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020 7035 2123

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HMP RISLEY – A TRANSFORMED PRISON

HMP Risley had made real improvements, and was now much safer and more purposeful, said Nick Hardwick, Chief Inspector of Prisons, publishing the report of an announced inspection of the Cheshire jail.

Risley is a large category C training prison. A previous inspection found the prison was not performing sufficiently well in any area apart from resettlement, had a serious drug problem, with associated gang violence, and squalid conditions. This inspection found a prison transformed in many areas and reasonably good outcomes for prisoners in all areas, although there were still further improvements to be made.

Inspectors were pleased to find that:

- treatment programmes and measures to limit supply had significantly reduced the drug problem;
- regular and active management engagement had led to significant improvements in staff-prisoner relationships;
- the prison was very clean;
- prisoners' perception of their safety had much improved;
- foreign national prisoners had good specialist support from dedicated staff; and

- the quality of education, training and most work opportunities was good.

However, inspectors were concerned to find that:

- managerial oversight of use of force was inadequate and some incidents were of particular concern;
- work on diversity was rudimentary;
- although the quality of education, training and work was good, the quantity was insufficient and almost a quarter of prisoners were locked in their cells in the working part of the day; and
- progress on resettlement had flatlined and in particular, opportunities to find and keep employment had reduced and there were few links with local employers.

Nick Hardwick said:

“There is still much to be done to ensure that the prison becomes a fully effective establishment that meets the range of prisoners’ diverse needs and prepares them appropriately for release through useful work and effective interventions. Nevertheless, Risley is a much safer, cleaner and more decent prison than before – a better and more purposeful place for prisoners (and as they often told us, a better place for the prison staff to work). The governor and the prison staff are to be commended on the improvements.”

Michael Spurr, Chief Executive Officer of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), said:

"I am pleased the Chief Inspector has recognised the efforts of the governor and prison staff to transform Risley into a safer and more purposeful establishment.

"Staff-prisoner relationships, prisoners' perceptions of safety and the supply and use of drugs have been among the areas where improvements have been made. This helps prisoners address their offending behaviour and reduce the likelihood of them reoffending on release, thereby protecting the public."

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. A copy of the report can be found on the HM Inspectorate of Prisons website from 29 June 2011 at <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/inspectorate-reports/hmi-prisons/prison-and-yoi-inspections/index.htm>.
2. HM Inspectorate of Prisons is an independent inspectorate, inspecting places of detention to report on conditions and treatment, and promote positive outcomes for those detained and the public.
3. This announced inspection was carried out from 7-11 February 2011.
4. HMP Risley is a category C training prison for adult males.
5. Please contact Jane Parsons in HMI Prisons Press Office on 0207 035 2123 or 07880 787452 from 0915 to 1415 Monday to Friday if you would like more information or to request an interview with Nick Hardwick.