

Ofsted report on education, skills and work activities

HMP Lindholme

Dates of inspection:

This part of the inspection was carried out by Ofsted inspectors using Ofsted's [Handbook for the inspection of education, skills and work activities in prisons and young offender institutions](#).

Ofsted inspects skills and work in custodial establishments as part of its further education and skills inspection activity. These inspections cover four areas: quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, and leadership and management. The findings are presented in the order of the learner journey in the establishment. Together with the areas of concern, this is Ofsted's assessment of what the establishment does well and what it needs to do better.

Education, skills and work activities

Expected outcomes:

All prisoners are expected and enabled to engage in education, skills or work activities that promote personal development and employability. There are sufficient, suitable education, skills and work places to meet the needs of the population and provision is of a good standard.

Ofsted made the following assessments about the education, skills and work provision:

Overall effectiveness: Requires Improvement

Quality of education: Requires Improvement

Behaviour and attitudes: Requires Improvement

Personal development: Requires Improvement

Leadership and management: Requires Improvement

Leaders and managers had focused on improving the provision of education, skills and work (ESW) at the prison since the previous inspection and, in particular, in the last year with the arrival of the new governor. They had faced significant challenges such as supporting large numbers of prisoners being released early, closures in vocational workshops and accommodating resettlement prisoners which the prison was not set up to do. Despite this, leaders had rectified or partially rectified the recommendations from the previous inspection.

The number of ESW spaces had been increased since the previous inspection and the prison offered now enough activity spaces in a full-time capacity for just over 90 per cent of its population. However, not enough prisoners yet accessed full-time activity. This reduced their chances to develop the necessary employability skills and work ethic expected from a training prison.

Leaders had done much work to improve the curriculum offer. They had increased the range of workshops by creating additional areas and introducing accreditation in mentoring, cycle maintenance, textiles, waste management, logistics, traffic management, scaffolding and land-based provision. Furthermore, they now offered qualifications at a higher level, providing progression routes for prisoners in construction, hospitality and barbering. Key enhancements had been made to the curriculum to ensure that it now met the needs of those prisoners with the lowest levels of English and mathematics.

Leaders had developed very good relationships with employers to ensure that the increased vocational training offer met the regional and national skills needs. The collaboration with a waste recycling employer to design the content of the curriculum in this area was highly innovative and effective.

At induction, prisoners received appropriate information regarding the education, skills and work available at the prison. Learners accessed useful advice from careers information, advice and guidance (CIAG) staff where they discussed the choices and options specific to

their sentence. This information was used well to create their learning plans which included individualised goals relating to education, employment, wellbeing and pre-release. The amount of prisoners receiving career advice at different points of their time at Lindholme had improved significantly.

Several relevant areas of the prison collaborated well with allocations in deciding which activity would be most suitable to prisoners' career goals and existing skills. However, leaders did not work closely enough with their allocation team to ensure that more prisoners engaged with full-time occupation in order to fulfil the training character of the establishment. The team prioritised allocating prisoners to the most suitable activity and worked well to reduce the existing small waiting lists.

The pay policy was fair and leaders had ensured that prisoners attending education received a high rate of pay. As part of their strategy to tackle low attendance, leaders had introduced a monetary reward for prisoners who attended education, skills and work on a continuous basis.

Novus delivered education and vocational training across the prison. Managers had improved the design and sequencing of the curriculum which helped learners to acquire and consolidate their learning. Teachers were well qualified in their respective trades and vocations, sharing their expertise well. They got to know their learners rapidly, using the results of initial assessment and prior learning to plan lessons. However, teachers in education did not consistently deliver lessons at a suitable pace, with some learners becoming distracted and lethargic. Vocational training was well structured with learners developing valuable new skills which were aimed at securing employment on release. Learners' work was of high quality in most vocational areas.

Leaders had supported well the continuous development of existing and new teaching staff across ESW. Industries instructors were completing a qualification in assessment and training to enable them to support prisoners to develop skills and behaviours in prison work. Teachers and trainers accessed a learning and development programme that helped them remain current and to improve their teaching skills.

Across ESW, sessions contained well-ordered activities which helped prisoners build on previous learning. For example, in welding learners benefited from demonstrations of each basic welding technique before practising, to help improve and refine their skills. Teachers then encouraged learners to undertake more complex welds, assessing their own work using practical observation checklists. As a result, learners quickly developed evaluation skills, and the ability to work confidently and independently.

Teachers in education helped to develop learners' English and mathematics skills well. In barbering, learners calculated concentrations of hair products and learned about skin allergies. In many cases, qualified mentors assisted learners in applying mathematics in a vocational context. For example, they developed learners' ability to use metric measurements in construction. However, learners made slower progress in the lessons

where they worked alone for extended periods of time without a clearly defined plan or objectives.

