



18 October 2011

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**NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEFORE 00.01, THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2011**

### **HMYOI AYLESBURY – INSUFFICIENT PROGRESS**

HMYOI Aylesbury was not making sufficient progress in any area other than resettlement, said Nick Hardwick, Chief Inspector of Prisons, publishing the report of an unannounced inspection of the Buckinghamshire young offender institution.

Aylesbury's last full inspection in March 2009 found that the prison was achieving reasonably good outcomes for prisoners in most areas, but there was a lack of opportunity for prisoners to engage in work, training or education. This short follow-up inspection found in some areas, particularly purposeful activity, the outcomes appeared to have declined.

Inspectors were concerned to find that:

- although the number of violent incidents and assaults appeared to be declining, they often involved the use of weapons;
- batons had been drawn by staff on nearly 40 occasions over the last two years and, although used on only a few occasions, this use was much more than inspectors had seen elsewhere;
- staff-prisoner relationships appeared distant;
- there was no drug therapy system in place, and suspicion drug tests were not always carried out;

- accommodation was poor, with dirty cells and insufficient encouragement to prisoners to keep them clean;
- there was far too little for prisoners to do, and 44% of prisoners were locked behind their cell doors during the working part of the day; and
- the quantity and range of work, training and education had decreased.

However, inspectors were pleased to find that:

- although high, the number of incidents where staff used force had declined;
- arrangements to support prisoners at risk of self-harm or suicide had much improved;
- a new management team for education and vocational training had been in place from January 2011 and some improvement was becoming evident; and
- resettlement work was improving, with a comprehensive reducing reoffending strategy, and good work with indeterminate-sentenced prisoners.

Nick Hardwick said:

“A short follow-up inspection is necessarily limited and does not provide a sufficiently comprehensive picture of a prison for us to make the firm judgements that we would in a full inspection. Nevertheless, we saw a prison in which young men serving long sentences spent most of the day locked in their cells and, when they were out on the wings, too little attempt to engage them or help them develop the skills and experience they needed to get and hold down a job on release.

“However, there were signs of improvement. Levels of violence were falling and a new management team was beginning to make an improvement in learning and skills. The prison now needs some assistance to build on this and its improving resettlement work, so that

young men leave the prison having received the support and direction which might help reduce the risk that they offend again.”

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

"Aylesbury has a challenging population and I am pleased that improvement is acknowledged in key areas such as safety, vocational training and resettlement.

“The Governor and staff will now tackle the concerns raised over the use of force, staff-prisoner relationships and purposeful activity.

“All these actions, combined with already the effective resettlement highlighted here, will reduce the likelihood of reoffending and thereby protect the public.”

ENDS

**Notes to Editors:**

1. A copy of the report can be found on the HM Inspectorate of Prisons website from 20 October 2011 at [www.justice.gov.uk/inspectorates/hmi-prisons](http://www.justice.gov.uk/inspectorates/hmi-prisons)
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 unannounced short follow-up inspection was carried out from 3-6 May 2011.
4. HMYOI Aylesbury holds long-term sentenced young adult males aged between 18 and 21 serving from two years to life imprisonment.
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.