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HMP HOLLESLEY BAY: RISING TO CHALLENGES

HMP Hollesley Bay was performing well and rising to the challenge of holding an increasingly diverse population, said Dame Anne Owers, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, publishing the report of an announced inspection into the Suffolk prison.

Hollesley Bay is an open prison for adult men, including young offenders under 21. Like all open prisons, it has had to manage a more diverse population in recent years, including some prisoners with very little time left to serve. Commendably, this inspection found that the prison had risen to this and various other challenges, and was continuing to progress.

Inspectors found:

- Hollesley Bay was a very safe prison. Early days were well managed and there was very little bullying or self-harm.
- Prisoners were largely well behaved and motivated. Drugs were not a major problem and there were few absconds. Security arrangements were generally proportionate, although movement around the grounds was too restricted.
- Staff-prisoner relations were positive, supported by a functioning personal officer scheme and efficient application and complaint procedures.
- Diversity arrangements were underdeveloped and further work was required with staff to raise cultural awareness.
- The grounds and accommodation were generally good. Prisoners had plenty of time out of their rooms and there was sufficient activity to keep them all purposefully occupied. Education, work and training opportunities were all good. Library and physical education provision were both good.
- Resettlement was well managed, although it was difficult to get probation officers in the community to visit prisoners for whom they were responsible in this distant rural prison. Sentence planning operated well for those on longer sentences, but there was no custody

planning for those with short sentences for whom the prison was not well equipped.

Anne Owers said:

“With the rising prison population, open establishments such as Hollesley Bay have had to deal with a more diverse population. Many prisoners are a long way from home and some have very little time left to serve, which means they can gain little from the regime and have little investment in it. Managers and staff are to be congratulated for rising to these challenges. The prison provided a very safe, well controlled and respectful environment. Prisoners were kept purposefully occupied and some good efforts were made to resettle those there long enough to receive appropriate support.”

Phil Wheatley, Director General of the National Offender Management Service, said:

“This is a good report which describes a prison performing extremely well, and management and staff are to be congratulated for their commitment to creating a positive environment in which prisoners are engaged with resettlement work and working towards successful return to the community. This will reduce re-offending and protect the public”

Notes for Editors

1. The full report can be found on the HM Inspectorate of Prisons website from 19 June 2009 at <http://inspectors.justice.gov.uk/hmiprisons>.
2. The announced inspection of the HMP Hollesley Bay was carried out from 9 – 13 February 2009.
3. The operational capacity at HMP Hollesley Bay at the time of the inspection was 345.
4. The last inspection of HMP Hollesley Bay took place from 8-10 January 2007.
5. Anne Owers, Chief Inspector, is available for interview. If you would like to speak to her please contact Andrew Winstone in the Press Office on 0203 334 3530.