



REPORT ON

AN UNANNOUNCED FOLLOW-UP

INSPECTION OF

HM YOUNG OFFENDER
INSTITUTION AND REMAND
CENTRE READING

25TH – 26TH FEBRUARY 2002

BY

HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF PRISONS

PREFACE

This follow-up inspection records progress that had been made at Reading YOI since the last inspection. Many recommendations had been followed up and this had resulted in improvements in healthcare, the built environment and security. We report on a prison that was largely a safe place, with good reception and induction procedures.

However, there were crucial areas where the prison had not improved and was not providing the environment that its young men needed. First, though individual relationships between staff and prisoners were good, there was what we describe as an institutional and systemic lack of respect: a failure to address young prisoners' basic needs. There were dirty and cold cells, showers in an appalling state and an ineffective Incentive and Earned Privileges scheme – in spite of the fact that these had been explicitly criticised in the last report.

Secondly, in spite of some examples of excellent work, there was not enough purposeful activity. Most prisoners had too little meaningful work and spent too much time in cells. Finally, though we commend the high numbers (and high success rate) released on Home Detention Curfew, there was no resettlement strategy, or effective sentence planning or personal officer work.

We describe Reading as a prison where residential staff did too little, and which had largely stagnated since the previous inspection. However, we commend the efforts of the recently-appointed Governor, and his determination to address many of the prison's weaknesses and problems. We expect to find a greatly-improved prison on our next inspection.

Anne Owers
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons

May 2002

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INTRODUCTION

Short inspections have been developed to ensure that the Inspectorate visits and checks establishments between full inspections. They are carried out by a smaller team, last less than five days and are usually unannounced. Clearly they cannot serve the functions of full inspections but we believe that they are important in highlighting issues of concern or praiseworthy areas relating to the treatment of prisoners. They are not intended to cover every aspect of the prison.

As the basis for this unannounced inspection, we have taken the recommendations contained in the last full inspection in April 1999. This report records our findings and describes the extent to which our recommendations had been implemented as well as recognising changes that had taken place since April 1999. The report also takes into account what we were told by young prisoners, staff and managers.

A team of four inspectors, Mr Gary Deighton, Mrs Gail Hunt, Mr Pat Mosley and Mrs Ruth Whitehead, carried out an unannounced short inspection of HMYOI and RC Reading in the period 25th - 26th February 2002.

As with all our inspections, they monitored the treatment of young prisoners against the model of the healthy prison described in the Expectations document contained in Annex 7 to the Annual Report of the HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for the period 1999-2000. The inspection team debriefed the Governor and his Deputy Governor before they left.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ESTABLISHMENT

1.01 HMYOI and RC Reading continued to hold young prisoners remanded into custody or who were sentenced to imprisonment. Since the previous full inspection, Reading no longer held juveniles, those aged 17 years or under. Most of the convicted young prisoners were serving sentences of 12 months or less and about half of them were likely to be released early under the Home Detention Curfew arrangements. Consequently there was a large turnover in the young prisoner population.

1.02 The operational capacity was 265 with certified normal accommodation of 195. At the time of this unannounced inspection, there were 256 young prisoners in residence. Kennet Unit continued to provide accommodation for young prisoners who went to work in the community, thus giving them a proper period of transition before their discharge back into society. Vulnerable young prisoners were held in what had been renamed a Separated Prisoners Unit but its function remained the same. The health care centre still had no 24-hour cover and in-patient accommodation had been converted to office use. There were plans to reinstate a 'Type 3 service' with in-patient facilities.

1.03 The new Governor had been in post for a few months and he had come at a time when Reading had been identified as one of two establishments that needed significant improvement. Consequently, we found managers and staff heavily engaged in drawing up plans in response to its forthcoming performance testing. Although most staff understood the significance of this testing, some could not understand how Reading could have been categorized by Prison Service Headquarters in this way. Staff perceptions and response to the challenge ahead would play a significant part in determining the outcome of its performance testing.

CHAPTER TWO

PROGRESS SINCE THE 1999 REPORT

2.01 In this chapter we have commented on all the recommendations as they had been identified in the main body of the previous inspection report, that is in Chapters One to Seven. We have also included additional observations on significant changes and initiatives that were in progress during this unannounced inspection.

Recommendations

To the Director General

2.02 *Governors must be left in post long enough to enable them to influence the organisational culture of the establishment. (6.4)*

Achieved.

2.03 *Sentenced juveniles should be held in establishments closer to their homes. (4.20)*

This recommendation was no longer relevant at Reading since the establishment did not hold juveniles.

2.04 *Young prisoners with outstanding court cases should not be transferred to another establishment unless court arrangements are unaffected and due account is taken of maintaining contact with families. (4.43)*

Achieved. There was no evidence that transfers continued without impending court cases being taken into account.

2.05 *Consideration should be given to re-allocating duties such as inspection of kitchens and diets which are currently undertaken by the doctor. (5.5)*

Achieved. These duties were now being undertaken by health care staff.

To the Governor

Accommodation and Facilities

2.06 *Additional blankets should be given to young prisoners complaining of the cold. (2.1)*

Not achieved. We observed some young prisoners in cold cells who had complained about these conditions for more than 24 hours but for whom additional blankets had not been provided. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.07 *Young prisoners on Kennet Wing should be observed in their rooms intermittently by staff throughout the night. (2.3)*

Not achieved. Although camera cover of corridors and the TV room was provided and relayed to the Centre, this did not extend to the lavatory and there was no observation of young prisoners in their rooms. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.08 *Wing staff facilities should be well maintained and redecorated as necessary. (2.4)*

Achieved.