Learners in land-based activities rapidly developed valuable new skills and knowledge. As an example, within a few weeks of starting, one prisoner had proficiently demonstrated competencies about the safe use of a woodchipper, weeding (including the identification of weeds), hedge trimming and lawn mowing.

Prisoners accessing the gym benefitted now from a wide range of valuable qualifications. Learners in the gym developed a thorough knowledge of new skills and subjects such as anatomy and nutrition, achieving their qualifications well. Others, like peer mentors, described too how they had developed their coaching and communication skills.

Across ESW, a high proportion of prisoners who completed their courses achieved their qualification. However, leaders did not yet identify the detailed reasons for prisoners' withdrawals and could not monitor the true success of their learning programmes. This had not been aided by the prison service's transition into central data systems and changes in management.

The prison's neurodiversity team had made a positive impact on learners' progress and wellbeing. New initiatives including a regular newsletter, a dedicated hub in education, and the introduction of four trained mentors who had raised staff awareness and support to prisoners with learning needs. The quality of the diagnostic assessments of learning difficulties had improved and matched the increasing number of neurodiverse learners. Teachers were now more aware of prisoners' learning and personal needs and they received useful guidance on how to engage with those presenting diverse learning needs and difficulties.

In industries and work, the progress workbooks were still not being used effectively to record the development of learners' wider employability skills. Too many targets set by instructors were generic and some were not checked or reviewed for long periods. Prisoners did not receive sufficiently developmental feedback.

Prisoners working in the residential areas did not benefit from suitable instruction, guidance or constructive feedback from wing staff to help them develop employability skills and behaviours such as prioritising, delivering quality and remaining productive. Staff were often unaware of the key jobs allocated to wing workers, and too often they were left to self-manage their work.

The promotion of reading had mostly improved since the previous inspection. Prisoners who were identified at induction as having low reading levels were promptly referred to the Shannon Trust. Those engaging with the Shannon Trust reported significant improvement in their confidence and reading ability. A strategic decision had been made to locate the Shannon Trust support at the heart of the education block to create an inclusive learning culture for novice readers. A notable number of prisoners had progressed into education after having learned to read.

Leaders and managers had taken time to understand the reading habits and preferences of prisoners and the number of magazines and newspapers bought by prisoners had increased

and so had the proportion of those who now read for pleasure. There remained some areas where the promotion of reading required further improvement. For example, some industry workshop reading areas were under-used with learners not fully aware of the benefits of reading.

Learners studying with the Open University and on distance learning programmes were well supported and made suitable progress towards achieving their qualifications.

Leaders had been effective at reducing the number of prisoners refusing to attend ESW, which had decreased significantly over the past year. However, attendance in education remained low and punctuality was greatly impacted by regime movement. The late arrival to sessions curtailed learners' productive learning time. For example, in barbering, clients were sometimes kept waiting for appointments and learners were unable to complete their written summaries at the conclusion of the session.

Staff and prisoner relationships in ESW were courteous and professional. Prisoners engaged well in activities, supporting each other on tasks in areas like bikes and painting and decorating. Prisoners could discuss sensitive topics in education while respecting other points of view and worked well with peers from different backgrounds, such as ethnicity, to solve problems.

Overall, prisoners demonstrated mature and professional behaviours. For example, in hospitality they took pride in the barista and catering service they offered, responding well to customer challenges. Classrooms and workshops were run in a safe and orderly manner and prisoners reported that they felt safe attending education, skills and work.

Prisoners, particularly those in education, were encouraged to develop their personal and employability skills. Teachers set clear personal development targets consistently well but prisoners were unsure about what these targets meant. Prisoners also accessed opportunities to develop into responsible citizens, playing a part in prison life in roles such as mentors. Some prisoners were aware of the enrichment activities and employment events available and had for example joined the book club and games club.

Prisoners did not have enough opportunities to deepen their understanding of British Values. Some were unaware of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation and how to keep themselves safe. Tutors planned in some detail how to cover topics such as tolerance during lessons, but this was not realised in many sessions.

Notable positive practice

Leaders and managers had successfully collaborated with a key national employer in the waste management sector to design the content of qualifications at Level 1 and Level 2 that met the specific needs of employers working in this industry. Prisoners now accessed qualifications that improved their chances of securing employment in the waste management area upon release.

Priority concerns and key concerns

Priority concerns

The number of prisoners accessing full-time education, training or employment was not high enough for a training prison. Leaders did not work closely enough with the allocations team to ensure all prisoners accessed full-time activity.

Attendance at education, skills and work remained still low with poor punctuality in many cases. The two-phase regime poorly impacted on prisoners' punctuality.

Key concern

The quality of education received by prisoners was not consistently good across education, skills and work. Prisoners in education and work did not access provision that supported them fully to develop new employability skills well.