May 2025. The main problem appeared to be that, for safety reasons, the temperature could not be altered, as water temperature and boiler temperature need to be the same: 70°F.

Food rarely featured in written applications but was a frequent topic in verbal feedback. The kitchens provided more than 700,000 meals in the reporting year on a budget of £3.01 per prisoner, per day. The Board knows there were some complaints but, overall, they think the food quality is reasonable, given the budget limits. Some prisoners said they don't get enough fruit and vegetables, and others asked for more bread, because it helps them 'feel full'.

This, though, doesn't mean there were no problems. In March 2025, the Board was made aware there had been an issue with the handling of halal food. A month earlier, pork products were accidentally served as halal. The prison management quickly apologised for this error. The Board spoke with the Imam about the halal food issue. He believed that the prison was doing all it could to manage the separation and cleaning of pans. The situation, though, could have been greatly improved had two additional brat pans (large, heavy-duty cooking appliances used in commercial kitchens for preparing big batch meals) been operational earlier. The pans had arrived at the prison in November 2024, but were not immediately connected to the electrics. By late April 2025, the additional pans were connected, enabling the kitchens to run two pans exclusively for halal food and non-halal. Over this period, the Board had several conversations with prisoners who were concerned about Halal food preparation and serving. The addition of the new pans brought those conversations to an acceptable end.

The cleaning of clothing, bedding, etc, at HMP Chelmsford is achieved through two laundry processes: the main central laundry, where bedding and towels are washed; and the individual wing laundries, where prisoner's personal clothing and property and, from December 2024, prison 'grey' clothing were washed. The main issues were with the central laundry, where the ongoing issues can be traced to one overriding factor - the unreliability of the boiler. The boiler is fixed, only to break down again soon after, a pattern that has been frustratingly repeated over many years.

As an example, in May the boiler was taken out of commission for repairs and de-scaling. Six weeks later it was still not back online, causing major issues.

It appears the boiler problems were not helped by lack of consistent maintenance by GFSL.

Two IMB members visited the laundry on 17 June 2025 and reported that '... the boiler has been decommissioned and has not been working for the past six weeks. We

observed sacks and sacks of stinking clothing and bags of blankets that were covered in black mould spores. The place smelled terrible, and laundry was overflowing. The laundry manager advised us that the boiler has been decommissioned, and it has been agreed for laundry to be sent to HMP Ranby in Nottinghamshire. Originally, the No.1 Governor was concerned that items would be lost, however there is such a backlog of laundry it needs to be sent out. Prisoners were washing some clothing on the wings, but the backlog is too much. Prisoners are now working in the laundry to pack up the bags, although none were present at the time. The situation was appalling and the IMB were shocked. This will be reported to the Governor.'

As for wing laundry, in December 2024, action was taken by upscaling the wing washing machines and dryers and taking out a 24/7 maintenance contract with a company.

Sometimes, though, things didn't go smoothly. In February 2025, a Board member visiting C wing found that the washing machines weren't working. When maintenance staff came to fix them, no one was available to escort them to the wing, so the repair couldn't happen.

That said, overall, the Board believes the new, more industrial-type wing machines have improved prisoners' lives, although recognition should also be given to the wing laundry orderlies (trusted prisoners who take on work to provide services that contribute to the running of the prison), who often demonstrate an outstanding commitment to their fellow prisoners.

## **5.2 Segregation**

The care and separation unit (CSU) accommodates prisoners held in cellular confinement as a punishment following adjudication (a disciplinary hearing when a prisoner is alleged to have broken prison rules), and those who are moved from the normal wings to maintain good order and/or discipline (GOoD), or for their own safety. Many of the prisoners who are held in the CSU are violent and/or vulnerable, and present considerable challenges to the officers who care for them.

The Board had no significant concerns, and we had very few complaints from prisoners in the unit, even though the accommodation - being in the old Victorian part of the prison - leaves a lot to be desired and was very cold in winter, especially on the 1s (the ground floor of the wing)

The Board believes that many prisoners who ended up in the CSU should not have even been in prison, suffering, as they were, from severe mental issues. The lack of beds in secure mental hospitals has a direct impact on the prison system, with officers being forced daily to deal with very sick prisoners.