2.09 *Wing cleaners should clean vacant cells before they are reoccupied. (2.4)*

Partially achieved. Young prisoners were required to clean their cells before leaving them. At times wing cleaners were used to supplement this process, but we observed vacant cells that had not been cleaned to a satisfactory standard. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.10 *The conditions, especially cleanliness in cells, should be improved. (2.6)*

Not achieved. We were told that improvements had been made and further plans were in place to improve matters. However, we saw dirty cells in which young prisoners were living and in some cells we found significant levels of graffiti. This was unacceptable and indicated a lack of staff commitment in routinely checking that cells were clear of graffiti. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.11 *The cell heating system should be more efficient. (2.6)*

Not achieved. A review of cell temperatures highlighted concerns in E Wing and the Segregation Unit. The Area Works Adviser had supported the re-submission of a bid to improve conditions in these areas. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.12 *Young prisoners should be able to shut their cell windows. (2.6)*

Not achieved. Some young prisoners were still unable to shut their windows. In one case young prisoners had complained for two days about the cold in their cell but staff had not arranged for the window to be closed. At one point a member of staff had given the young prisoners a plastic bag to place over the window to stop the draft, but another officer had told the young prisoners to remove it. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.13 *An offensive displays policy should be published and properly enforced. (2.6)*

Achieved. A policy was in place and it was being enforced effectively.

2.14 *Remand and convicted young prisoners should be located separately. (2.7)*

Not achieved. Population pressures made this impractical.

2.15 *Staff supervision should be continuous when the showers in the activities centre are occupied. (2.9)*

Not achieved. There was no supervision of showers in this area when we visited: the two staff in the activities area were attending to young prisoners elsewhere and did not supervise showering. **The showers in the activities centre were in an appalling condition and should be closed or refurbished.**

2.16 *The 'drop-in' centre should be extended to include attendance of representatives from housing and employment agencies, Citizens Advice Bureau, Relate, the Samaritans etc. (2.9)*

Not achieved. This facility was no longer operational. Other systems were, however, in place to allow young prisoners access to Reading Careers Service, bail information and housing support, as well as to the Samaritans

2.17 *The shower room off A Wing should be closed. (2.10)*

Achieved. This area had been refurbished, but it was not used as frequently as possible.

2.18 *The space occupied by the showers off the Forbury Workshop should be put to better use. (2.10)*

Not achieved. Plans were in place to make greater use of this area as a showering facility for all young prisoners. We were concerned that young prisoners did not have regular access to showers and some of the showering facilities were unacceptably dirty and damaged. **Young prisoners should have the opportunity for daily showers in clean and decent conditions.**

2.19 *Notice board information should be improved. (2.11)*

Achieved. Notice boards were well maintained and plans were in place for them to be replaced with lockable glass-fronted cabinets.

2.20 *An amenities committee should be provided. (2.11)*

Not achieved. There was no amenities committee. **We repeat the recommendation.**

Catering

2.21 *More bread should be made available at meal times. (2.13)*

Not achieved. Only two slices of bread were allowed per young prisoner and this was strictly enforced at the serveries. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.22 *Arrangements to clean the meal trays should be improved, and this should be the responsibility of the catering department. (2.14)*

Not achieved. As it was felt neither the facilities nor staff existed in the kitchen to complete this task, young prisoners were still responsible for cleaning trays. They had received some training and although the trays were generally clean, the machines did leave watermarks.

2.23 *A facility to heat the meal trays on which meals are served should be provided. (2.14)*

Not achieved. The cost of providing equipment to heat trays was felt to be prohibitive.

2.24 *Training to NVQ standard in catering should be considered for selected young prisoners. (2.14)*

Not achieved. No young prisoners worked in the kitchen area. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.25 *An Environmental Health Officer's report should be obtained. (2.15)*

Achieved. Reports were available dated September 1999 and March 2001.

2.26 *Plans to introduce food comments books and to set up consultative meetings should be introduced. (2.15)*

Not achieved. We repeat the recommendation.

2.27 *The lunchtime meal should not be served before 12.00 noon. (2.16)*

Not achieved. The lunchtime meal was served at 11.30am and the evening meal often as early as 16.15pm depending on staff availability. **We repeat the recommendation.**

Clothing Exchange

2.28 *The clothing exchange store should meet statutory requirements for health and safety and for basic security; there should be higher input from managers into the clothing exchange system. (2.22)*

2.29 *Controls for bedding and clothing should be improved. (2.22)*

Partially achieved. The clothing exchange store remained in the small, unsuitable accommodation. No boxes were stored at above head height. The store was visited by the supplies Principal Officer and duty Senior Officers but there was little further evidence of management input to the clothing exchange system.

2.30 *There should be specified maximum and minimum holdings of clothing and bedding. (2.22)*

Achieved.

2.31 *There should be nominated relief for the clothing exchange storeman. (2.22)*

Achieved.

2.32 *Suitable arrangements should be in place to deal with infected kit items.*

(2.22)

Achieved. Infected items, which mainly came from the hospital, were placed in a separate incinerator bag.

2.33 *Arrangements should be in place to ensure that every young prisoner exchanges bedding and clothing every week. (2.22)*

Achieved. This was done on a rota basis for each landing or unit.

2.34 *The arrangements for the initial issue of clothing and bedding from reception should be improved. (2.22)*

Achieved.

Prison Shop

2.35 *Prison officers should be replaced by operational support grades in the establishment shop. (2.25)*

Not achieved. The prison shop was staffed by two prison officers on a main shift basis Monday to Friday and one prison officer at weekends. The recommendation had been accepted by management but had not been implemented. **We repeat the recommendation.**

Education

2.36 *The role for the education department in the induction process should be reviewed with a programme of testing introduced. This information should be used to develop the educational programme. (2.32)*

Achieved. As part of the induction process all young prisoners visited the education department and were given the basic skills assessment. In addition, the opportunity was taken to gather information from the young prisoners to assist in placing them on appropriate courses in the education department.

2.37 *Provision of education facilities for the Abbey and Segregation Units should be improved. (2.33)*

Achieved. The Abbey Unit no longer existed and all young prisoners could have education.

2.38 *The quality of curriculum planning should be improved. (2.34)*

Not inspected.

2.39 *The length of teaching sessions should be reviewed. (2.34)*

Not inspected.

2.40 *The Education Manager, with the support of senior managers in the establishment, should consider ways of improving attendance levels. (2.35)*

Not inspected.

2.41 *Links between the education department and the local Careers Service Company should be improved. (2.37)*

Not inspected.

2.42 *Scope for extending the work of the Careers Service in the prison should be explored. (2.37)*

Not inspected.

2.43 *The Education Service lacked a detailed staff training plan, and this should be reviewed. (2.41)*

Not inspected.

