



HM Prison &  
Probation Service

Action Plan: HMP The Verne

Action Plan Submitted: 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024

A Response to the HMIP Inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Report Published: 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024

## INTRODUCTION

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and HM Inspectorate of Probation for England and Wales are independent inspectorates which provide scrutiny of the conditions for, and treatment of prisoners and offenders. They report their findings for prisons, Young Offender Institutions, and effectiveness of the work of probation, and youth offending services across England and Wales to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). In response to the report HMPPS / MoJ are required to draft a robust and timely action plan to address the priority and key concerns. Action plans provide specific steps and actions to address the priority and key concerns, that are clear, outcome focussed, measurable, achievable, and relevant with the owner and timescale of each step clearly identified. Action plans are sent to HMIP and published on the GOV.UK website. Progress against the implementation and delivery of the action plans will also be monitored and reported on.



## ACTION PLAN: HMIP REPORT

ESTABLISHMENT: HMP THE VERNE

1. Rec No	2. Concerns	3. Response Action Taken/Planned	4. Responsible Owner	5. Target Date
Priority concerns				
1	<b>The prison was not fulfilling its key purpose as a training prison for prisoners convicted of sexual offences.</b> Offending behaviour programmes were not being delivered, and the treatment needs for many had not been addressed.	Senior Leaders at HMP The Verne have commenced a schedule of visits to other prisons that hold people convicted of sexual offences (PCoSO) to observe best practice and effective approaches to rehabilitation. Findings will be used to develop and inform The Verne's strategic approach to supporting PCoSOs in preparation for release.	Governor	December 2024
		HMP The Verne will work in collaboration with the HMPPS Interventions Services and the Prison Group Psychology Lead to formulate a Programmes Strategy and Action Plan to ensure a range of interventions is available to PCoSOs. The Action Plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis at the Reducing Reoffending meeting chaired by the Governor.	Governor	January 2025
		HMPPS Rehabilitation Directorate and Psychology Services Group will support HMP The Verne in ensuring programme facilitators are recruited and trained in readiness for the national roll out of the new suite of Offending Behaviour Programmes so that structured group work can be progressed to address the treatment needs of PCoSOs at HMP The Verne more effectively.	Governor, Rehabilitation Directorate and Psychology Services Group	November 2025



2	<p><b>Many prisoners were frustrated by the lack of contact with a prison offender manager and opportunities to progress in their sentence.</b> Far too little structured offending behaviour work took place to challenge and address prisoners' attitudes, thinking and behaviour robustly. Some had been released without the specific interventions they needed to demonstrate a reduction in their risk.</p>	<p>HMP The Verne has increased the levels of Prison Offender Manager (POM) supervision by assigning two Prison Officers to work as temporary Prison Offender Managers with levels of POM supervision being scrutinised daily.</p>	Governor	Complete
		<p>The Head of Offender Management Delivery (HOMD) provides assurance that the POM supervision target of once every two months is being met and progress is reviewed at the Governor's Performance Meeting held monthly.</p>	Governor	Complete
		<p>HMP The Verne will continue to work with Offender Management in Custody (OMIC) leads via the Local Leadership Forum (LLF) to identify opportunities and potential pathways to secure permanently employed probation staff.</p>	Governor	April 2025
		<p>The Head of Offender Management Delivery ensures that all prisoners are allocated to a named POM and key worker on arrival at The Verne. At the point of case allocation, the HOMD will clearly set out priority tasks for the POM to address which will be shared with the keyworker to help focus their key work session. To improve contact levels with prisoners, the Offender Management Unit (OMU) will develop a schedule to ensure that prisoners meet with a keyworker at a minimum of once per month.</p>	Governor	December 2024
		<p>The HOMD will develop a revised OMU strategy and Action Plan for the delivery of structured POM offending behaviour work utilising positive practice from other prisons. The implementation of the Action Plan will be</p>	Governor	December 2024



		reviewed at the OMU Strategy meeting which is held once every two months and chaired by the Governor.		
3	<p><b>Scrutiny and oversight of important areas, including use of force, segregation and constant supervision, were weak.</b> Data were not being used sufficiently well to inform action and there was not enough focus on driving continuous improvement.</p>	<p>A review of the governance arrangements for segregation and constant supervision has led to improvements to data sets and tracking the effectiveness of actions. All instances of the use of constant supervision are now reviewed at a Multi-Disciplinary Learning Panel to ensure any use was necessary and proportionate.</p> <p>All use of segregation is reviewed as part of the Segregation, Monitoring and Review Group (SMARG). This ensures that use is defensible, identifies any disproportionalities and offers feedback for improvement. The frequency of the SMARG has also been increased to monthly to provide more effective oversight.</p> <p>All segregation documentation is quality assured by the Deputy Governor to ensure that documents that justify the use of segregation are detailed and that decisions to segregate prisoners that are mentally unwell are defensible. This includes a review of individual daily regimes and reintegration plans to ensure that weaknesses in this process are addressed.</p> <p>The monthly Use of Force Strategy Meeting has been supplemented by a weekly Use of Force Learning Panel chaired by the Deputy Governor. The learning panel scrutinises body worn video camera footage and ensures that each individual use of force is reviewed in</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>



