HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF PRISONS FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

A Second Chance

A Review of Education and Supporting Arrangements within Units for Juveniles managed by HM Prison Service

A Thematic Review by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales carried out jointly with The Office for Standards in Education

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PREFACE

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the establishment of the Youth Justice Board have led to the most radical reform of the youth justice system since 1908. These reforms created a new relationship between the Prison Service, as the provider of custodial care for almost 90% of the children in custody, and the Youth Justice Board, as the commissioning agency for this provision. The new regime was itself able to build on the plans and additional resources already secured for youth justice within the Prison Service.

I would like to think that these developments were precipitated, at least in part, by the Inspectorate report Young Prisoners, published under my predecessor, Sir David Ramsbotham, which exposed the years of neglect of children held in Prison Service custody.

The Act also created a new sentence, the Detention and Training Order. Sentences are designed to be 'seamless', with much stronger links between periods served in custody and in the community. This requires close collaboration between those caring for children while they are in institutions and the staff of the community-based Youth Offending Teams, who will support them after return to their home area. There has also been a considerable injection of resources into juvenile Prison Service establishments, and much more rigorous targets and standards for time out of cell, education and purposeful activity.

The central and pivotal word in the Detention and Training Order (DTO) is 'training'. It is a sentence designed to provide a new start, a second chance, to children who in many cases have missed out on educational and developmental opportunities. Indeed, there was some initial evidence that the DTO made sentencers more likely to give custodial sentences, in the belief that it would provide positive benefits for children and young people.

This report, based upon Prisons Inspectorate and OFSTED inspections of education and training provisions in all establishments holding children, is the first objective external assessment of that central objective, in the initial phase of the new regime. It needs to be recognised that it reflects inspections carried out between April 2000 and March 2001. It is therefore an account of developments taking place in a rapidly changing system which was learning to cope with new demands and opportunities. It provides a snapshot of particular establishments at different stages in this process: it is a progress report, rather than a verdict.

The report records the progress that has been made within this short time in improving outcomes for children held in Prison Service custody. But it also shows that there is still a long way to go before the Prison Service is able to deliver effective education and training for the 3,000 children held in its care.

It needs to be recognised, first, that it is literally running an impoverished regime. Even after the new resources made available under the Comprehensive Spending review, the average amount spent on education per head in a juvenile Young Offender Institution, (except for two small specialist units') is £3,000 per year, compared with £16,000 in a secure training centre and between £21,000 and £31,000 in a local authority secure unit. It is therefore not surprising, as this report clearly shows, that such Young Offender Institutions are still far from meeting the targets and standards that the Youth Justice Board and Prison Service itself has set for them.

Within a generally disadvantaged juvenile prison population, two groups – remand prisoners and girls – have had an even lower priority, because it has been assumed that they should not be, or shortly will not be, in prison at all. Girls, for example, were supposed to be out of the prison system by April 2001; that deadline has been subsequently extended, at least to April 2002 and probably beyond. It has therefore been difficult for establishments to plan provision for the rising population that they now hold, and, as our inspections show, the consequence has been unacceptable deficits in the care of girls.

Education provision for children in prisons has also suffered from the fact that contracts were negotiated with education providers in advance of the regime requirements for under-18s set out in Prison Service Order 4950. They therefore offer a level and quality of provision that does not meet these requirements, and is inadequate for the needs of the young people. It is welcome that, with the transfer of responsibility to the Prisoners Learning Support Unit of the Department for Education and Skills, that department is renegotiating contracts with providers. It is to be hoped that this ensures that education departments in prisons have the resources and the staff they need.

The report also focuses on where resources need to be targeted. It points out the need to provide sufficient resources for entry level and level 1 literacy and numeracy courses, to meet the needs of many of the children taken into custody (while not, of course, neglecting the needs of the smaller number of medium and high achievers). Ironically, basic skills courses were the least satisfactory of those inspected. It also calls for more creative educational methods, greater use of small group and one to one teaching, more and better vocational and offending behaviour courses, and much better training and support for those teaching a very challenging group of young people. It stresses that education and training need to be an integrated and integral part of the regime in all juvenile establishments, involving residential as well as specialist staff in sentence and training planning. Finally, and importantly, it points to examples of good practice which can and should be spread through the system as a whole.

The report describes a system which is clearly still in development and in transition, and which is dealing with an extremely demanding and vulnerable group of young people. We hope that its conclusions will assist the positive development of the system, to support the staff and young people within it.

Anne Owers CBE
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons

Sections

INTRODUCTION

1.01 The Government has decided, as one of its highest priorities, to raise the educational standards of socially disadvantaged or excluded young people. Most of the young people committed to custody come under this description. Education and training were, therefore, fundamental components of the new youth justice system which came into being in April 2000.

1.02 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons was asked, as a consequence, by the Chairman of the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to undertake an annual inspection of all 13 Young Offender Institutions, contracted by the YJB, accommodating boys under the age of 18 years. The Chief Inspector willingly agreed to this request and sought the assistance of the Office of Standards in Education (OFSTED) from Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools. This was immediately forthcoming and was backed up by the allocation of the necessary staff resources.

1.03 Between 1 April 2000 and 31 March 2001 five full inspections and two unannounced inspections of establishments were carried out by HM Inspectorate of Prisons, with the support of HM Inspectors from OFSTED.

1.04 The remaining six establishments received an inspection of their education arrangements. The reports of these inspections were not published but were sent to the Home Secretary, the Chairman of the YJB and the Director General of HM Prison Service, as well as to the Governors and education contractors of the establishments concerned.

1.05 In addition, four inspections were undertaken of women's establishments which, at the time, held small numbers of young women under the age of 18 years.

1.06 Inspectors from the two inspectorates have therefore worked together on a total of 17 inspections of Prison Service establishments holding young people under the age of 18.

1.07 When these establishments were inspected, they were at different stages of adapting to, and implementing, the changes demanded by the new youth justice system. The examples of good practice and the problems identified by inspectors and referred to in this report thus inevitably date from different points in the development of individual establishments and of the youth justice system as a whole. The information about some establishments is, therefore, more up to date than others.

1.08 Education and training, especially for a group of adolescents disenchanted by their earlier experiences, cannot be effective without being supported by, and integrated into the wider regime of the establishment. An assessment is included in the report of the extent to which this has been achieved. The report also takes particular account of the progress that has been made in meeting:

i) the Standards that the YJB set for all custodial settings in its National Standards for Youth Justice of April 2000[1]; and

ii) the Standards that the Prison Service set for its own establishments in the two Prison Service Orders 4950[2] 'Regimes for Prisoners Under 18 Years Old (July 1999) and 'Regimes for Young Women Under 18 Years Old' (February 2000).