2.44 *The Head of Service should be given further support and training in dealing with the new and developing role. (2.41)*

Not inspected.

2.45 *The practice of requiring the education manager to supervise young prisoners using the shop should cease. (2.42)*

Not inspected.

2.46 *The policy of paying teaching staff 50% less during periods of training should be reviewed. (2.42)*

Not inspected.

2.47 *Material in the Library relating to employment, training and careers should be improved. (2.43)*

Not inspected.

Employment

2.48 *More work opportunities with accreditation should be provided. (2.45)*

Achieved. With the exception of the charity shop there were no workshops in the establishment. The Kennet unit offered formal training leading to real work and educational courses were mostly modular with unit accreditation.

Gardens

2.49 *Consideration should be given to undertaking gardening work in the local community under temporary licence. (2.49)*

Not achieved. The emphasis was on equipping young prisoners with skills that would lead to jobs and a career.

Requests / Complaints

2.50 *Response times for dealing with requests/complaints should be examined.*
(2.52)

Not achieved. The figures provided to us indicated that 63% of complaints received a reply within seven days, though in December this dropped to 33%. A senior officer was responsible for chasing replies and co-ordinating responses. **We repeat the recommendation.**

Physical Education

2.51 *The showers in the main Gym should be deep cleaned, including the ceiling.*
(2.54)

Achieved. The PE area had been refurbished soon after our last inspection.

Visits

2.52 *The Assisted Prison Visits Scheme should be advertised more prominently in the visits' waiting room.* (2.57)

Achieved.

2.53 *The provision for searching legal visitors should be reviewed.* (2.58)

Achieved. Generally legal visitors were not searched but we were told that a small percentage (5%-10%) of those arriving in cars were searched.

2.54 *Consideration should be given to redecorating the visitors' waiting room.*
(2.58)

Achieved.

2.55 *The main visits room should be re-decorated and an alternative seating arrangement introduced.* (2.61)

Partially achieved. Redecoration had been accomplished and the 'snake' seating arrangement was to be replaced by an informal arrangement with chairs and low tables.

Chaplaincy

2.56 *Young prisoners should not have to forgo other regime activities in order to participate in a religious service. Full consideration should be given to rearranging the regime to avoid such clashes. (2.64)*

Partially achieved. For young prisoners in A Wing, the church services still clashed with exercise, gym and other activities.

Other Observations

2.57 Since there was no multi-faith room, suitable available accommodation had to be found each time some young prisoners wished to worship. Roman Catholic services took place only twice a month as no Roman Catholic chaplain had been appointed to fill the vacancy created in the summer of 2001. **Young prisoners of all faiths should have access to regular religious services and suitable worship facilities.**

Mail and Telephones

2.58 *Two members of staff should always be present to open incoming post. (2.66)*
Achieved.

2.59 *Samaritans posters should be more prominent. (2.67)*

Achieved. Young prisoners received Samaritan cards when newly arrived at Reading.

2.60 *All card telephones should have acoustic privacy hoods. (2.67)*

Not achieved. Not all telephones had privacy hoods. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.61 *Opportunities to use the telephone should be increased for those on full-time education, on the basic regime and in the Segregation Unit. (2.67)*

Partially achieved. Provision had been increased for young prisoners in the Segregation Unit, but the needs of young prisoners undertaking full time education were not being fully met.

Sentence Planning

2.62 *Needs of unconvicted young prisoners should be identified on reception. (2.68)*

Achieved. All young prisoners, irrespective of legal status went through the induction programme and could receive most of the services available.

2.63 *Custody plans should focus on offenders' needs. (2.68)*

Not achieved. Custody plans were not prepared on unsentenced young prisoners.

2.64 *Formal multi-disciplinary Sentence Plan boards should be held with the offender in attendance. (2.70)*

Partially achieved. Sentence plan boards were held only for those young prisoners who were in Kennet Unit, the drugs programme or involved in the Enhanced Thinking Skills programme, but there was no formal system and attendance varied.

Vulnerable young prisoners

2.65 *Full consideration should be given to expanding and enhancing the daily regime for vulnerable young prisoners to provide them with facilities that more closely match those for the rest of the population at Reading. (3.4)*

Achieved. Young prisoners in what was previously E Wing and was now called the Separate Young prisoners Unit had a better regime spending more time out of cell during the daytime. Much of the morning was spent in a 'domestics' period followed by exercise and then education. The afternoon was spent on association when young prisoners could have showers and make telephone calls. On two afternoons each week there was the opportunity to go to the gymnasium. There was no evening association. **There should be provision for some evening association every week.**

Incentives and Earned Privileges

2.66 *The 'Fast track' system for putting selected individuals on the enhanced level should be reviewed. (3.11)*

Partially achieved. A 'fast track' system was still in place, but a board considered young prisoners for suitability for enhanced status. There was very little detail contained on the forms submitted in this process.

Race Relations and Foreign Nationals

2.67 *Efforts should be made to ensure that the exit survey of young prisoners' opinions on race relations in Reading proceeds as planned. (3.13)*

Not achieved. However, a wider exit questionnaire covering matters including race relations was in draft stage and it was planned to issue this to young prisoners shortly before they attended a discharge board. **The revised questionnaire should be issued.**

Anti-bullying policy and practice

2.68 *The programme on Abbey Unit should be expanded to offer a more positive and therapeutic regime for those identified as bullies. (3.18)*

Not achieved. The Abbey Unit no longer existed and any young prisoner identified as a bully was dealt with on normal location. The current anti-bullying strategy was in need of review as it was outdated and could not work; for example, it stated that bullies would be placed in an inmate development unit which did not exist. There were no meaningful interventions to challenge those identified as bullies. The current procedure, put in place two weeks before this inspection, involved a semi-structured interview with a psychological assistant to identify whether an Enhanced Thinking Skills course would be appropriate. **The anti-bullying strategy should be reviewed without delay.**

2.69 *Consideration should be given to establishing an Anti-bullying Committee. (3.20)*

Achieved.

Use of Control and Restraint

2.70 *More managers should be trained [and refreshed] in the use of Control and Restraint. (3.23)*

Not achieved. This recommendation had been rejected. Priority was given to training uniformed staff and this took place monthly and included refresher training.