		a timely manner and identifies any areas for learning and improvement which are shared with staff.		
4	<b>Not enough key work was taking place.</b> Most prisoners went for several weeks or months without meeting their key worker.	<p>The Head of Business Assurance (HoBA) will ensure consistency in the allocation of keywork sessions to all prisoners by undertaking a review of Prison Officer scheduling. Performance in this area will be added to the agenda for the Governor's Performance meeting that is held monthly.</p> <p>A recently appointed Head of Offender Management Services has been given a clear direction to lead and drive keywork delivery and is being supported by a dedicated Custodial Manager. The quality of key work sessions is now being monitored locally, with regional support, to ensure that conversations are meaningful and promote sentence progression. Residential Custodial Managers are quality assuring sessions with the Head of Residence performing an additional 10% dip test of the keyworker case notes.</p> <p>To ensure continued improvements to the quality as well as the quantity of keywork delivery, all Prison Officers joining The Verne are required to attend a 'Keywork Delivery at The Verne' presentation delivered by the New Colleague Mentor (NCM).</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>January 2025</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>



5.	<p><b>The lack of a comprehensive health needs assessment and poor clinical quality oversight meetings meant that significant actions required to improve the delivery of health care had not been identified.</b> The outpatient unit remained unsafe and officer escorts for external hospital appointments were still under-resourced.</p>	<p>A Quarterly Health Strategy meeting will take place to plan for future delivery based on analysis of current population need. In addition, governance at the monthly Local Delivery Quality Board (LDQB) will be improved by reviewing membership and securing the attendance of health commissioners, senior Oxleas leads, and Local Authority leads. This meeting will also monitor service delivery including the resourcing of additional hospital escorts to ensure it meets need.</p> <p>National Health Service England (NHSE) Quality Assurance visits are completed annually and in response to specific concerns. These are followed up with Heads of Healthcare to review progress with identified actions. Quarterly Clinical Quality Review Meetings (CQRM) between NHSE and the contracted provider Oxleas address quality themes and risks. NHSE conduct an extensive monthly review of data at HMP The Verne, which includes demographic data relating to the need. These revised governance arrangements are allowing for a dynamic understanding of healthcare needs to drive improved health care delivery.</p> <p>NHSE have conducted three Quality Assurance visits focused on the physical environment in which healthcare is delivered at HMP The Verne. Due to ongoing concerns about the clinical facilities, NHSE have made recommendations to Oxleas and HMPPS for infrastructure improvements to be made. Due to these being assessed as priority concerns, weekly meetings with NHSE and Oxleas are in place to review the situation and manage and mitigate the associated risks.</p>	<p>Governor and Head of Healthcare</p> <p>Governor, Oxleas and NHSE</p> <p>HMPPS, Oxleas and NHSE</p>	<p>December 2024</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
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6.	<b>The curriculum did not meet the needs of many prisoners. Too many prisoners allocated to activities were underemployed, and too few in the workshops had the opportunity to achieve meaningful qualifications.</b>	HMP The Verne has used achievement data and prisoner feedback to complete a full learning and skills needs analysis. This will inform 2025 curriculum design and employment pathways.	Governor	April 2025
		HMP The Verne is undertaking a full review of all prison job descriptions. Those positions that are underemployed will be identified and reshaped. Prisoners at HMP The Verne of state working age currently receive face to face Information Advice and Guidance and have Digital Personal Learning Plans that outline their pathway to employment. A curriculum of activity for older prisoners will be developed to ensure they are prepared for retirement through meaningful and engaging activity.	Governor	January 2025
		HMP the Verne will expand the use of 'Progress in Workbooks' to capture the learning progress of prisoners. We will improve the qualification offer across our workshops to provide vocational knowledge and skills for specific trades or professions which will maximise prisoners' potential and support them in acquiring gainful employment on release.	Governor	June 2025
Key concerns				
7	<b>The use of segregation to care for prisoners at acute risk of self-harm and mentally unwell was inappropriate.</b> Segregation was also used for reasons we would not usually expect.	HMP The Verne will reduce the use of segregation by seeking opportunities to create secure accommodation on some main residential units. Additionally, we will seek external/Ministry of Justice funding to create a constant supervision cell outside of the Care and Separation Unit (CSU).	Governor	April 2025