1 Lord Warner (2000) National Standards for Youth Justice. London: Youth Justice Board.

2 HM Prison Service (2000) Prison Service Order No. 4950 Regimes for prisoners under 18 years old issued 29/7/99 and Regimes for young women under 18 years old issued 11/02/00. London: HM Prison Service.

1.09 A brief description of the estate and the juvenile population is given in Chapter 2. The main findings from the inspections and key issues for attention are listed in Chapters 3 and 4. These have been drawn from HM Inspectorate of Prisons' perspective of the evolving picture of the first 12 months of the new youth justice system (Chapter 5), and OFSTED's perspective of education in the juvenile estate with specific reference to basic skills (Chapter 6).

1.10 A brief review of the overall context and background to the youth justice reforms is provided in Appendix I and Appendix II describes the process of preparation for the review and the issues that arose.

1.11 Generally in the report where issues apply to both boys and girls, we have used the male gender, in light of the overwhelming number of boys in the juvenile population. Where issues refer specifically to girls, the female gender has been used.

JUVENILE POPULATION PROFILE

The Estate

2.01 The Youth Justice Board contracted nationally for approximately 3,250 secure places for young people under 18 years of age. Of these, about 250 were in local authority secure units, 120 were in secure training centres and 2,850 were in male Young Offender Institutions.

2.02 The Prison Service establishments were as follows:

Sentenced juveniles only:
- Huntercombe (Oxfordshire County Council [CC])
- Werrington (Staffordshire CC)

Sentenced and remanded juveniles only:
- Wetherby (Leeds Metropolitan District Council [MDC])

Sentenced juveniles on split sites, also holding those aged 18 - 21:
- Hollesley Bay, (Suffolk CC)
- Portland, (Dorset CC)
- Thorncross (Warrington MDC)

Sentenced and remanded juveniles on split sites:
- Ashfield (South Gloucestershire District Council)
- Brinsford (Staffordshire CC)
- Castington (Northumberland CC)
- Feltham (Hounslow London Borough)
- Lancaster Farms (Lancashire CC)
- Onley (Northamptonshire CC)
- Stoke Heath (Salop CC)

2.03 Thorncross was the only open establishment designated to hold juveniles; Castington, Hollesley and Huntercombe each opened special units in the course of the year to hold a total of 125 younger boys serving longer sentences under Section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 and succeeding legislation.

2.04 Towards the end of the year 2000, it was decided to develop special units for approximately 100 girls under 18 in four Prison Service establishments for women. These establishments progressively took over the care of girls under 18, and were:

Brockhill
Bullwood Hall
Eastwood Park
New Hall

2.05 In the course of the year under review, two female establishments were inspected. A full inspection was carried out at Holloway and an education inspection took place at Bullwood Hall. Both establishments were holding girls at the time.

Profile of the Population

2.06 The breakdown of the population by age, status and gender in September 2000 was as follows:

	Male				Female			
Ages	**15**	**16**	**17**	**Total**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**Total**
Status								
Sentenced	238	567	1034	1839	4	30	58	92
Untried	28	75	201	305	-	-	8	8
Convicted (unsentenced)	12	45	119	176	-	-	8	8
Total	278	687	1354	2320	4	30	74	108

2.07 The population of boys as a whole fluctuated between 2,154 at its lowest point in April 2000 and 2,410 at its peak in August 2000.

2.08 It was to be expected that young people in custody were some of the most disadvantaged and low achieving in the country. However, the extent of the deficits revealed during the course of the inspections alarmed even the inspectors familiar with the needs of this group.

2.09 A total of 171 young people under 18 were surveyed by HM Prison Inspectorate's research team with the aid of questionnaires in the course of the inspections of six establishments. The findings were as follows:

- 49% reported having at some time been in local authority care
- 84% had been excluded from school
- 86% had truanted from school, including 15 (83%) of the small group of 18 young people who had recorded themselves as **not** having been excluded from school
- 52% had left school at 14 or younger
- 29% had left school at 13 or younger
- 73% described their educational achievement as nil
- 10% had one or more GCSE
- 48% had been in custody before
- Only 11% said they had never used drugs

2.10 These findings were broadly confirmed by the outcomes of the basic skill tests carried out on all young people at the time of their initial induction in establishments. The data for 2000/2001, analysed by the Prisoners Learning Support Unit of the Department for Education and Skills, indicated that of the 5,963 young people screened on admission to 11 of the 13 contracted boys establishments:

- On numeracy tests 256 (4.29%) and on reading ability tests 259 (4.43%) had attainment at pre-entry level, i.e. lower than what would be expected of a 7 year old child.

- At entry level (i.e. the expectations of a 7 year old) the corresponding figures were 2,244 (37.63%) and 1,870 (31.36%).

MAIN FINDINGS

General

3.01 Overall, the rapidity with which the new youth justice system had established itself was a considerable achievement. Whilst positive developments were seen over the course of the year under review in most establishments, some fundamental issues remained to be tackled.

3.02 Education and training did not play the central role envisaged by Youth Justice Board standards in the Detention and Training Orders (DTOs). One of the main reasons for this was that education contracts had been set before these standards had been determined.

3.03 The provision of vocational training was generally lacking.

3.04 The constant flux in the population with some trainees moving rapidly between establishments created serious problems in managing education classes and limited what could be achieved.

3.05 Arrangements to enable young people to continue their education on transfer to the community were lacking.

3.06 Whilst inspectors found some pockets of good practice, there were few arrangements to spread good practice to other establishments.

3.07 Initial and continuing professional development was inadequate to equip all staff, including teachers and instructors, for work with challenging adolescents.

The Wider Regime

3.08 Learners registered very high scores on all indicators of social exclusion and disadvantage, thereby demonstrating the need for education and training within this population.

3.9 Collaboration with community services, in particular Youth Offending Teams (YOTs), was developing well but there was insufficient staff in these who came from an educational background.

3.10 Strong leadership, particularly at middle management level, contributed significantly to a positive and effective regime.

3.11 The preparation and delivery of training plans benefited greatly from all who worked with the young person, in particular Personal Officers and education and/or training staff.

3.12 There were serious deficiencies in most establishments meeting the assessed needs of the young people, in particular the provision of vocational training and offending behaviour courses.