2.71 *Control and Restraint supervisors should ensure that all use of force forms are filled in correctly and with sufficient information. (3.25)*

Achieved. The forms that we sampled had been properly completed. In the period January to December 2001, C&R had been used on 122 occasions, averaging ten per month. This was low considering the young prisoner population.

Security

2.72 *Training in security intelligence should be provided. (3.28)*

Achieved. Relevant staff had been trained and the system was working effectively.

2.73 *Searching targets should be achieved and searching of visitors should be increased. (3.29)*

Achieved. Searching targets were being met and searching of visitors had been increased.

2.74 *The policy on the use of closed visits should be reviewed. (3.30)*

Achieved. The policy had been reviewed, but it remained the practice for young prisoners with proven MDT positive charges to be placed on closed visits as a matter of routine.

2.75 *The level of searching of out workers should be revised. (3.32)*

Achieved. The local searching strategy specified strip-searching for outworkers and we were assured this was being complied with in all instances.

Drug Strategy

2.76 *Drug awareness training should form part of the induction for new staff. (3.36)*

Partially achieved. Although this did not form part of induction for new staff, trained officers provided drug awareness training; Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) monies had funded this work.

2.77 *Efforts to reduce the supply of illegal drugs entering the establishment should be increased. (3.37)*

Achieved. A passive drugs dog was now used in the establishment.

2.78 *Health, safety and hygiene matters in the Mandatory Drug Testing (MDT) suite should be addressed. (3.39)*

Achieved. A new portacabin was used as the MDT suite and conditions were considerably better than in the previous accommodation.

2.79 *The drug strategy should be based on a needs analysis and should be revised accordingly. (3.41)*

Achieved. A new draft strategy was currently being considered by the Area Drugs Co-ordinator. This had been based on a recent rapid assessment that had been undertaken by the new Drug Service Manager in co-operation with officers and members of the psychology and drug services departments.

Other Observations

2.80 A Drug Service Manager had been appointed to manage the various activities related to addressing substance use. Apart from discipline officers who were engaged in MDT and Voluntary Drug Testing, two extra officers were funded by CSR monies to deliver programmes. The existing provider of the 'RAPt' programme delivering the first five steps of the 12-step programme was to cease work at Reading. Cranstoun was contracted to provide the CARAT service and Cranstoun workers were part of the Drug Service Manager's team; the impending appointment of a nurse specialising in detoxification would complete the team complement. Currently there were evening self help groups run weekly by Alcoholics Anonymous on Mondays and by Narcotics Anonymous on Tuesdays.

2.81 At the time of this unannounced inspection, the manager was working on plans to introduce an additional programme that would be accredited either through the Open College Network or by the Prison Service's Area Psychologist. The programme was aimed at young prisoners serving sentences of up to six months. There would be six groups of up to 12 participants and work would also address problems with alcohol. At the outset, at the induction programme for all young prisoners, a throughcare or drug referral worker would be able to link young prisoners with community agencies. We found the work currently being undertaken in substance use to be properly co-ordinated, well thought out and based on recently assessed need. It was recognised that many young prisoners would not be at Reading

for long and a short programme would ensure that participants would be able to complete it before release.

Suicide awareness

2.82 *All efforts should be put into ensuring that plans for the Buddy Scheme are followed up. (3.43)*

Achieved. A buddy scheme was in operation using young prisoners trained by the prison and supported by the Samaritans.

2.83 *Consideration should be given to establishing 24-hour medical and nursing cover at Reading. Efforts should be made to improve the conditions in which the most vulnerable young prisoners are kept. (3.48)*

Partially achieved. The conditions for vulnerable young prisoners had improved.

We repeat the recommendation for medical cover.

Reception

2.84 *Reception staff should regularly monitor the quality of the video and replace it when worn. (4.3)*

Partially achieved. As part of the redecoration and refurbishment of the reception area the video was not currently available, but there were plans to update it.

2.85 *Efforts should be made to remove as many of the potential ligature points in the holding areas in Reception. (4.4)*

Achieved. The holding rooms in reception were generally free of ligature points.

First Night Induction

2.86 *Staffing issues should be resolved to enable the planned 48-hour rolling Induction programme to be introduced without delay. (4.6)*

Achieved. There was a team of eight induction officers, with two on duty at any one time.

2.87 *Induction cells should be improved. (4.8)*

Partially achieved. There were televisions in cells and proper cabinets. In-cell toilets were not screened and the cells could be cold.

2.88 *New receptions should be offered radios. (4.9)*

Not achieved. The Chaplaincy had provided radios to those who needed them and few of these radios remained. This recommendation was considered no longer relevant in view of the availability of televisions.

2.89 *Reception packs should be issued to new receptions. (4.10)*

Achieved. All new reception young prisoners received either a smoker's or a non-smoker's pack. This was accompanied by a comprehensive information pack including separate leaflets about daily regimes, CARATs, anti-bullying, health care, Home Detention Curfew and the Board of Visitors. This did not apply to young prisoners arriving from another establishment.

2.90 *Systems should be in place to allow new receptions to receive small amounts of money at or during their initial visit. (4.10)*

Not achieved. Managers were not prepared to allow the handing in of money on visits; all money had to be sent through the post.

2.91 *Disruptions to Induction Board interviews should be minimised and the process reviewed. (4.12)*

Achieved. The disruption had been caused by visits. On the first day of induction a young prisoner was now not permitted a visit until after 15.00 hrs.

2.92 *Reception interviews should be held in private. (4.13)*

Achieved. Dedicated interview rooms had been built for this purpose.

2.93 *All new receptions should have basic skills assessment tests during the induction period. (4.14)*

Achieved. This was done on the second morning of the induction process but was not repeated if a young prisoner had recently completed the test.

2.94 *Members of the Board of Visitors, volunteers from the Samaritans, Substance Abuse Counsellors and Careers advisors should be included in the revised Induction*

programme. Other young prisoners should also be used to impart information in appropriate circumstances. (4.16)

Partially achieved. Only induction staff gave presentations on the programme since it was felt that the structure of the programme would make inputs from other staff too difficult to organise and too time consuming. The wing cleaner was responsible for showing young prisoners how to make up their bed pack and a Buddy came to the wing to deal with any problems and offer advice.

