Staff survey methodology and results

HMP Gartree

August 2026

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Staff survey methodology

A survey of staff is carried out at the start of every inspection, the results of which contribute to the evidence base for the inspection.

HMI Prisons researchers developed an online questionnaire consisting of structured questions exploring the experience of staff in the establishment. There are also four open questions which allow staff to describe their experiences and tell inspectors anything else they think is important. These comments are not published or shared with the establishment.

Distribution

HMI Prisons researchers provide a link to the survey embedded in a covering email. The covering email explains the purpose of the survey, that participation is voluntary and gives assurances about confidentiality and anonymity, enabling staff to give their informed consent to participate. This email is sent to the establishment with a request that it is forwarded to all staff working at the establishment; an HMI Prisons researcher is copied into this email to provide assurance. Additionally, researchers distribute postcards to wing offices for the attention of staff about details of the online survey which included the link.

Survey response

The survey was sent to 503 email addresses at Gartree. Staff were given 7 days to complete the survey. We received a total of 120 completed questionnaires.

We cannot be sure that every member of staff working at the establishment received the email. Furthermore, because the online survey is set up to enable multiple responses from a single device (to facilitate participation by those who share computers), it is possible that individuals may have completed the questionnaire more than once. It is therefore not possible to provide an accurate response rate.

Full survey results

The full survey results for staff at Gartree provide a breakdown of responses for only the structured questions. Percentages have been rounded and therefore may not add up to 100%.

The full inspection report is available on our website at:
https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/inspections/

Staff survey

Q1 Please tick the option which most closely matches your role:

Frontline operational staff	40 (33%)
Operational manager	9 (8%)
Health care staff	8 (7%)
Education, skills and work staff	18 (15%)
Administrative staff	18 (15%)
Other staff	27 (23%)

Staff well-being

Q2 How well is the establishment supporting staff well-being?

Very well	27 (23%)
Quite well	49 (41%)
Neither well nor poorly	27 (23%)
Quite poorly	12 (10%)
Very poorly	5 (4%)

Q3 How would you describe your morale at work:

Very high	11 (9%)
High	50 (42%)
Neither high nor low	33 (28%)
Low	21 (18%)
Very low	5 (4%)

Prisoner well-being

Q4 Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Reasonable steps are being taken to keep prisoners safe	41 (34%)	57 (48%)	12 (10%)	2 (2%)	8 (7%)
Prisoners are having enough time out of their cells	55 (46%)	41 (34%)	9 (8%)	2 (2%)	13 (11%)

Leadership in this establishment

Q5 How clearly are the top priorities of this establishment communicated to you?

Very clearly	49 (41%)
Quite clearly	51 (43%)
Not very clearly	12 (10%)
Not at all clearly	4 (3%)
I don't know the top priorities	4 (3%)

Q5a To what extent do you agree or disagree with this establishment's priorities?

Strongly agree	43 (37%)
Somewhat agree	49 (42%)
Somewhat disagree	16 (14%)
Strongly disagree	3 (3%)
Don't know	5 (4%)

Q6 Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree that your knowledge and skills are sufficient to do your job well *(e.g. training and development opportunities)***:**

Strongly agree	66 (55%)
Somewhat agree	41 (34%)
Somewhat disagree	11 (9%)
Strongly disagree	2 (2%)

Q7 How often do you meet with someone (a manager or mentor) to discuss how you are progressing in your role?

About once a month	39 (33%)
Approximately once every three months	30 (25%)
Approximately twice a year	11 (9%)
Once a year or less	26 (22%)
I have not had the opportunity to meet with someone	13 (11%)

Q8 Please rate the quality of support you receive from your line manager:

Very good	61 (51%)
Good	27 (23%)
Neither good nor poor	22 (18%)
Poor	6 (5%)
Very poor	4 (3%)

Q9 Please use the scale to rate the following statements:

	Always	Often	Occasionally	Never	Don't know
Governors/directors and senior managers in this establishment are approachable (e.g. they take time to listen)	39 (33%)	42 (35%)	32 (27%)	6 (5%)	1 (1%)
Governors/directors and senior managers in this establishment acknowledge and celebrate good work	27 (23%)	38 (32%)	42 (35%)	11 (9%)	2 (2%)
Governors/directors and senior managers set high standards of behaviour for staff	37 (31%)	46 (38%)	25 (21%)	6 (5%)	6 (5%)
Governors/directors and senior managers challenge poor behaviour by staff	25 (21%)	38 (32%)	37 (31%)	3 (3%)	17 (14%)
Governors/directors encourage staff to reflect on and learn from their mistakes	25 (21%)	38 (32%)	22 (18%)	8 (7%)	27 (23%)
Governors/directors use feedback from prisoners, staff and others to generate ideas, create plans and measure progress	16 (13%)	33 (28%)	33 (28%)	12 (10%)	26 (22%)

Raising concerns

Q10 Do you know what the formal procedure is to raise concerns (whistleblowing) in this establishment?

Yes	98 (82%)
No	22 (18%)

Q11 Have you formally raised concerns about this establishment?

Yes	11 (9%)
No	109 (91%)

Q12 Would you formally raise concerns if you had any?

Yes	73 (68%)
No	2 (2%)
Don't know	32 (30%)

Q14 Who or what organisation did you raise your concern to? *(Please select more than one if relevant)*

A colleague	2
A manager	7
Human resources	0
Ofsted or Estyn	0
Care Quality Commission or Healthcare Inspectorate Wales	0
HM Inspectorate of Prisons	0
Trade union	5
Professional organisation	1
Police	0
Other	2

Q15 Were your concerns taken seriously?

Yes	7 (70%)
No	2 (20%)
Don't know	1 (10%)

Q16 Was any effective action taken in response to the concerns you had raised?

Yes	5 (50%)
No	2 (20%)
Don't know	3 (30%)

Q18 Have you ever witnessed staff behaving inappropriately towards prisoners at this establishment?

Yes	28 (23%)
No	88 (73%)
Don't know	4 (3%)

Q19 Have you ever witnessed staff behaving inappropriately towards each other at this establishment?

Yes	46 (38%)
No	69 (58%)
Don't know	5 (4%)