3.13 A co-ordinated approach to planning and delivering the regime, backed by strong inter-professional collaboration, was important.

Sentenced Male Juveniles

3.14 Most learners were serving short sentences and in many establishments at least half the population were serving custodial periods of three months or less. There were problems providing relevant programmes for this group.

3.15 The constant turnover of the population resulted in a very high volume of training plan conferences and reviews. The pressures these placed on staff and resources did not appear to have been anticipated by either the Prison Service or the YJB.

3.16 Establishments had generally been successful in developing effective relationships with YOTs. In many

establishments, 80% of training plan conferences were attended by YOT workers and 50% by parents.

3.17 Training plan conferences were most successful when they involved those most closely involved in the care of the learner, in particular the Personal Officer. When this did not happen, meetings risked becoming a mere paper exercise.

3.18 Education staff attended training plan conferences regularly in only two establishments. As a consequence, recorded education objectives were so general that they were almost meaningless.

3.19 Frequently the programme planned for a learner was unavailable to those who were directly working with him. Few establishments had systems for monitoring whether planned programmes had been delivered. The scale of provision in many areas was insufficient to meet assessed needs.

3.20 The extent to which Prison Officers and the wider regime supported educational objectives varied. In the best provision, learners were moved to the right classes on time and non-attendance occurred for legitimate reasons; Personal Officers were closely involved and also acted as learning mentors.

3.21 Physical education, vocational training and other specialist areas were providing strong support to assist educational achievement in some establishments.

3.22 The target of 30 hours per week of purposeful activity was increasingly being achieved, although the form in which it was delivered was sometimes unsatisfactory. The quality and scale of evening and weekend activity was generally poor.

Unsentenced Male Juveniles

3.23 In planning and provision, a low priority was accorded to remanded young people, even though their period in custody could often be longer than that of the sentenced population.

3.24 Education and training opportunities for those who were remanded were often much poorer than for sentenced young people.

3.25 An education and training plan for even an extended period in custody had rarely been formulated.

Provision for Girls

3.26 The Prison Service had been operating under a clear understanding that girls under 18 years would have left the prison system by April 2000 and had planned accordingly.

3.27 Arrangements for girls had suffered from the uncertainty about the continuing role of the Prison Service in providing for them.

3.28 Establishing an appropriate regime for the care of girls had not received the additional resources necessary to meet the Standards set by the YJB.

3.29 Provision for unsentenced girls aged 17 was unacceptable when they were held in adult regimes.

Induction and Initial Educational Assessment

3.30 Arrangements for the induction and initial assessment of new learners were variable and ranged from good to unsatisfactory.

3.31 Good practice included the provision of up-to-date information, the opportunity for one-to-one guidance, the provision of taster courses and the provision of appropriate programmes to meet individual need.

3.32 The quality of information about educational background and prior attainment of learners, submitted on the ASSET form, was too general and vague.

3.33 The majority of new learners experienced difficulty in reading and writing. Some establishments reported that between 60% and 80% of new arrivals were at or below Level 1 in numeracy and literacy.

3.34 Basic skills test results needed, however, to be treated with a degree of caution. Confidentiality was not guaranteed; some learners did not take the test seriously and some were in no state of mind to listen to the instructions or to perform to the best of their ability.

3.35 The quality of written information given to young people at the time of induction was generally inappropriate for those learners who experienced difficulty in reading and writing and for those whose first language was not English.

3.36 Dyslexia screening was carried out in some, but not all, of the establishments.

3.37 Education staff did not play a meaningful role in the sentence planning process and consequently the quality of target setting, at the initial case conference and subsequent review meetings, was poor.

Standards of Teaching and Learning

3.38 A total of 152 sessions were observed. Standards in the vocational areas and in the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) and life and social skills were generally satisfactory or better.

3.39 Standards of teaching and learning in basic skills, the area of greatest needs according to the basic skills test results, were less than satisfactory.

3.40 Effective teaching was difficult, if not impossible, in some establishments because of the constantly changing prison population, staff shortages, unpredictable attendance patterns and varying degrees of learner motivation.

3.41 Excessive use was made of worksheets; this resulted in some learners spending much of their time in education completing worksheet after worksheet.

3.42 The teaching of numeracy was weak. In nearly 40% of classes, the quality of teaching was judged to be less than satisfactory. In the better sessions, there was good use of resources and methods. Realistic tasks and assignments were set, such as vocational work in paving or costing brickwork, which stimulated learners' interest and resulted in appropriate work. In the worst provision, little work was done. Unstretching, mechanical and repetitive individual worksheets were used extensively, even though learners were known to have poor reading skills.

3.43 The teaching of literacy was better than in numeracy; 38% of sessions were judged to be good or excellent, but 31% of sessions were unsatisfactory or poor. In the best practice, tutors provided a good variety of activities; the contexts used were interesting and relevant to the learners. A few classes used a wide range of materials and resources; insufficient use was made of ICT to support the teaching of literacy.

3.44 Where learners had been carefully assessed, and realistic detailed targets set, more progress was made and learners responded well. There were several examples of effective one-to-one teaching sessions where tutors had established an atmosphere of mutual respect, and where there were clear expectations about achievement levels.

3.45 In the unsatisfactory classes, expectations were low and learners soon became disruptive. Learners, waiting for the attention and support they needed, were soon off task, talking to others or asking to play games.

The Curriculum

3.46 All establishments were aware of the requirement to base their provision on the National Core Curriculum specified by the Prison Service; education managers were less certain of the requirements or any policies for education specified by the Youth Justice Board.

3.47 There was a focus on basic skills but no provision to address the particular needs of the significant proportion of learners who showed signs of dyslexia. A few departments were able, beneficially, to provide some one-to-one support for those with the greatest need.

3.48 Any provision beyond the core curriculum depended on the Education Contract and on the scale and extent of resources and accommodation available in a particular establishment.

3.49 Good practice was observed in those establishments providing a varied educational programme combined with planned training in workshops.

3.50 Evening provision was on offer in over 50% of education departments, although the scale was limited. There was no weekend provision.

3.51 The requirement to create separate provision for juveniles and young offenders was making curriculum planning and timetabling difficult.

3.52 With the emphasis on providing for those learners below Level 2, learners with high level qualifications had a very limited range of courses to choose from, and in many cases there was little chance of progression.

3.53 Prison Service targets set at Level 2 in the Education Contracts were inappropriate for most learners whose attainment and time available constrained them to lower levels.