Prisoners smashing up, setting fire to, or flooding their cell was a, seemingly, constant issue, meaning cells were often out of use for a short while, putting even more pressure on staff. Dirty protests (where a prisoner has chosen to defecate or urinate in a cell without using the facilities provided) were also a fact of life in the CSU, an unpleasant problem for everyone concerned. In June 2025, one prisoner was so disruptive - smashing up his cell and self-harming - that staff were forced to place him in a body belt, the first time this apparatus had been used at HMP Chelmsford in 25 years.

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

The Board noted there was a change during the reporting year with regard to the focus of the key worker (KW) strategy. The focus of the previous two years was on the number of KW sessions reported by staff. We have evidence that this drove some KW sessions to be contrived, with some being little more than a brief conversation, as officer and prisoner passed each other on a wing.

In 2024, we saw the focus shift from concentrating on the number of KW sessions to the more nuanced view of prioritising prisoners who most needed help:

- Prisoners on an assessment, care in custody and teamwork documents, or ACCTs (those at high risk of self-harm or suicide).
- Those on challenge, support, and intervention plans, or CSIPs (higher risk of violence).
- Individuals with complex needs.
- Those aged 18-21 years.
- Care leavers.
- Those under 25 years of age.
- Prisoners who are self-isolating.
- People with limited reading ability.
- Prisoners who are repeat self-harmers.

This focused key working on around 100 prisoners. From November 2024, the Board had no complaints from prisoners or officers about the key worker process. That said, we are disappointed that the target was to see these 'most vulnerable' prisoners only once per month.

On 11 July 2025, staff and prisoners took part in a football match organised by the senior management team wellbeing committee and the PE team. The event aimed to build better relationships, offer prisoners a positive change from routine, and encourage physical activity among both staff and prisoners. Every wing (except the healthcare unit, the vulnerable prisoner unit and the CSU) provided players. Ten prisoners played over three 20 minute 'halves' and had the opportunity to play against their own wing officers. A total of 14 officers played, with a further 15-20 watching. Prisoners on E and F wings, whose cells face the pitch, were able to watch the match from their windows and they joined in with light-hearted banter. Across the three 'halves', the prisoners won 4-2. The match was hailed a success and, due to demand from prisoners and officers, further matches are planned.

On 11 July 2025, staff and prisoners took part in a football match organised by the senior management team's wellbeing committee in partnership with the PE department. The event aimed to build better relationships, offer prisoners a positive change from their routine, and encourage physical activity among both staff and prisoners.

### **5.4 Equality and diversity**

During December 2024 and January 2025, there was a marked uptick in problems around the prison, with prisoners complaining about officers using inappropriate and potentially racist language, and bullying. Prison management was quick to act, with some officers being officially reminded of their duty and moved to other wings.

The prison celebrated Pride Month in June 2025.

The Board was pleased to note that a forum group for young black, Asian and minority ethnic prisoners has become part of the prison routine, seeking to help tackle the problems they face within the prison system.

Neurodiversity is a disorder that has become much more understood in recent years. Diagnosis at HMP Chelmsford was difficult, because a man's issues could not always be found on the healthcare system. Prisoners were flagged if they were neurodivergent using information from healthcare systems, information from NSMs at past prisons, information from inductions and from education based on initial screening and assessment.

Because of churn (the frequent movement of prisoners in and out of the prison through transfers, releases, and new admissions), it is impossible to put an exact figure on how many neurodivergent prisoners were at HMP Chelmsford during the reporting period. However, we estimate that around 21% of prisoners reported some kind of need, be it self-declared or officially diagnosed.

The Board commends HMP Chelmsford for its efforts to raise awareness and improve support for neurodiversity in the prison. To that end, during the early part of 2025, plans were put in place to make G wing Blue Spur 1s the focus for neurodivergent prisoners, supported by trained officers and processes.