Care of Juveniles (under seventeen year old remands)

2.95 *All staff should attend TSA training courses as an establishment priority. (4.17)*

2.96 *Juveniles should be located separately from young prisoners and have specially selected 'role model' staff. (4.17)*

No longer applicable. Reading did not hold juveniles.

Home Detention Curfew (HDC)

2.97 *Young prisoners eligible for HDC should not be transferred to another establishment or received from other establishments until HDC applications are complete. (4.22)*

Partially achieved. There were good links between the HDC unit at Reading and those at Onley and Feltham, which meant that any uncompleted applications continued to be processed at the new establishment. In the period August 2001 to January 2002 on average just over half the young prisoners had been released under HDC. In that period only one young prisoner had breached his conditions of release.

2.98 *The allocation of HDC Risk Assessment work should be reviewed. (4.25)*

Achieved. The HDC officer now completed risk assessments routinely as part of her job.

2.99 *Additional staff training in HDC arrangements should be provided. (4.26)*

No longer applicable. New young prisoners were provided with an information leaflet on arrival about the HDC process.

Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL)

2.100 *Post Release on Temporary Licence case conferences should be held with young prisoners. (4.30)*

Not achieved. ROTL was used almost exclusively on Kennet wing.

2.101 *Community visits should be provided as appropriate for young prisoners. (4.31)*

Achieved.

Community activities

2.102 *The discharge diary for young prisoners should contain information to record feedback and progress reports of prisoners. (4.32)*

Not achieved. Information on progress was recorded on the young prisoner's wing file.

2.103 *We strongly recommend that the establishment seek private sponsorship for the housing project if the Prison Service cannot fund it. (4.40)*

Not achieved. A housing association had expressed interest but the drop-in centre project had not materialised.

Legal Aid and Bail

2.104 *The provision of evening legal visits should be considered. (4.45)*

Not achieved. Legal visits were not offered in the evening.

2.105 *Prison Reform Trust information booklets should be issued to every new reception. (4.45)*

Not achieved. These were not being issued, but young prisoners did receive a local information pack that was detailed and of high quality.

2.106 *Interview facilities for probation service officers on C Wing should be improved. (4.46)*

Achieved. These were now adequate for their purpose.

Management of Throughcare

2.107 *The regime should be reviewed. (4.48)*

Achieved.

2.108 *Important work being undertaken with young prisoners in Education should not be hindered by avoidable disruptions. (4.48)*

Partially achieved. The action plan in response to the last inspection report identified the prison shop as being the only avoidable disruption. This had been remedied by shop items being bagged up and taken to young prisoners in education. There remained occasions when staff shortages meant that education sessions had to be cancelled.

2.109 *Responsibility for Throughcare should be separated from the Residential function and the Sentence Management Unit should be included in the new Throughcare function. (4.49)*

Achieved. The Senior Management Team included a Head of Prisoner Development and a Head of Resettlement.

2.110 *An analysis should be carried out to enable managers to plan a range of interventions that are known to protect against re-offending on release and which are appropriate for the needs of young prisoners in Reading. (4.50)*

Not achieved. A needs analysis undertaken prior to the last inspection had resulted in the development of drugs services and accredited programmes. Several staff told us that once systems were in place for routine custody and sentence planning of all young prisoners, the data collected would inform the development of further services. This could take too long. **We repeat the recommendation.**

Probation Department

2.111 *The time is now right for a further review of the role and staffing of the Probation Department in the light of the increased numbers of sentenced young prisoners in the population of the establishment and the importance of effective throughcare for young prisoners. (4.52)*

Achieved. The level of Probation staffing was still recognised as inadequate and, if resources allowed, more Probation involvement would be sought in Kennet wing and in the delivery of programmes.

Psychology

2.112 *A Psychology Unit should be established to support the work of throughcare and resettlement with young prisoners. (4.53)*

Achieved. One psychologist post and one psychology assistant had been employed primarily to deliver the Enhanced Thinking Skills programme. The psychology assistant assisted other departments in the production of statistics and survey work and had recently taken on one-to-one work with young prisoners on basic regime. There was scope for psychological input to the small number of young prisoners with special needs such as life sentenced young prisoners, sex offenders and those at risk of self-harm.

Kennet House Unit

2.113 *Kennet House Unit should be formally evaluated. (4.58)*

Achieved. The establishment had reviewed the success of the unit. It was a part of the establishment that worked well and it was meeting the resettlement needs of young prisoners.

Health Care

2.114 *The need for medical time should be reviewed in light of the findings of the needs assessment exercise. (5.4)*

Achieved.

2.115 *Recruitment may be improved using a joint nursing service between the establishment and a local practice for primary care and between the establishment, and a local mental health trust for mental health care; this should be considered.*

(5.6)

Achieved. There had been recent recruitment of nursing staff and a nurse specialising in detoxification was to be appointed.

2.116 *There should be a review of the need of the service for clerical and other support. (5.8)*

Achieved. A part-time administrative officer was now part of the team.

2.117 *Staff should have their training requirements reviewed annually and plans to meet these needs should be included in staff annual appraisals. (5.9)*

Achieved. Each member of staff had time bounded individual objectives and training plans.

2.118 *A formal clinical audit programme should be established and reviewed annually. (5.10)*

Not achieved. We repeat the recommendation.

2.119 *Senior Management Group (SMG) meetings should be timed to allow the attendance of the doctor. (5.11)*

Achieved. The health care manager was part of the SMG and attended their meetings

2.120 *The Governor should establish contact with the chief executive of Berkshire Health Authority with a view to developing needs assessment and a HISP for the establishment and following this planning for the health care service and the health care budget should be needs based. (5.12)*

Achieved. The Governor attended health authority meetings. These were for Health Improvement (HIMP) and not HISP as incorrectly worded in the original recommendation.

Health Care Centre

2.121 *Outdoor facilities for health care patients should be improved. (5.17)*

No longer applicable. There were no longer in-patients at Reading.

2.122 *The doctor's surgery should, as a minimum, meet HCS 3.1 standard. (5.19)*

Achieved.