3.54 The majority of education departments offered some form of outreach provision in, for example, the health care centre and for vulnerable learners. This work was valued but was the first to be cancelled when the department experienced staffing shortages.

Management and Leadership

3.55 The quality of management and leadership of education departments varied considerably across the 13 establishments in the juvenile estate and ranged from good to unsatisfactory.

3.56 A considerable amount of disruption to life within education departments was caused by the movement of learners to create discrete provision for juveniles. These changes, compounded by problems of over-crowding, also had major implications for the staffing and timetabling of provision.

3.57 Poor management in some establishments outside of the immediate control of education managers meant that significant amounts of educational time was lost through the late arrival, early return and failure to unlock learners on the call list.

3.58 National targets set by the Prison Service, linked to Level 2 achievement in numeracy and literacy, were proving to be unrealistic, and had a de-motivating effect on education managers and their teaching staff.

3.59 In a number of establishments, there were effective links between teachers and staff responsible for training and workshop provision.

3.60 The target figures failed to take account of the starting point, in terms of prior achievement, of learners and paid insufficient attention to the short periods spent in custody by the majority.

3.61 The range and quality of support offered by careers service companies varied considerably. There were examples of good practice, but there was no minimum level of provision; much depended on the policies and priorities of individual careers service companies.

Resources

3.62 Most teachers were in possession of, or were studying for, a recognised teaching qualification. A minority held a Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) or a Certificate of Education (Cert Ed). Few teachers had experience of working in secondary and/or special schools.

3.63 There were growing teacher shortages in particular curriculum areas including ICT, basic skills and mathematics. Education managers were finding it increasingly more difficult to find supply teachers to cover for staff absence and sickness.

3.64 Staffing problems, combined with poor punctuality and the considerable movement of learners, resulted in many

learners being offered a less than satisfactory experience of education.

3.65 In a number of cases, effective use was made of mentors who provided excellent one-to-one support, particularly in the teaching of basic skills.

3.66 The quality of teaching accommodation ranged from excellent to poor.

3.67 Specialist teaching facilities in Art and Design, Cookery and Crafts were generally good.

3.68 ICT equipment varied both in terms of quality and quantity. There were particular shortages in equipment and software to support literacy, numeracy and art.

3.69 There was an over-reliance on mechanical and unimaginative worksheets, with too little provision of more relevant, topical and multi-media materials.

Library

3.70 Libraries were being used, primarily, as places for the selection and exchange of books rather than as a resource to support learning.

3.71 Access to the library, in some establishments, was poor and learners did not always get their weekly entitlement to a library visit.

3.72 The majority of libraries were attractive and welcoming. Book stocks were generally adequate, with a good range of paperback fiction titles on offer. Talking books and audio-cassettes were available in some, but not all, establishments. The quality and range of reading material for learners with reading difficulties, and for those whose first language was not English, was variable.

3.73 Insufficient use was made of ICT either as a means of assisting librarians in their day-to-day work (for example in recording loans, stock levels and cataloguing), or in using computers as a resource to support learning.

3.74 The range and quality of careers information in libraries was generally poor.

KEY ISSUES FOR ATTENTION

4.01 In order to improve the quality of provision for young people, the following steps should be taken.

General

4.02 Ensure that education and training contracts fully reflect the Standards of the Youth Justice Board and the requirements of Prison Service Order 4950.

4.03 Increase the provision of vocational training and offending behaviour courses.

4.04 Support young people in continuing education and training upon transfer to the community.

4.05 Review the professional needs of all staff, and provide opportunities for continuing development to equip them for work with challenging adolescents.

The Wider Regime

4.06 Ensure that all those who work with a young person, in particular education and training staff and Personal Officers, attend training plan meetings and reviews.

4.07 Monitor the high volume of training plan conferences and provide the necessary resources to support them.

4.08 Continually review the needs of the population so that appropriate provision can be made to address them.

4.09 Closely monitor the delivery of agreed programmes.

4.10 Improve the quality of evening and weekend activity.

4.11 Actively spread good practice.

4.12 Ensure that unsentenced young people are offered a regime of comparable quality to that of the sentenced population.

4.13 Provide appropriately for sentenced and unsentenced girls.

Induction and Initial Assessment

4.14 Improve the quality of educational target setting at the initial and subsequent training planning meetings by ensuring that education staff are represented and that the targets set are detailed and allow for progression.

4.15 Improve the quality of information on the ASSET form relating to educational background and prior attainment.

4.16 Improve the quality of initial educational needs assessment to ensure that learners are placed in suitable provision.

4.17 Develop appropriate ways for establishing dyslexia screening in all establishments.

4.18 Improve the quality of information given to juveniles at the time of induction.

Standards of Teaching and Learning

4.19 Raise the standard of teaching and learning, particularly in numeracy and literacy.

4.20 Provide additional classroom support for teachers (such as resources, staffing) to assist them in dealing with the constantly changing population, the varying degrees of learner motivation and the wide range of ability.

4.21 Separate longer-stay from short-stay learners whenever possible and conduct individual assessment and target setting meetings outside of the classroom.

4.22 Avoid sending inappropriate learners into basic skills classes.

4.23 Shorten the waiting time before learners can start appropriate courses.

The Curriculum

4.24 Provide up-to-date and detailed information about the role and requirements of the YJB for education managers and teaching staff.

4.25 Consider ways of developing vocational courses and programmes.

4.26 Ensure that there is adequate provision for the significant numbers at level 1 or below and that programmes are delivered in such a way as to engage young people disaffected with traditional education.

4.27 Provide appropriate courses for those at Level 2 or above.

4.28 Extend the use of Key Skills.

4.29 Provide for dyslexia assessment and support.

4.30 Develop suitable educational opportunities for short-stay learners.

Management and Leadership

4.31 Ensure that young offenders are not disadvantaged as a result of developing provision for juveniles.

4.32 Match the scale and range of provision to the scale and range of identified needs.

4.33 Broaden the range of teaching approaches and, where appropriate, reduce classes to no more than 90 minutes in length.

4.34 Provide additional support and training for education managers.

4.35 Ensure that education contracts fairly reflect developments since the introduction of Youth Justice Board Standards.

4.36 Strengthen links between education managers and prison managers, particularly the Head of Inmate Activities.

4.37 Ensure that prison managers fully understand the implications, for the contractor, of learners arriving late and not being called for education.