Although this ambitious plan ultimately stalled, due to staffing challenges (it was not possible to maintain consistent staff on G wing) and tensions among other prisoners (the high number of neurodivergent prisoners placed an extra strain on those prisoners on the enhanced, or top, level of the prison's incentives scheme, who felt like they were relied on for support), it was, nevertheless, a bold effort.

Something good did emerge, though. It was decided to keep 10 spaces on G wing for neurodivergent prisoners with the highest level of need. They had access to a sensory room and pro-social modelling from the enhanced prisoners. This allowed for a buddy system to be created, whereby any enhanced prisoner happy to support a neurodivergent prisoner in basic day-to-day admin such as adding phone numbers and ordering canteen, could volunteer to do so.

On arrival on G wing, neurodivergent prisoners were expected to follow the same regime and behaviour expectations of other prisoners but were managed by staff who were trained in neurodiversity management techniques. After 28 days, progress was reviewed. Subsequent monthly reviews took place to decide if the prisoner stayed on G wing or moved off.

There was, generally, a shortage of cells suitable for wheelchair users. This was partly due to an increase in older prisoners entering the prison, as well as those with severe mental health issues. As there were too few secure mental hospital places, HMP Chelmsford's healthcare unit was housing prisoners who should be in specialist facilities. As a result, more wheelchair users had to be placed on the general wings, in cells that were unsuitable for their needs.

## **5.5 Faith and pastoral support**

The Board observed the visible presence of the chaplaincy team on the wings. The fact that many faiths were represented was a huge plus point. Attendance was high at services and prayer. The major Muslim festivals of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha were well supported by prison management and the Imam.



The chaplaincy building in HMP Chelmsford is very small, so much so that only a moveable curtain separates Muslim and Christian faith artefacts, moving back and forth, depending on the faith service.

## **5.6 Incentives schemes**

The incentives scheme (known colloquially as the incentives and earned privileges/IEP scheme) is designed to encourage good behaviour and participation in rehabilitation. It rewards prisoners who follow the rules, engage in work or education, and show respect to staff and others. There are, typically, three levels: basic (lowest), standard (middle) and enhanced (top). Prisoners start on standard and can move up or down, depending on their conduct. Those on enhanced status enjoy extra privileges, such as more social visits, additional time out of their rooms, or access to better jobs, while those on the basic level lose certain privileges like having a TV in their room or limited association time.

From the Board's observations, the incentives scheme is generally fairly enforced at HMP Chelmsford, although, obviously, there are still moans about its implementation. One anomaly noted by the Board happens when a man gets a 'nicking' and is slated for an adjudication. Part of that process sees him downgraded to the basic level. However, if it is subsequently decided not to proceed with the adjudication, the man does not return to his earlier status but stays on basic status, even though, officially, he has done nothing wrong. The Board understands that this process was established in 2013, after government intervention, and we believe it should be re-examined.

In the Board's opinion, the process for prisoners entering the prison on remand needs reviewing. Currently, they are required to sign a compact (a contract), agreeing to work or attend education. Failure to attend means they receive a negative incentives scheme sanction. It appears that prisoners who don't sign the compact are restricted to the legal limit of 30 minutes out of their room each day. It's easy to see why this can easily lead to confusion and frustration among prisoners.

On 25 April 2025, an amnesty was conducted on C wing, giving prisoners the chance to give up drugs or illicit items, with no consequences. The Board applauds this initiative and would like to see more like it.

## **5.7 Complaints**

The Comp 1 (ordinary) complaints system involved a prisoner completing a complaint form and relying on the 'complaints clerk' to process it in a timely fashion. Unfortunately, this often did not happen, causing issues. Some prisoners told the IMB that they had no idea whether prison managers had received their complaint. So, after, say, a month with no word, the prisoner would send in a repeat complaint, only to be told that 'repeats' were not allowed. This anomaly needs addressing, as prisoners have no way of knowing that their original Comp 1 form has been received and are bound to assume the worst if they hear nothing back. The hiring of a new complaints clerk in August 2025 appeared to have helped matters enormously.

