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HMP LITTLEHEY – IMPRESSIVE AND IMPROVING

HMP Littlehey remains a safe and effective prison, said Anne Owers, Chief Inspector of Prisons, publishing the report of a full announced inspection of the training prison in Cambridgeshire.

Sex offenders made up three-quarters of the prison population and there was a wide range of interventions to address sexual offending, including some imaginative work with those who denied their offence.

Inspectors also noted that:

- There was an effective safer custody strategy, though anti-bullying procedures needed to be better understood
- Mental health in-reach services were well integrated into the prison's work
- Most prisoners were allocated to purposeful activity, though more could be done, and the amount of vocational training increased.

However, there were some weaknesses:

- More work needed to be done to improve the perceptions of black and minority ethnic prisoners, to improve provision for foreign nationals and to support the growing number of older and infirm prisoners
- The resettlement strategy was insubstantial and not based on an analysis of risks and needs; and offender management was under-resourced

Anne Owers said:

“Littlehey remains an impressive and improving prison, able to work effectively with some very high risk prisoners. It provides a fundamentally safe and respectful environment, in which prisoners are generally occupied purposefully. Some impressive interventions are available for sex offenders. Inevitably, there is scope for improvement but, overall, staff and managers are to be commended on what they have achieved so far.”

Phil Wheatley, Prison Service Director General said:

“This is rightly an excellent report on a prison that is providing a safe and respectful environment for prisoners, to the credit of staff and the senior management team.

“The prison has now employed a full time race equality officer and is hoping to work with Help The Aged to assess the needs of their older population.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. A full copy of the HMCIP report into HMP Littlehey is available from http://inspectrates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmprisons/inspect_reports/hmp-yoi-inspections.html
2. Littlehey is a category C prison for adult male prisoners, three quarters of whom are sex offenders.
3. The full announced inspection took place between 2-6 July 2007. Littlehey was last applauded for the way that the prison had been able to integrate all prisoners into a single population
4. Anne Owers is available for interview. To request an interview with her, please call 020 7210 8803.

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