Resources

4.38 Recruit appropriately trained and experienced teachers to work with juveniles.

4.39 Provide an in-service training programme to ensure that teachers have up-to-date knowledge of national initiatives and issues.

4.40 Organise specialist training in a number of important areas including working with learners with dyslexia and dealing with learners with behavioural problems.

4.41 Appoint classroom assistants to support teachers in their day-to-day work.

4.42 Encourage the appointment of mentors to provide one-to-one classroom support.

4.43 Consider ways of attracting staff in areas (geographical and subject) of teacher shortages.

4.44 Ensure that the range and quality of ICT resources reaches a minimum standard in all establishments.

4.45 Use more diverse, relevant, interesting and challenging teaching resources.

Library

4.46 Improve access to libraries.

4.47 Strengthen links between teachers and library staff and ensure that more effective use is made of library provision, particularly as a resource to support learning.

PART A: A PERSPECTIVE FROM HMIP

The first twelve months of the new youth justice system - the evolving picture.

Sentenced Male Juveniles

5.01 The three or four months following the introduction of the new youth justice system in April 2000 were confusing for the Prison Service establishments holding young people in that:

- New relationships with Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) were being established and staff were adjusting to the new planning arrangements.

- Almost all establishments had to hold those serving the new Detention and Training Order (DTO) in the same units as those serving the youth custody sentence which it had replaced. In addition, few establishments were in the fortunate position of Castington, which was allowed gradually to build up units exclusively dedicated to those serving a DTO. This enabled its staff teams to plan, organise and train for their new roles. The benefits of this planned approach were evident from the outset in the quality of the regime on offer.

- Movements of young people between establishments were done in large groups, in particular those serving long periods under Section 53 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. A number of these young people had been scattered widely across the young offender estate and were often held, quite inappropriately, with those who were much older than themselves. The system as a whole seemed to be taken by surprise by the numbers in this category - at 400 they represented over 25% of the sentenced juvenile population. Provision for them was made more difficult by the fact that the special unit at Castington was still being constructed and the unit at Hollesley was only just beginning to admit receptions.

- Many staff, in particularly newly appointed prisons officers, but also teachers and instructors, felt that they had been inadequately trained and prepared for the new work. This problem is referred to in more detail in Appendix 2.

5.02 The experience of the two juvenile units at Lancaster Farms observed at the end of April 2000 was therefore fairly typical. With a total capacity of 120 in two living units, the establishment had to provide for:

- Disaffected young people sentenced under Section 53 of the CYPA 1933 who had been transferred in at short notice.

- A group of those serving the former youth custody orders assembled from other units of the establishment.

- An increasing number of those newly sentenced to the DTO.

- 20 remanded young people, including some very immature and vulnerable 15 year olds who would have been much more appropriately placed in a local authority secure unit.

5.03 In such cases, staff faced major challenges. Despite the considerable efforts of the staff, during the first few

months of the new arrangements, Lancaster Farms was a very unsafe place for its young people.

5.04 This was one of the first of a number of examples of the consequences of sudden transfers of large groups of young people and of attempting to provide, in the same living units, for a very heterogeneous population. Staff had to concentrate on managing the all-pervading turbulence that ensued and there was little opportunity for motivating the young people to engage in constructive activities.

5.05 The fact that some establishments were not ready to take on their new roles or full numbers of young prisoners increased pressures on others. Emergency building work at Hollesley Bay and recruitment difficulties, particularly amongst nursing staff at Huntercombe resulted in placing extreme pressures on Feltham. The situation had reached crisis point by August when the total sentenced population peaked at 2,410, that is to say 260 more than the April figure.

5.06 In many of the establishments that were inspected, over 50% of the population were serving four or six month DTOs, equating to custodial periods of two or three months. Even if an establishment was operating in near ideal conditions, there would be serious questions as to what training was possible in such a brief period. The reality has been that for much of the period under review, the large numbers in this group were a major destabilising factor. Attempts to make adequate provision for them inhibited the development of purposeful regimes for those serving longer sentences

5.07 As presently constructed, these short Orders were presenting serious problems and it sometimes seemed that they were doing more harm than good to the young people concerned. It was evident that it was proving extremely difficult to secure any commitment from the young people either to their individual programmes or to the regime of the establishment. It was not by chance that the majority of instances of vandalism that occurred, in particular the smashing of cells, appeared to have been concentrated amongst this group.

5.08 Growing numbers and overcrowding, particularly in London and the South East, resulted in young people being sent further and further away from home. It became quite normal for a young person to spend the first four to six weeks of their DTO at Feltham, and then to be moved to Ashfield, Portland, Hollesley or Huntercombe for the few remaining weeks or months. This meant that these establishments were taking young people from well outside the areas of their designated YOTs with whom they had been attempting to develop relationships.

5.09 This constant population 'churn' not only destabilised the regime of the receiving establishments but undermined any real prospect of continuity in delivering the programmes agreed in individual training plans.

Unsentenced Male Juveniles

5.10 YJB Standards, underpinned by Prison Service Order 4950, require that a regime should be offered to unsentenced young people which is of comparable quality to that provided for sentenced juveniles. If they do not succeed in getting a bail alternative within the first 14 days of arrival, many unsentenced young people can remain remanded in custody for significantly longer than the duration of the DTOs of those who are sentenced.

5.11 Although there were signs towards the end of the year under review that arrangements in some establishments were beginning to improve, far too often inspectors found that provision was unacceptable in that:

- Unsentenced young people were being offered little or no purposeful activity and remained locked in their cells for much of the day.
- With the exception of those who were still of compulsory school age, there was often no access to education or other training.

- Even when there was such access, a significant number of young people reported feeling unsafe in the classrooms and were thus unlikely to benefit from the education or training on offer.

- Little background information, especially of the earlier educational experiences of young people, was available. Generally there was no contact between the staff caring for young people and the responsible YOT workers; this often seemed to be because both sides were unaware of what was expected of them. Even in instances when YOT workers had known young people, they frequently failed to complete vulnerability assessments or send through the background information required by custodial staff for their proper care.

- Educational or other assessments were rarely carried out; individual programmes were not being planned and agreed as required by YJB Standards.

5.12 Overall, therefore, unsentenced young people had much poorer experiences in custody than those who were sentenced. These deficiencies were somewhat ironic as the Standards required by the YJB of both YOTs and custodial establishments for the care of the unsentenced were mandatory. By contrast, the Standards set for those who were sentenced had been deemed 'aspirational'. It would be easy to suspect that this difference in the status of the requirements had itself been an oversight, and was an early symptom of the neglect that seemed to blight planning and provision for the unsentenced juvenile population from the outset.