The Board noted that healthcare complaint forms were less readily available than other types of complaint form. This has been a consistent issue over recent years and the Board believes it's time to take action. We have resorted to carrying the forms on our monitoring visits to the wings.

Complaints to the Board, in the form of applications, fell from 528 to 408 (see section 8).

When considering financial issues such as spends, credit and pay, the complexity of the subject and the sheer number of transactions make it notable that the Board received only nine applications. We believe the low number is testament to the work done by prison staff, especially given that prisoners often focus on even the smallest errors. The Board also acknowledges that, when issues did arise, they were dealt with promptly.

## **5.8 Property**

Property-related issues continued to be an issue at HMP Chelmsford. They were mainly related to:

- New parcels from family or friends getting temporarily misplaced or permanently lost.
- Loss of existing property following moves to the care and separation unit or another wing.
- Property losses related to cells or other areas not being secured.

Parcel misplacement and loss can be a huge psychological issue for prisoners, as they might doubt a partner or other family member or lose confidence in officers and the integrity of the prison's systems.

The Board's data showed that in the early part of the reporting year, i.e., from September to end November 2024 (three months), there were 11 complaints about parcels. From December (nine months), there were four.

The Board was surprised to learn that the prison failed to check delivery company data to clarify parcel issues. Royal Mail, for example, held the date and delivery time, photo of delivery, name and signature of the person who accepted the parcel. Checking this data before telling a prisoner his expected parcel was not delivered would have seemed a logical idea and the Board would have liked to see it adopted by prison staff.

The Board noted that officers and officer support grade (OSGs) staff, who opened parcels and updated property information cards, often did not work regularly in reception and officer placements varied from day to day. The Board believes this has contributed to errors and considers it an issue that requires prompt attention.

The Board highlighted its concerns about prisoners' property losses in its previous annual report: *'Once again, we would urge HMP Chelmsford to look at all the processes for moving prisoners' property between wings - and make them much more robust. The Board's experience of talking to prisoners after their property is lost during a wing move is that they feel completely let down by officers.'* We reiterate that statement here and stress the need for immediate improvement.

Here are two examples of property issues at HMP Chelmsford:

- Five weeks after arriving at HMP Chelmsford, a prisoner complained that his clothing had not been returned to him as 'promised'. The prisoner had arrived from the police station with soaking wet clothes in a plastic bag, as he had jumped in the river trying to evade capture. A reception officer said he would wash and dry the clothes and then return them. This didn't happen. Eventually, and with the IMB's prompting, the clothes were found in reception, still wet and

in the original bag. Such failures are unacceptable and underscore the importance of addressing this issue urgently.

- A prisoner had asked his wife to send in a parcel. His wife did not speak English and had difficulty understanding the process (i.e. the importance of the 'clothing sticker') and size of parcel. One parcel she sent was deemed too big and was returned to her home. So his wife made a bespoke cardboard box for the parcel and sent that in. Subsequently, the gate staff were asked three times whether the parcel had been received. Each time, they said it had not. By chance, an IMB member visited the gate and asked to look at the parcel receipt book (which is handwritten). At this point, the officer realised that, for some unknown reason, the parcel had been logged under the prisoner's number rather than their name, while the search had only been conducted by name. Subsequently, the parcel was found and delivered to the prisoner.

Despite the challenges, not everything was negative. During the reporting period, there was a marked increase in the number of runs to other prisons, delivering 'lost' property to transferred prisoners. Also, as time went on, the excellent custodial managers in reception attempted to improve complaints procedures and generally get to grips with the numerous problems.

## **6. Health and wellbeing**

### **6.1 Physical health, exercise, time out of cell, gym**

The Board noted that applications concerning healthcare fell by 25% over the reporting period. Despite this reduction, health and wellbeing was the number one issue in the prison, as reflected by written input to the Board. However, many issues fell into this category, and not all were the responsibility of the healthcare department. Of the applications the Board received in the health and wellbeing category:

- 40% related to physical health (e.g. injury treatment, exercise time, etc.)
- 21% related to appointment issues (doctor, dentist, hospital, etc.)
- 19% related to mental health or psychiatry support
- 13% related to prescription issues.
- 7% others

The Board noted that many of the health complaints we received related to issues that were easily solvable (e.g. seeing a nurse to discuss an injury dressing; getting a doctor's or mental health appointment; confirming an optician or dentist appointment; confirming a hospital waiting list; explaining an F35 issue, etc). This was due to the good working relationship the IMB had with the majority of CRG Healthcare Group staff.

