Ministry of Justice

Catherine McKinnell MP
Minister of State for Justice

Chair, Independent Monitoring Board
HMP/YOI Askham Grange
Askham Grange
York
YO23 3FT

MoJ ref: SUB140105

16 November 2026

Dear Chair,

HMP/YOI ASKHAM GRANGE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

Thank you for submitting your Board's annual report on HMP/YOI Askham Grange. I am grateful to you and your colleagues for your continued commitment and professionalism in carrying out your independent monitoring role.

I was particularly pleased to read the Board's positive assessment of HMP/YOI Askham Grange and its continued success in supporting women as they prepare for release. Your report highlights a safe and supportive environment, underpinned by excellent staff-prisoner relationships, effective key work, strong mental healthcare provision and a clear focus on rehabilitation. I was also encouraged by the Board's positive comments regarding education, vocational training, family support, the Mother and Baby Unit, the chaplaincy service and the prison's employment and resettlement opportunities. Together, these strengths demonstrate the important role Askham Grange continues to play in helping women develop the skills, confidence and resilience needed for successful reintegration into the community

I note that you have raised one matter for the attention of HMPPS. Further comments are set out in the attached annex.

The Lord Chancellor and I greatly value the important contribution made by members of Independent Monitoring Boards across the prison estate. Your Board's continued scrutiny provides an important source of assurance and support and I thank you again for your commitment on behalf of HMP/YOI Askham Grange.

Catherine

Catherine McKinnell MP
Minister for Prisons, Probation and Reducing Reoffending

T +4420 3334 3555
F +44870 761 7753

https://contact-moj.service.justice.gov.uk/
www.gov.uk/moj

102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

Annex

HMP/YOI ASKHAM GRANGE: INDEPENDENT MONITORING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

HMPPS comments on matters raised in the report

Capacity and Population Management

HMPPS continues to work to make best use of capacity across the women's estate, while ensuring that women are held in establishments that are appropriate to their individual circumstances and resettlement needs. Population levels at individual establishments, including HMP/YOI Askham Grange, are kept under regular review as part of the ongoing management of the women's estate. HMPPS recognises the important rehabilitative opportunities provided by Askham Grange and the role it plays in supporting women during the final stages of their sentence. Consideration will continue to be given to how these opportunities can be used most effectively for women who are suitable for open conditions and able to benefit from the establishment's specialist services and interventions.