2.123 *Disturbed and vulnerable young people coming into the establishment should not be placed in isolated, unfurnished rooms with no professional supervision. (5.22)*

Achieved. There were ligature-free care suites available for young prisoners who needed extra attention.

2.124 *The proportion of general and mental health nurses should meet the identified needs of young prisoners. (5.23)*

Achieved. Staffing levels were correct and recent recruitment had provided an appropriate mixture of nurses and health care officers in general and mental nursing.

2.125 *The need for specialist mental health care should be reviewed in light of the needs assessment. (5.24)*

Achieved. The needs assessment had identified a post for a forensic psychiatrist and a contract for a suitable candidate was in the process of being negotiated.

2.126 *The genito-urinary medicine service audit results should be published. (5.25)*

Achieved. Statistical information was regularly provided to the NHS for input to their records.

2.127 *The service should be equipped to allow the most effective treatment for genital warts. (5.25)*

Achieved. Cryotherapy treatment was now available to patients.

2.128 *A telephone should be provided in the medical room in reception. (5.26)*

Achieved. A mobile telephone was available for use.

2.129 *A working group should consider the mental health care of young prisoners arriving at Reading. (5.28)*

Partially achieved. A preliminary study of the quality of life as perceived by young prisoners and staff had been undertaken by the Berkshire NHS Health Authority and their findings were still in draft. Based on this, mental health promotion was on the agenda for the next Health Improvement meeting.

Other Observations

2.130 Reading was now a Type 2 Health Care Centre and there was no longer any provision for 24-hour cover. Individual patient rooms were now used as offices or for Mandatory and Voluntary Drug testing. The Health Care Centre also provided rooms for groupwork and a Parenting class was in session when we visited the area. There were plans to return to 24-hour cover later in the year. A new Head of Health Care had been appointed and health care staff comprised a mixture of health care officers and F grade nurses. Out of hours cover was provided by the existing GP and by the Senior Medical Officer at HMYOI Aylesbury. There appeared to be a good service to patients and waiting times to see visiting specialists were minimal.

Pharmacy

2.131 *A maximum/minimum thermometer should be obtained and the temperature range recorded daily. (5.30)*

Partially achieved. Temperature ranges were not being recorded and **this should be rectified.**

2.132 *The set of keys in the governor's safe should be held in a pouch with a number, and records should be kept of use. (5.31)*

Achieved.

2.133 *Medicines that have gone outside of the control of the health centre staff (e.g. in-possession items) should not be reused. (5.32)*

Achieved. Any unused medicines were sent to the pharmacy at Bullingdon.

2.134 *The contents of the resuscitation drugs kit should be checked regularly and replaced when appropriate. (5.33)*

Achieved.

2.135 *Current editions of reference books should be obtained. (5.33)*

Achieved. These were usually sent by the pharmacist at Bullingdon.

2.136 *The maximum/minimum temperatures should be recorded daily. (5.34)*

Not achieved. We repeat the recommendation.

2.137 *A list of the stock of medicines should be formally adopted and reviewed regularly. (5.36)*

Achieved. An agreed stock list was regularly reviewed and this was last undertaken in November 2001.

2.138 *All items should be added to the PMR in order that a complete patient profile is kept. (5.36)*

Achieved. All nurse issued medication was entered on patients' medication cards.

2.139 *The front pages of charts should be completed. (5.37)*

Achieved.

2.140 *A formal written 'in-possession' policy should be drawn up. (5.38)*

Partially achieved. We found a list of 'in-possession' drugs and stock lists were kept.

2.141 *A system should be implemented so that every stock item sent to Reading is labelled with a control code which is recorded at HMP Bullingdon. (5.39)*

Not achieved. We repeat the recommendation.

2.142 *The current 'special sick' list should be formally adopted. Further written guidance should be made available. (5.40)*

Partially achieved. 'Special sick' lists were maintained but written guidance was still needed.

2.143 *All treatments should be recorded on the treatment card. (5.40)*

Achieved.

2.144 *The Gatehouse key should be kept in a pouch with a numbered seal and a record book kept detailing any such access. (5.41)*

Not achieved. We repeat the recommendation.

2.145 *A formal written protocol should be in place, and appropriate records maintained for Paracetamol kept in the main Control Centre. (5.42)*

No longer applicable. A Governor's Order prohibited night staff from issuing paracetamol.

2.146 *When prescribing controlled drugs this should be written up on the treatment card HR013, a copy together with the original prescription sent to HMP Bullingdon, and the prescription form should be retained at Bullingdon. (5.44)*

No longer applicable. There were no controlled drugs held at Reading at the time of this inspection.

2.147 *The use of Diazepam and Dihydrocodeine as a detoxification therapy should be monitored and regular reconciliation checks made. (5.45)*

Partially achieved. The current detoxification policy was to be reviewed. In the period 1st October 2000 to 30th September 2001, 122 patients had completed the detoxification programme for drugs and a further seven had completed detoxification from alcohol.

2.148 *The pharmacist should become more involved in developing and reviewing policy. (5.46)*

Partially achieved. The pharmacist from Bullingdon attended Reading twice each year and there had been some policy input. For example, the number of daily treatment times had been reduced from four to two times a day.

Dental

2.149 *Extra sessions should be provided and suitable arrangements made for emergency cover at those times when the dentist is unable to attend. (5.47)*

Achieved. There were no young prisoners on the waiting list at the time of this unannounced inspection.

2.150 *The emergency drugs kit should be brought up-to-date and serviced regularly. (5.48)*

Achieved.

2.151 *The following additions should be made to the surgery:*

- *refilling of positive pressure oxygen cylinder*
- *mercury spillage tray and kit*
- *facility for the development of radiographs*
- *repair of the head of the X-ray machine*
- *repair/renewal of the ultrasonic scaler*
- *disposable paper towels should be supplied*
- *all the dental team should undergo regular CPR training.*

Achieved.

Management Services

2.152 *Sick leave management should be given a higher priority. (6.11)*

Achieved. A review of sickness absence was conducted monthly and the Governor reviewed sick leave cases daily.

2.153 *Training should be given to staff dealing with sick leave management matters. (6.11)*

Achieved.