The Board considered that prisoners often contacted them because healthcare complaint forms were often not readily available on the wing (see 5.7).

The Board noted that management recognised the importance of the gym in maintaining the physical and mental wellbeing of prisoners. We also noted the increased level of enthusiasm and excitement on the wing when the prisoners were waiting to go to the gym. The sense of excitement was evident and a pleasure to observe.

During the summer, a new roll-call procedure was instigated, to bring HMP Chelmsford in line with the rest of the prison estate and also to tighten up the process. The upshot of this was that counting the prisoners took much longer than before. So long, in fact, that during the process some prisoners may have moved and be counted twice. The time delay to sort out issues unsurprisingly caused problems. For example, prisoners on C wing regularly missed at least one gym session a week, due to problems with the roll call.

### **6.2 Mental health**

It is difficult to overstate the impact of mental health issues had on prison life, both for prisoners and staff. Some prisoners entering HMP Chelmsford had severe mental health problems and would have benefited from care in a specialist unit. The lack of spaces in these units meant prison staff had to cope with prisoners with extremely challenging behaviour. Disruptive behaviour caused issues not only for staff but also for the wider prison population. This was most apparent in the CSU, where staff were often forced to deal with extremely unwell individuals. One of the consequences was that often prisoners were put on constant watch after threatening to harm themselves. This used up a tremendous amount of resources.

From our observations, we were impressed with some of the interventions by the mental health team in supporting prisoners and those due to be released. They

seemed to work well with other agencies and showed great evidence of joined-up working.

It was good to see distraction packs readily available to prisoners struggling with their mental health.

The prison was constantly contending with prisoners who complained their 'mental health was affected' after not getting what they wanted. This form of unfounded 'leverage' was extremely difficult to manage.

### **6.3 Doctor and dentist visits, movement issues**

The optician visited the prison once a month and, on average, there were 30 prisoners waiting to see him. This suggests an increase in the optician's capacity would be extremely welcome.

Dentistry services were better, representing the best situation the Board had been aware of since the impact of Covid-19. The dentist visited four times each month and hosted two sessions each day. The dentist advised the Board that the morning sessions worked well but that sometimes the afternoon session were impacted by the late arrival or non-arrival of the patients. Notwithstanding any movement issues, the waiting list for a dental assessment was around 36, while those waiting for treatment averaged 18. Given that the dentist targeted eight sessions each working day, the Board had only praise for the progress in dentistry provision. A look at our applications about dentistry revealed three during the reporting year, of which two came from the same prisoner, one of which related to missing an appointment due to being on special regime, which meant it was more of a movement issue.

There were six applications about hospital appointments. The issues were:

- Prisoners forgot to advise staff or nurse at reception of an upcoming hospital appointment.
- Once an appointment was missed without warning, the NHS treatment cycle was then deemed to have ended.
- Prisoners had a set treatment plan, but it wasn't provided by an Essex hospital close to HMP Chelmsford.

The Board noted the success of Launchpad in allowing prisoners to check information. Enabling prisoners to check for upcoming internal medical appointments, including optician, dentistry, physiotherapy, etc, not only have helped the prisoners directly through reduced anxiety but also reassured them that the prison healthcare applications process worked.

### **6.4 Prescription issues**

During the reporting year, the Board reviewed how information on prisoners' medication had been collected and managed, following an incident in which a prisoner went four days without essential heart medication after their arrival.

At HMP Chelmsford, new prisoners were seen by a nurse in reception for an initial health screening. Pharmacy staff completed a medicines reconciliation within 72 hours, usually interviewing new arrivals at the 'pharmacy hatch'. Prisoners were asked about their current medications, allergies, and GP details. Medication that had not been taken for over three months was not automatically restarted.