5.13 The reasons included:

- The pre-occupation with the priority of demonstrating that the arrangements for those sentenced to the new DTO were working.

- The anticipation that, with faster-track justice and more bail alternatives, unsentenced young people would effectively disappear from the prison system.

- The belief that the custodial periods of the unsentenced population would be brief. The reality has been that for many young people on remand, the periods of custody have been much longer than the average length of a DTO.

5.14 Certainly, the number of unsentenced young people did reduce a little, declining from 575 in April 2000 to 453 in January 2001, but they still represented 25% of the population in Prison Service custody.

5.15 Some of the failures could be accounted for by the particular difficulties experienced by some of the key establishments which had been allocated the remand function:

- Onley and Wetherby did not take over their remand role from Glen Parva and Doncaster respectively until the end of 2000.

- Brinsford and Stoke Heath had the least developed facilities and regimes, of all of the 13 establishments, for young people irrespective of their status.

- Feltham was to suffer acute problems of overcrowding for much of the year.

5.16 Towards the end of the year under review, establishments such as Castington, Feltham and Wetherby began to structure their regimes in ways that related to the needs of the unsentenced population and access to education and training began to improve. However the system as a whole failed to recognise this group as being one of the most vulnerable and difficult to provide for. These young people were arriving, often off the streets, traumatised by events before and after their arrest. For some it was their first time away from home. They were easily exposed to bullying and were particularly at risk of

self-harm. The difficulties in caring for them were made greater by their legal status, volatility, uncertainty as to what would happen to them and reluctance to give any commitment to a regime.

Provision for Girls

5.17 A ministerial decision was made at the outset of the new youth justice system that girls under 18 should not be held in the prison system beyond 31 March 2001 but should, thereafter, be provided for within the Secure Training Centres and Local Authority Secure Units. In the later months of 2000, it became clear that this target would be unachievable and the date was extended by a further year. Throughout the period under review, despite the increasing numbers of young girls held outside of the prison system, the numbers within it remained constant at around 100.

5.18 The relatively small numbers of young people involved and the anticipated temporary nature of their presence within the prison system appeared to have resulted in little other planning for them being done by either the YJB or the Prison Service. For much of the year under review, girls under 18 continued to be dispersed across the female estate and held in any establishment that accepted those under 21, with whom they shared an identical regime. There appeared to be little contact between the Operational Manager for Women's Prisons or his staff and either the YJB or the Prison Service's own Youth Offender Group. As a consequence, those working directly with these young people tended to find out what was expected of them in the new youth system only through indirect and informal channels. The 6-day YJB training course, required to be completed by all staff working with boys, was normally not on offer to them.

5.19 Even more seriously, no additional resources were available to establishments to assist them in meeting the planning and regime standards that were now required. Establishments for girls, such as Bullwood Hall, could only move towards partially meeting these requirements by reducing provision for adult women and the 18 - 21 age group. However, even by doing this, the establishment fell very far short of planning and delivering the quality of education, training and other purposeful activity that was now required.

5.20 In the absence of any obvious strategy, there was confusion and uncertainty for staff and girls alike. In the late months of 2000, it was decided that four female establishments would set up specialist units for those aged under 18 and would be charged with developing and delivering an appropriate regime. The establishments designated for this purpose were Brockhill, Bullwood Hall Eastwood Park and New Hall. It was not clear when the new arrangements were to take effect, and even at the end of March 2001 the resources to fund an appropriate regime had still not been allocated to these establishments.

5.21 The experiences of Holloway and Bullwood Hall illustrated the absence of any strategy. Holloway had been able to develop a well resourced and well managed Young Offender Unit on one of its wings (DO Wing) as a result of a special allocation of ring fenced funding. This had been secured three years previously, quite independently of the YJB, and had benefited all 30 of the young women under 21 years of age who were housed on the unit, including the 15 girls under 18 years.

5.22 Bullwood Hall had none of these resources but was also receiving a similar number of girls under 18. Shortly after it had been designated for its new role, the establishment was invited to prepare a business plan to enable it to meet YJB Standards. Funding to be made available from the start of the new financial year in April 2001.

5.23 A high quality plan was accordingly drawn up and submitted. The establishment clearly specified that there would a lead time of at least six months, and more probably nine months, before the enhanced regime could be established and delivered. However at the time of the inspection on 22 and 23 March 2001, with a

week to go before the start of the new financial year, agreement to the plan had not yet been received. Requests by the establishment to advertise for the additional staff, including teachers, who would be required had not been granted.

5.24 It transpired that on the night before the start of the inspection, Bullwood Hall was suddenly informed that it had to take the entire Holloway DO population within the following ten days. Furthermore, the establishment was informed that it had to provide for this group in advance of any new regime appropriate to their needs being established. As inspectors were to discover, the prison was already facing heavy pressure from its existing group of very difficult young people. With the resources available to it, there was no likelihood that Bullwood Hall could, in the medium term, match what Holloway had been providing for this population. Most of those who were being transferred were, therefore, unlikely to be able to achieve the comprehensive education and training objectives and targets that were contained within the individual training DTO plans drawn up at Holloway.

5.25 At any one time, there are about 10 unsentenced 17 year olds within the prison system; girls under 17 cannot, by law, be remanded to Prison Service establishments. During an inspection of Holloway in December 2000, the regime provision for the three young girls held on remand in the establishment at the time were quite deplorable. They were dispersed around the adult wings (one young girl was held with sentenced women who were serving sentences of up to 12 years). Two of the three girls were frightened, bullied and at serious risk. In spite of the fact that all three had been in custody for eight weeks or more, none of them were engaged in any purposeful activity. Inspectors were greatly concerned that, even at the end of the year under review, there appeared still to be no plans to make acceptable arrangements for the proper care and treatment of 17 year old girls on remand held by the Prison Service.

Training Plan and Review System

5.26 The concept of the seamless sentence was one of the most radical and welcome innovations of the new youth justice system. Although previously, on release from custody, young people have been subject to a period of supervision under licence, this had, in the main, been a reactive process. Little was expected of them as long as they did not re-offend during this time. A young person's experience of supervision was thus very detached from what happened whilst in custody. Probation officers had rarely had contact with those caring for the young person. Any meetings normally took place in the visits area, well away from the living units where the young person spent most of his time.