Staff

2.154 *The changes to the staff detailing during the changeover should be managed to ensure that variations of TOIL are kept to a minimum. (6.18)*

Achieved. TOIL averaged 2.1 hours for each officer and the situation had been improved with the introduction of a system of central detailing.

2.155 *The use of operational support grades should be extended. (6.20)*

Partially achieved. There remained scope for the further extension of Operational Support Grade staff, for example in the prison shop.

Staff Induction, Training and Investors in People

2.156 *Establishment Business Plans should be produced so that individual performance objectives and training needs can be identified to compile the establishment Training Plan. (6.22)*

Achieved.

2.157 *Staff working with young offenders should receive Trust for the Study of Adolescence training as a priority. (6.23)*

Not achieved. We repeat the recommendation.

2.158 *Training should be evaluated; systems should be available to enable line managers to identify positive changes to staff performance as a result of training. (6.24)*

Partially achieved. There was some rudimentary evaluation of courses but none which fed into line management to enable evaluation of putting into practice what had been learned or any resulting changes in performance. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.159 *First Aid or Short Duration Breathing Apparatus (SDBA) training should be provided for night staff. (6.24)*

No longer applicable. SDBA was not available

Equal Opportunities, Facilities for the Disabled and Staff Facilities

2.160 *Staff should be made aware of “Harassment at Work”, “Discrimination” and “Race Relations” issues. (6.26)*

Partially achieved. In 2001 nine staff had been trained in Race Relations, eight had been trained in Equal Opportunities and 61 in Sexual Harassment. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.161 *The establishment equal opportunities liaison officer should be on the distribution list for minutes from the Race Relations Management Team meetings. (6.26)*

Achieved.

2.162 *There should be more female middle and senior managers. (6.27)*

Achieved.

2.163 *More staff from ethnic minority groups should be recruited. (6.27)*

Achieved.

2.164 *There should be a review of all staff facilities for those with disabilities. (6.28)*

Achieved.

The Estate

2.165 *Plenum systems should be replaced. (7.3)*

Not achieved. Management did not accept this recommendation. The existing system had been cleaned at a cost of £20,000.

2.166 *The windows should be replaced. (7.4)*

2.167 *Cell Certifications should reflect accurately conditions in the establishment. (7.5)*

Not achieved. Some cells still do not meet the minimum temperature requirements particularly in the segregation unit. Capital bids have been submitted but have not been successful. **We repeat the recommendations.**

2.168 *Slates on the roof of the clothing exchange stores building should be removed, refixed and any structural repairs found necessary, be carried out. (7.6)*

Not achieved. This work had been listed to be carried out but was not seen as a priority. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.169 *There should be a running programme of repairs to brickwork. (7.6)*

Not achieved. The work would require major capital and it was not seen as a priority. **We repeat the recommendation.**

2.170 *Vegetation should be removed promptly. (7.6)*

Achieved.

2.171 *The plywood cladding on the elevations of the building housing the Works department should be replaced. (7.6)*

Achieved.

2.172 *The Planned Prevention Maintenance programme should be brought back. (7.7)*

Achieved.

Health and Safety

2.173 *Safety Audits should be completed annually. The Policy/Statement of Arrangements should be improved further by clearer definition. (7.8)*

Achieved. Audits were completed on time and the Health and Safety policy had been reviewed twice since the last inspection.

2.174 *There should be a radiation protection supervisor. (7.8)*

Achieved.

2.175 *The dental compressor should be included in the establishment's Schedule of Equipment held by the Works department and be inspected regularly, as the law requires. (7.8)*

Achieved.

2.176 *The kitchen cold room alarms should be able to attract attention at all times. (7.8)*

Achieved.

2.177 *Cleaning standards in the shower area, the art room and the associated recess should be improved. (7.8)*

Achieved.

Fire Precautions

2.178 *Sufficient facility time should be provided for the fire officer to properly discharge all his responsibilities. (7.9)*

Achieved. Two additional Operational Support Grade staff had been trained to attend to maintenance such as fire fighting equipment and surveys. One officer was also a retained fire fighter for Buckinghamshire Fire Authority and provided expertise to fire precautions necessary at this establishment.

2.179 *The Fire Inspectorate recommendations should be carried out as a matter of some urgency. (7.9)*

Achieved.

2.180 *Fire training and SDBA training should be kept up-to-date. (7.10)*

Partially achieved. Fire training had been undertaken within the past 12 months although there had been no training or fire drills since September 2001. SDBA training was not regarded as a priority as the local fire station was three minutes away.

2.181 *All departments should hold an annual evacuation exercise; some exercises should be carried out after dark. (7.11)*

Partially achieved. There had been six exercises in 2001 but none after dark.

2.182 *Facilities for the disabled should be checked throughout the establishment and brought up to a safe standard. (7.12)*

Partially achieved. There were ramps into the visits room but there was no wheelchair access to the main prison.

CHAPTER THREE

HEALTH PRISON SUMMARY

3.01 The Healthy Prison concept was introduced in our thematic review ‘Suicide is Everyone's Concern’. The four criteria regarding the treatment of and conditions for prisoners in a healthy prison are:

- prisoners are held in safety;
- prisoners are treated with respect as fellow human beings;
- prisoners are given the opportunity to engage in purposeful activity;
- prisoners are helped to reduce the likelihood of re-offending and prepare for release.

Test 1 - The weakest prisoners feel safe

3.02 Reading was a safe place for young prisoners: we were told this by young prisoners themselves and staff cared that the environment in which young prisoners lived and in which they worked was controlled and safe.

3.03 Young prisoners were introduced to Reading in a way that encouraged them to feel safe: the reception procedure was sensitive and appropriately managed; first night arrangements were good and there was an effective 48-hour induction programme.

3.04 Use of force in the establishment was closely monitored by the Governor and senior managers to ensure that its use was legitimate and as a last resort.

3.05 In some areas, however, there was a need for closer supervision of young prisoners: this applied particularly to showers and during the night in Kennet Unit. There was also room for development in anti-bullying work following a detailed and useful local survey highlighting areas of concern and issues to be addressed.

Test 2 – Prisoners are treated with respect as individuals

3.06 In individual relationships between staff and young prisoners we found no matters of concern. Indeed, we were impressed by the staff's recognition of the specific needs of a young prisoner population, and young prisoners to whom we spoke said that staff, in general, cared about their problems.