As many prisoners struggled to recall details, staff prompted them about common conditions such as high blood pressure or depression. With consent, the NHS summary care record (SCR) was checked to confirm prescriptions, although incomplete data sometimes required staff to contact GPs or community pharmacies.

Information was entered into the 'SystmOne' template, and repeat prescriptions were issued by a doctor and dispensed by the pharmacist. Prisoners arriving in the evening usually received their medication the following afternoon. New or unverified medication requests triggered clinical or mental health assessments before treatment was restarted.

Following complaints from prisoners regarding changes to their prescribed medications after arrival at HMP Chelmsford, the Board reviewed the procedures for managing new arrivals. The review found the process to have been robust and carried out with appropriate consideration. It was noted that most complaints related to reduced dosages, the discontinuation of non-compatible medications, or the cessation of long-term prescriptions for sleeping tablets.

However, we were concerned that, at times, the dispensing of some medicines at was severely restricted by the fact that the healthcare centre/pharmacy unit did not operate 24 hours a day. For example, prisoners who required sleeping tablets had to take them at the dispensing hatch at around 4pm. This had an impact on both the prisoner and any cellmate, as those taking the sleeping tablets tended to wake up very early.

## **6.5 Drug issues and rehabilitation**

The Forward Trust charity provides substance misuse services: screening, assessment and treatment for drug and alcohol problems.

As explained in the latest HMIP inspection report (published in May 2024), illicit drugs were a growing concern and HMP Chelmsford was not immune.

The transient nature of HMP Chelmsford, which accommodates predominantly remand prisoners with short-term and high-turnover stays, exacerbated existing issues related to drug use.

The No.1 Governor explained in a meeting with the IMB, in January 2025, that he believed the courthouse was a potential source of drugs entering the prison.

Spice (a synthetic cannabinoid that mimics the effects of cannabis but is often much stronger and unpredictable) has been an issue throughout the reporting year. Our log reports from October 2024 show that 'spice parties' were taking place.

Mandatory drug tests (MDT) helped identify the main drugs of choice, which were cannabis and spice. C wing was the main wing for prisoner found to be under the influence (UTI), with, for example, 27 cases discovered in June 2025.

Our logs show the type of issues that senior management were up against. On 28 January 2025, we noted: *'A prisoner who uses a wheelchair was found with £5,000 of drugs and a weapon hidden in his wheelchair cushion.'* On 4 August 2025, we noted: *'Dogs found a parcel of drugs near to G wing, which had been thrown over [the prison wall].'*

From the Board's observations, prison staff were extremely vigilant during social visiting sessions, running a strict regime to help combat drug smuggling during family time.

## **7. Progression and resettlement**

### **7.1 Education, library**

In May 2025, the library manager was frustrated that staff shortages meant fewer prisoners were able to visit the library. She would usually expect 50-60 prisoners per day, but sometimes only 10 or 20 visited. An outreach service is offered, but she would prefer the prisoners to visit the library to benefit from her well-presented service.

Inexperienced prison officers caused problems, in the Board's view. In one case, an officer left a challenging prisoner alone in the library with the manager, who felt unsafe.

The Board was impressed by some initiatives, which were of great benefit to the prisoners. These included:

- Storybook Dads, where prisoners pre-record stories for their children.
- Raising Readers, where prisoners and their children select a title and a copy is given to both, enabling them to share the same story.
- Rhyme Time: a nursery rhyme session for fathers with young children.

July 2025 was the prison's reading celebration month, with activities and events around reading for both staff and prisoners, with prominent notices on walls around the prison. Also, there has been a children's art competition, where drawings were submitted from children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews, using different media, and linked to a poem or book.

'Reducing reoffending' was an initiative introduced in August 2025 for a month. On arriving in the establishment, prisoners were offered a book to read to help ease the transition into prison life.

The education provider at HMP Chelmsford was People Plus.