5.27 One of the successes of the YJB has been the joint training that it initiated for community staff (such as YOT workers) and custodial staff. This training has provided the foundation for the very good working relationships that have, in the main, developed between the two groups of staff. Stereotypes on both sides have been broken down. In particular, this has helped the custodial staff to feel less isolated and acquire a more positive and professional self-image. Indeed, the DTO seemed to be most successful in those establishments where the contact and working relationships were established directly between the community staff and the staff on the living units, who had responsibility for the daily care of the young people.

5.28 The Youth Justice Board has been proved to be entirely right in specifying so exactly the timescales that had to be complied with in relation to the convening of the training plan conferences. YJB Standards also stipulated that this was to be a joint activity incorporating the young person and, whenever possible, his family or carers. It was to be expected that it would take a period for all concerned to get used to this new process and the demanding documentation associated with it. It was, however, remarkable how rapidly the system bedded down in most

establishments, and at the end of 2000 it was quite normal to find establishments experiencing 80% attendance of YOT workers at training plan conferences. This was all the more remarkable in light of the remoteness of some establishments where young people were placed due to population pressures, and the distances from their home areas. Some establishments with particularly persistent staff and robust administrative systems were recording 90% attendance by YOT workers and approaching 60% by parents. This was a considerable achievement considering the turbulent regimes and the very fluid populations of young people that were then prevailing.

5.29 The YJB and the Prison Service failed, however, to take account of the sheer volume of training plan conferences that would ensue from the very demanding Standards that had been set. The pressure was undoubtedly increased by the large proportion of young people who were serving very short Orders. These required that a greater proportion of training plan conferences had to be convened at short notice and take place more frequently than was the case for those serving the longer custodial periods.

5.30 Where success was evident, this derived mainly from establishing the system and building relationships between the staff overseeing the community and the custodial components of the Orders. Much more questionable, however, were practices that occurred in many establishments which included:

- The quality and delivery of the plans agreed at training plan conferences was inappropriate. Objectives and targets were frequently set without establishing whether the relevant programmes were available or could be achieved within the time available. In short, far too often they constituted no more than a 'wish list'.

- Objectives and targets were often very general and vague. Frequently, the proposed education programme lacked specificity, merely stating that the young person should 'attend education'.

- Custodial staff attending the meetings often knew far too little about the young person. This could result in the conference or review becoming little more than a paper exercise.

- Only at Hollesley Bay and Lancaster Farms did education staff attempt to attend all training plan conferences, although the volume of these was proving to be overwhelming. The presence of teaching staff who knew the young person and his work greatly enhanced the value of the conference. Where no education staff were present, this generally resulted in no education assessments, no advice as to proposed curriculum, or recommended targets, and no progress reports being available. Those who were present at the initial review and pre-transfer conference were thus almost totally uninformed about the education needs, progress or what was required for the young person if he was to continue with education and training upon transfer to the community.

- Very few YOT workers had a career background in education and training. They were poorly informed about the previous education experience of the young people and had little knowledge of, or contact with, the education and training facilities in their localities. Awareness of post-sixteen further education provision seemed to be especially lacking. This was particularly serious as these facilities were the natural point at which young people would re-enter education and training upon transfer to the community.

5.31 A few establishments such as Castington and Hollesley Bay had organised themselves in such a way that the young person's Personal Officer, or in his/her absence, a designated 'shadow' or alternate, played a central role in the training plan process. As one of their core duties, they were required to co-ordinate

the preparation of material for the training plan conferences about the three or four young people for whom they were responsible and summarise progress at these meetings. In between meetings they were expected to ensure that programmes, in particular of education and training, were being delivered, that courses and classes were being attended and that targets were being met. This arrangement required strong administrative support. When it worked well, it was very successful because it ensured that training plan conferences were informed by the staff member who had the greatest daily contact with the young person. Personal Officers also got considerable job satisfaction from this degree of responsibility for a small number of young people.

5.32 Other establishments such as Huntercombe had developed a small specialist group of prison officers who, with social work support, led on the training plan process for the establishment as a whole. This resulted in very successful relationships with YOTs and other outside agencies. However, it could result in some ambiguity between the role of the casework officer and that of the Personal Officers on the living units who had the daily care of the young people, whose experience was therefore not fed into the training plan conferences.

5.33 Generally, it was felt that there was a long way to go before young people were experiencing their time in custody as one whole and integrated experience. Regimes were too fragmented and education and training remained too detached from the living units where young people spent most of their time. There was still much unrealised potential for prison officers working on the units to support individual training programmes.

Meeting Assessed Needs

5.34 A training plan is only as good as the assessments that underpin it and the facilities and resources available to deliver it. There were major deficiencies in the latter. Little was being done to systematically collate information about the extent to which identified needs could not be met, nor about failure to deliver previously agreed programmes because the course did not take place or waiting lists were too long.

5.35 It was however quite clear that the major deficiencies in provision were in:

- **Vocational training**
  Only Werrington and Thorncross had provision that came near to meeting the need and demand for vocational training. For the 200 young people at Brinsford, nothing was available. Those at Onley and Stoke Heath had access only to a mere handful of places. Many young people, particularly those who have just reached school leaving age, will only be motivated to engage in education and training if they see it as being related to future employment. Practical training, such as bricklaying, painting and decorating, metalwork and woodwork clearly offers the prospect of this.

- **Offending Behaviour Courses**
  Very little in the way of accredited courses existed for those under 18. The absence of any provision for sex offenders was of particular concern. A few establishments ran accredited enhanced thinking skills courses, although there were problems in sustaining the engagement of many young people of this age group in these courses. Other establishments were experimenting with 'smart thinking' programmes. Generally, what took place could best be described as 'home spun' and was developed by enthusiastic officers. Occasionally, as at Wetherby, staff received strong support from psychology departments. However, a good deal of this non-accredited activity had also ceased over the previous 18 months as result of Prison Service instructions, often to the considerable disappointment of the staff who had developed and led it.

The Wider Regime

5.36 The most effective regimes were those that:

- Had strong leadership at senior and middle management levels.
- Were supported by close collaboration between all professional disciplines.
- Were planned and timetabled as a coherent whole.
- Had something approaching the necessary facilities and resources to respond to the assessed needs of the young people in their care.