3.07 There was, however, a lack of respect towards young prisoners at an institutional and systemic level. This expressed itself in the failure of staff and systems to address some of the basic needs of young prisoners. We found dirty and cold cells in which young prisoners were living and which staff did not challenge or assist young prisoners to improve. Some cell walls had graffiti, some of it obscene; again, staff did nothing to challenge this. There were no amenities consultation groups nor even a food comments book. Changes had recently been made to the Incentives and Earned Privileges system to make it fairer and less open to abuse, but this was meeting with some staff resistance. Young prisoners had limited access to showers and the condition of some of them was appalling. There was no identified multi-faith room.

3.08 These exemplified an institution in which a lack of respect was systemic but in which many staff also operated on a one-to-one level with care and concern for their young prisoners. There is a need at Reading to build respect and concern for the basic needs of young prisoners into the prevailing culture of the establishment.

Test 3 – Prisoners are fully and purposefully occupied and are expected to improve themselves

3.09 There was very little meaningful work for young prisoners at Reading and the regime on offer was not challenging. Too many spent too long in their cells, and too many staff failed to encourage young prisoners sufficiently to engage fully with the regime that was on offer. The structure of the day, with its division into four parts, resulted in young prisoners spending too much time locked behind their doors either waiting to be unlocked again for another activity or having been allowed to choose not to participate in an activity on offer.

3.10 At the opposite end of the scale, we found some excellent work being undertaken in the Education Centre, and in Kennet unit, with opportunities for training and working out for a select group of young prisoners. This was an excellent and praiseworthy initiative.

Test 4 – Prisoners can strengthen links with their families and prepare themselves for release

3.11 There were few young prisoners leaving Reading through Kennet Unit since it could hold only a maximum of 20 at any one time. However, those who were fortunate to make their way back into the community by this route would be likely to do so with useful qualifications and a job. Other young prisoners might also be released on Home Detention Curfew, and we were impressed with the high numbers being released in this way. It was also good to note that many young prisoners with drug problems would have had these addressed during their time at Reading.

3.12 Unfortunately, staff in general were not fully engaged with the resettlement agenda and it is unlikely this will be the case until sentence planning and personal officer work become meaningful in the establishment.

Conclusion

3.13 During our inspection we found some good practice at Reading, but too much of this was in specialist areas and not enough involved prison officers working on the landings; it was clear from our time at the establishment that there were too many of those staff doing too little work.

3.14 It was also clear that Reading had largely stagnated since our previous inspection and before the appointment of a new Governor five months earlier. He and his closest managers had given the prison direction and there was a sense of movement about the place. We did not consider Reading to be a sick jail, but it had many weaknesses and failings. The new Governor was well aware of these and we left the establishment prison confident of his determination to address them.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Governor

Accommodation and Facilities

- 4.01 Additional blankets should be given to young prisoners who are cold. (2.06)
- 4.02 Young prisoners in Kennet Wing should be observed in their rooms intermittently by staff throughout the night. (2.07)
- 4.03 Wing cleaners should clean vacant cells before they are reoccupied. (2.09)
- 4.04 Conditions, especially cleanliness in cells, should be improved. (2.10)
- 4.05 The cell heating system should be more efficient. (2.11)
- 4.06 Young prisoners should be able to shut their cell windows. (2.12)
- 4.07 The showers in the activities centre should be closed or refurbished. (2.15)
- 4.08 Young prisoners should have the opportunity for daily showers in clean and decent conditions. (2.18)
- 4.09 An amenities committee should be provided. (2.20)

Catering

- 4.10 More bread should be made available at meal times. (2.21)
- 4.11 Training to NVQ standard in catering should be considered for selected young prisoners. (2.24)

4.12 A food comments book and consultative meetings should be introduced.
(2.26)

4.13 The lunchtime meal should not be served before 12 noon. (2.27)

Prison Shop

4.14 Prison officers should be replaced by operational support grades in the establishment shop. (2.35)

Requests / Complaints

4.15 Response times for dealing with requests/complaints should be examined.
(2.50)

Chaplaincy

4.16 Young prisoners of all faiths should have access to regular religious services and suitable worship facilities. (2.57)

Mail and Telephones

4.17 All card telephones should have acoustic privacy hoods. (2.60)

Vulnerable Prisoners

4.18 There should be provision for some evening association for vulnerable young prisoners every week. (2.65)

Race Relations and Foreign Nationals

4.19 The revised questionnaire should be issued. (2.67)

Anti-Bullying

4.20 The anti-bullying strategy should be reviewed without delay. (2.68)

Suicide awareness

4.21 Consideration should be given to establishing 24-hour medical and nursing cover at Reading. (2.83)

Management of Throughcare

- 4.22 An analysis should be carried out to enable managers to plan a range of interventions that are known to protect against re-offending on release and which are appropriate for the needs of young prisoners in Reading. (2.110)

Health Care

- 4.23 A formal clinical audit programme should be established and reviewed annually. (2.118)

Pharmacy

- 4.24 Maximum and minimum refrigerator temperatures should be recorded daily. (2.131 and 2.136)
- 4.25 A system should be implemented so that every stock item sent to Reading is labelled with a control code, which is recorded at HMP Bullingdon. (2.141)
- 4.26 The Gatehouse key should be kept in a pouch with a numbered seal and a record book kept detailing any such access. (2.144)

Staff Induction, Training And Investors In People

- 4.27 Staff working with young offenders should receive Trust for the Study of Adolescence training as a priority. (2.157)
- 4.28 Training should be evaluated; systems should be available to enable line managers to identify positive changes to staff performance as a result of training. (2.158)

Equal Opportunities, Facilities for the Disabled and Staff Facilities

- 4.29 Staff should be made aware of “Harassment at Work”, “Discrimination” and “Race Relations” issues. (2.160)

The Estate

- 4.30 The windows should be replaced. Cell Certifications should reflect accurately conditions in the establishment. (2.166 & 2.167)
- 4.31 Slates on the roof of the clothing exchange stores building should be removed, refixed and any structural repairs found necessary, be carried out. (2.168)
- 4.32 There should be a running programme of repairs to brickwork. (2.169)