The Board was pleased to observe various educational courses, including graphics, business, maths and ESOL (English for speakers of other languages). ESOL is important for individuals who experience challenges with interpreter-assisted video links, as they may have difficulty understanding what is being communicated or required. With that in mind, it was extremely disappointing to discover that huge cuts to the education budgets of prisons across the UK are on their way. Ministry of Justice figures show that 57% of adult prisoners have literacy levels below those expected of an 11-year-old. That is a shocking statistic and makes the latest news even harder to understand.

Prisoners had the opportunity to enter a piece of creative art for the Koestler Awards, an annual competition run by Koestler Arts (a charity that supports creativity in prisons through arts awards and exhibitions).

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

Barista training and the barbering course were closed on 1 April 2025. The Board is hoping that barista training will return next year, as it is excellent at teaching prisoners both vocational and personal skills. Also, 'Fletcher's', where the training takes place, has a pleasant atmosphere, experienced by all.

The Board became aware that key prisoner groups experienced issues while working or training:

- Full-time workers on G wing did not have enough time to shower on returning to the wing in the afternoon. G wing had more full-time workers than other wings and is located furthest from places of employment.
- Prisoners undertaking the multi-skills training course (the highest priority training in the prison) were required to give up two gym sessions per week. This was enough for many prisoners to decline the training outright, as they seemed to choose short-term enjoyment over future societal and personal benefits.
- Prisoners working on A wing felt they were poorly treated, citing lack of gym access, limited time in the fresh air and only one weekly exercise session (often in the punishment yard). However, the Board observed the custodial manager meeting with these prisoners to hear their concerns, explain plans and outline upcoming actions.

Some of the above appear contrary to the prison strategy of focusing on positive outcomes.

A major complaint about the disparity between rates of pay for cleaners and biohazard cleaners was resolved, thanks to the persistent interventions of an IMB member. Some individuals were receiving £7 per week, having completed no cleans, whilst those located or working on A wing or in the healthcare centre received the same pay, despite completing multiple cleans. From 1 August 2025, prisoners began receiving £10 for every official bio-clean, provided they were accredited biohazard cleaners.

The polytunnel continued to produce an abundance of salads and vegetables, which supplied the kitchen but, regrettably, all eggs collected from the prison chickens were destroyed, due to the risk of salmonella.

During the reporting year, a new tutor in workshop 3 (recycling) initiated body searches of the prisoners exiting the workshop. A Board member observed her finding illicit items (such as batteries) on prisoners being taken back to their wings. The Board were very surprised that body searches had not been carried out before.

From the Board's observations, People Plus provided excellent tuition in workshops 1 and 2, located near G wing, offering courses in carpentry, plumbing, bricklaying, and painting and decorating. These courses can lead to a Level 1 qualification in construction, enabling participants to progress and specialise further. The Board noted that the prisoners were very engaged and positive about their activities.

There are different levels of achievement within the programme, with the first being recognised by a certificate after three weeks. Higher qualifications typically took around three months to complete. The workshops were well organised and laid out, and prisoners who completed their work ahead of time were encouraged to make personal projects during their spare time. Attendance was voluntary, and participants consistently reported enjoying the courses.

However, as stated above, some prisoners dropped out because they were unwilling to miss their two weekly gym sessions. The Board believes that adjusting the regime to allow for one gym session on a weekday afternoon would encourage prisoners to attend the course, even if it meant sacrificing an afternoon's pay to do so. We believe this issue is a significant source of frustration for both learners and tutors.



As referenced above (see 7.1), upcoming cuts will likely eat into the budgets of these well-established and popular courses - a significant loss for prisoners who want to learn a skill and improve their future prospects.

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

During the reporting year, external adjudications, conducted via video link in the presence of a judge, were frequently disrupted by administrative errors in paperwork and witness availability, resulting in unnecessary and frustrating adjournments. In one instance, a case was postponed because the prisoner had not received a copy of the restrictions order in advance, and the officer required to attend the hearing was unavailable. Additionally, poor sound quality on the laptop made it almost impossible for the prisoner to hear the judge; this issue was subsequently resolved by repairing the IT port and purchasing a new speaker, a step which, in the Board's view, should have been taken much earlier.

