

**HMP Drake Hall was making good progress but was not yet addressing the needs of foreign nationals, a third of the population, said Anne Owers, Chief Inspector of Prisons today, publishing the report of a follow-up unannounced inspection of the prison.**

The report found that:

- HMP Drake Hall was a safe prison with low incidence of self harm and bullying;
- Drug supply had been effectively reduced;
- Provision for resettlement was good with especially impressive drug treatment services;
- Facilities for prisoners had improved with a new reception building and library and an expanded gym.

However, despite the considerable improvements, the report noted a number of concerns:

- Although foreign nationals made up a third of the population there was no formal foreign national policy, no monitoring of services and no job description for the foreign national liaison officer;
- Help for foreign nationals preparing for release and resettlement into their home country was insufficient;
- Although staff-prisoner relationships were relaxed, informal relationships were limited, there was no personal officer scheme in operation and the quality of adjudications was inadequate;
- Basic hygiene items were difficult for prisoners to obtain and prisoners were means tested before being issued with free clothing;
- Facilities and support for visitors needed improvement.

Anne Owers said:

"Drake Hall has significantly improved since our last inspection and staff can take considerable credit. Nevertheless, a proper focus on the needs of foreign nationals is essential if the prison is to become an effective foreign national centre for the women's estate."

Phil Wheatley, Director General of the Prison Service said:

"I am pleased that the Chief Inspector recognised the good work

carried out at HMP Drake Hall and the progress made in reducing drug supply, providing good quality drug treatment and developing improved resettlement work.

"Work has already started to improve provision for foreign national prisoners with closer working between the prison and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. Drake Hall now has policies in place to better manage the needs of these particular prisoners including targeting specific areas of educational need."

**Notes to editors:**

1. The unannounced inspection of HMP Drake Hall took place on 31 September to 1 August 2004.
2. Drake Hall is a 'semi-open' women's prison and centre for foreign nationals in Staffordshire.
3. Inspectorate reports and releases are available at: [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/justice/prisons/inspprisons](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/justice/prisons/inspprisons).
4. For an electronic copy of this report, please call 020 7273 4545.