		All documents will clearly record the decision-making process for the use of segregation at HMP Verne. Records will demonstrate that use is necessary and justified until viable alternative options become available.	Governor	December 2024
8	<b>Health record keeping lacked effective oversight, particularly within the substance misuse service.</b> Care plans were missing and contact entries were too brief. The primary care service had an over-reliance on recording actions on the patient's task list instead of the core record, creating a disjointed record of care received.	<p>The Head of Healthcare provides the Governor with assurance on the quality of all care plans at the monthly Local Delivery Quality Board (LDQB) meeting.</p> <p>The Head of Drug Strategy provides monthly assurance on the quality of the Integrated Substance Misuse Service (ISMS) Care plans, which is recorded at the monthly drug strategy meeting.</p> <p>The ISMS team and the Oxleas Regional Manager have reviewed the approach taken to care planning and have now completed training with the Change Grow Live (CGL) Assurance and Governance Lead focusing on developing bespoke care plans based on individual strengths and needs. Training has also been provided on how and where to record care plans and recovery plans on the 'SystemOne' database so that a more consistent approach to record keeping is maintained.</p>	<p>Governor and Head of Healthcare</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Head of Healthcare</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
9	<b>Too many discrimination incident reporting forms (DIRFs) were not being fully investigated.</b> The prison was inappropriately diverting DIRFs to the complaints process.	<p>A multi-disciplinary Discrimination Incident Reporting Form (DIRF) scrutiny panel held every two months that includes prison peer workers has been implemented to quality assure DIRFs and identify actions to improve the process and quality of responses.</p> <p>HMP The Verne will ensure that any complaints of discrimination are reflected in the DIRFs. A new</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>December 2024</p>



		<p>tracking system will be introduced to enable responses to DIRFs to be monitored and measured for timeliness. All Managers will be trained to effectively investigate complaints of discrimination. The Deputy Governor will quality check 10% of all completed DIRFs with feedback provided by the Safer Prisons Department. Assurance activity will be completed by the Zahid Mubarek Trust who will also quality assure 10% of responses completed</p> <p>In line with policy requirements, staff log any complaint involving discrimination, and complaint handlers directly address any identified discrimination issues. The authority to divert or reject a DIRF will be placed at Deputy Governor Level.</p>	Governor	December 2024
10	<p><b>The prison's daily routine was frequently disrupted.</b> As a result of staffing shortfalls, prisoners were often left locked on their residential units, and association, secure social video calls and library sessions were cancelled at short notice.</p>	<p>HMP The Verne has completed a full review of the core day as part of a wider staff reprofiling exercise. This has now been implemented with additional staff resource in the evening to facilitate secure social video calls and improved access to association and fresh air for prisoners engaged in full time work.</p> <p>HMP The Verne has reviewed the Regime Management Plan (RMP) and will be training Custodial Managers in its use so that key elements of the regime are only affected as a last possible resort. Custodial Managers will be required to log any disruption or amendments to the regime with the reason. These records will be reviewed on a quarterly basis at the Governor's Performance Meeting.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>December 2024</p>



		A weekly regime planning meeting currently identifies areas of shortfall, and a 72-hour check will be introduced to ensure that timely alterations to shifts can be made to cover critical areas of delivery.	Governor	December 2024
11	<b>Many prisoners waited too long to start the education or training course of their choice.</b>	<p>A full review of the Allocations to Work and Education process has been conducted. This revised process balances the risks and needs of prisoners and aims to provide a pathway for them through purposeful activity towards their likely employment opportunities on release.</p> <p>The timeliness of the activity workplace risk assessment process will be improved as part of a full review of Induction into Purposeful Activity.</p> <p>The Governor's Morning Meeting agenda has been amended to include the number of workplace risk assessments in process which has resulted in improvements to the timeliness of the decisions.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>January 2025</p> <p>Complete</p>
12	<b>Too many prisoners with additional support needs did not get the support they needed in education, training and work.</b>	The Neurodiversity Support Manager will improve support in prison workshop areas by delivering training every six months to Workshop Staff. Education staff will continue to support prisoners by using context statements that capture prisoners individual learning needs in both classrooms and Weston College run workshops. The Neurodiversity Support Manager will work with Residential Managers to ensure that they are aware of the prisoners with additional needs working in wing employment and that they are aware of their individual support plans.	Governor	December 2024



		The Oxleas Occupational Therapist will support this process and help shape plans for those with both mental and physical health difficulties.	Governor	January 2025
13	<b>Prisoners did not benefit from meaningful engagement with employers while in custody, in preparation for a job on release.</b>	<p>HMP The Verne is soon to appoint a Creating Future Opportunities (CFO) support worker. This provision will give information and guidance on employment opportunities aligned with licence conditions and coordinate with community outreach support workers in release locations to facilitate through-the-gate support and ongoing services.</p> <p>HMP The Verne will continue to try and identify national employers who are willing to employ PCoSO prisoners on release.</p>	<p>Governor</p> <p>Governor</p>	<p>January 2025</p> <p>April 2025</p>