On 10 April 2025, HMP Chelmsford hosted Abdul Bangura as a guest speaker in the library. Abdul shared his story, describing how he rebuilt his life after serving five-and-a-half years in prison, initially by founding a meal preparation service before finding his niche in running an aviation services company. Abdul's visit, entitled, 'From the wing to wings', was well attended. He spoke about the importance of self-belief, second chances, and building a positive future. A member of the IMB met Abdul during his visit and was impressed by his authenticity and dedication. The Board noted the positive impact Abdul's story had on prisoners.

The Board enjoyed a very good working relationship with offender management unit (OMU) across a broad range of subjects.

### **7.4 Family contact**

The Board has been impressed by prison management's efforts to encourage prisoners in maintaining family ties. Research shows that prisoners who maintain a bond with their families and significant others are at a lower risk of re-offending.

In February 2025, the head of the reducing reoffending unit identified the need for a functional head with responsibility for overseeing the prison's Families and Significant Others (FaSO) strategy. The Board applauds this initiative.

Supervision in the visitors' centre - run, under contract, by Ormiston Families - was stepped up during the reporting year. Stricter procedures were implemented, which improved security and reduced contraband. Visitors were subject to security checks that involved scanning, body searches and the use of a sniffer dog. Prisoners were searched after using the toilets. Strict rules were enforced regarding clothing and jewellery, and bank notes were not allowed; however, Ormiston Families exchanged notes for up to £15 in £1 coins to enable visitors to purchase refreshments.

Family visits were held in the visitors' centre every afternoon except Friday, accommodating up to 26 prisoners, each of whom could receive up to three adults and three children at any one time. Additionally, a downstairs visits room has four glass-screened kiosks for no-contact visits.

Prisoners were required to remain seated throughout their visit, and, while kissing on the lips was permitted, lingering was not allowed.

Monthly children's visits were popular and well organised, enabling 20 prisoners to receive visits from one adult and any number of children or stepchildren under 16. These encouraged free interaction between prisoners and their children, with play equipment provided throughout the hall. One prisoner said these visits allowed him 'to imagine I am not in prison for a couple of hours', and visitors expressed a desire for more children's visits to be offered.

The central booking system operated efficiently and proved to be more effective than the previous in-house method.

Social video calls suffered a major issue during 2025. The staff member who managed these moved to another job. Due to an oversight, they were not replaced, causing a complete breakdown of social video calls for several months. Obviously, this denied remote families the chance to 'see' their loved ones. We are pleased to report that the issue is due to be fixed by the time this report is published.

Legal visits were conducted in one of eight individual rooms during the morning.

In July 2025, the chaplaincy team arranged an event called 'Messy Church', allowing prisoners to spend interactive time with their children inside the prison. Activities were organised and stories were read. The No.1 Governor appeared pleased with the results.

## **7.5 Resettlement planning**

Due to a lack of resources, the Board was unable to monitor all aspects of release preparation, including housing support and pre-release services. However, from our observations, we considered other areas that bolster resettlement, such as family contact, reading development, and formal and vocational education, to be very good. If prisoners had pre-release issues and came to us for help, we assisted them as best we could.

## 8. The work of the IMB

### Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	14
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	4
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	7
Total number of visits to the establishment	135
Total number of segregation (GOoD) reviews observed	3

### Applications to the IMB (apps)

Code	Subject	Current reporting year	Previous reporting year
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	41	68
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives scheme, sanctions	20	20
C	Equality	29	22
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, time out of cell	13	28
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection, restrictions	29	52
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	9	4
F	Food and kitchens	2	12
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	78	104
H1	Property within the establishment	47	43
H2	Property during transfer or in another facility	15	12
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogues	11	16
I	Sentence management, including HDC (home detention curfew), ROTL (release on temporary licence), parole, release dates, recategorisation	14	39
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	69	69
K	Transfers	1	7
L	Miscellaneous	30	32
	<b>Total number of applications</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>528</b>



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