5.37 The YJB Standards, as well as Prison Service Order 4950, had stressed from the outset the centrality of education and training in the new youth justice regime. However, in the main, education departments within establishments appeared to have been oddly detached from any of the practical planning for the new regimes. There were probably a number of reasons for this:

- Contracts between the Prison Service and the individual providers worked to a timescale that took no account of the major changes that needed to take place in April 2000 and could not be easily varied.
- In the case of establishments on shared sites, the contract was let for the establishment as a whole and it was not easy to isolate those elements relating to juveniles.
- Education managers saw their primary accountability to their employers, the contractors, rather than to the managers of the establishment who were leading the development of the new regime.
- The Prison Service's education department, which administered the contracts for the whole of the Service, did not have a tradition of working closely with the Young Offender Group, which was handling the details of most of the negotiations with the YJB for the Service as a whole.

5.38 Collaboration between vocational training and education was also variable in the few places where this was available on any scale. Werrington was one establishment where there was very close collaboration between the two departments. Basic skills, numeracy and literacy provision was closely related to the provision of practical training and were thus presented in a totally different and more attractive manner than the way in which they would have been experienced by the young people at school.

5.39 Too often young people experienced the programmes planned for them as a series of unrelated components. However, there were an encouraging number of emerging examples of good practice:

- At Lancaster Farms, a number of officers had been trained as tutors for education support, and worked with young people individually in the evening, supporting their education programmes. Attempts were made to match these tutors to those young people with particular learning deficits when Personal Officer allocations were made.
- At Wetherby, the PE and psychology departments were collaborating on an assertiveness programme for victims and the vulnerable. This was presented as a preparatory programme for the Duke of Edinburgh's award, which meant that it was not openly identified within the establishment as provision for poor copers.
- At Werrington, the education department drew on a substantial network of community volunteers who acted as mentors and one-to-one tutors.
- In the Carlford Unit at Hollesley Bay, the unit officers took responsibility for much of the activity programme in the afternoons. They drew upon their own interests and hobbies. Thus, one

officer lead a successful group studying caterpillars and butterflies.

- At Onley, the PE department ran a project developing literacy and numeracy in a sports setting.

- At Castington, a small group of officers ran an activity centre that included a music group, where young people acted as assistant tutors, some inspired stain glass production and others organised repairs to vandalised furniture.

5.40 The impact of custody upon a young person stands or falls as a result of his experience of staff on the residential unit. These staff have considerable potential to support a training plan, if they are fully identified with it. Equally, they have considerable power to subvert it, however unintentionally. It, therefore, makes sense that the living unit becomes the hub from which all components of the training programme radiate. These should be underpinned by unit staff in their Personal Officer capacities, and supported by professional colleagues who have a strong identity with the living unit.

5.41 Portland was an excellent example of this. The majority of officers had, in addition to their general wing and Personal Officer duties, a range of specialist functions. Some of the officers acted as sports and games leaders, others were in charge of offending behaviour, resettlement or anti-bullying programmes.

5.42 There was the same heartening trend for officers to take on responsibility for organising and running activities in a number of other establishments. This contributed significantly to their morale and sense of worth and gave added value to their interaction with the young people in their care during the routines of locking, unlocking and supervision of meals.

5.43 The target of 30 hours per week of purposeful activity was increasingly being met, and although it was very dependent on the varying level of resources available, the quantity of such provision was generally improving. However, the quality and availability of time out of cell was much more problematic. At best, most establishments only just meet the modest target of ten hours set out in PSO 4950 on weekdays, although far too often this was only available to the limited number of young people on the enhanced level of the Incentive and Earned Privileges scheme (IEP), or it was eroded by cancellation of association because of staff shortages. The amount of time spent out of cell at weekends and holidays was far worse, with association after 6pm rarely, if ever, on offer, and sometimes not available either in the afternoons. The contrast at Ashfield was considerable. As a privately managed establishment, it was required under its contract to provide 14 hours out of cell and generally succeeded in achieving this target. Ashfield also had serious problems of recruitment and a heavy turnover of staff, which therefore raised the issue of why a privately managed establishment was able to do this when the Prison Service could not.

5.44 Even at Ashfield, however, problems were encountered in providing a quality purposeful or constructive recreational activity in the evenings and at weekends. Their experience raised a further issue, namely how time out of cell should be spent. There was a limit to the amount of time that could be spent on telephone calls or showering. Having fifty or sixty adolescents milling around two or three pool tables was not very constructive and was also potentially unsafe.

5.45 Planning and appropriate provision for elements of time out of cell that have not previously been defined as 'purposive activity' must therefore be given a higher priority. Some questions, therefore, required fundamental answers:

- Was the target of 14 hours out of cell too high? Did most people who have their freedom in the community actually choose to spend 14 hours per day in groups?

- Should more time be allocated for quiet reflection and, if so, how could this be organised?

- How could time out of cell be more effectively used, following the example of Lancaster Farms, to support the education training programme? Was there a place for 'homework clubs'?

- Could more of this time be spent in sports or group hobby activities organised by officers who were on duty anyhow? In several establishments unit staff who had trained as sports and games leaders were frustrated in their efforts to run activities by health and safety requirements that required the presence of PE staff. It was not clear why this was the case in some establishments and not in others and there should be more clarity and consistency nationally on this issue.

- What further contributions could be made by outside organisations, churches and volunteers?

- The YMCA had developed imaginative, popular and challenging evening programmes, as was evident at Thorncross. Was there a role for a youth club on each unit where young people could see new faces and experience a regime that went up a gear and presented itself in another more positive manner?

- Why was there not more involvement in community projects, both inside and outside the establishment, which could play a much greater part? The Inside Out Trust worked with several establishments, including Hollesley, where young people could work on painting and other projects both in their cells and in wider groups.

- Why could not more use be made of outside recreational opportunities? Wetherby and Thorncross had developed programmes of an outward-bound type, and Portland and Hollesley wanted to exploit the recreational potential of their locations.

5.46 Ironically, as Hollesley Bay had found, it seemed easier to achieve mobility, even at comparatively early points in their sentences, for those sentenced for more serious offences under Section 53 of CYPA 1933 to qualify for release on temporary licence than it was for young people serving the DTO.

5.47 Clearly, many of those serving the DTO were in custody for too short a period for the necessary security procedures to be completed, but a progressive re-engagement in the community would seem to be an essential component of resettlement and the seamless sentence. Moreover, those establishments which had a well developed policy on town visits and community activities found that access to these were a powerful inducement to qualify for the enhanced level of the IEP scheme and was thus a major inducement towards good behaviour.

5.48 There appeared to be some tensions, and indeed inconsistency, between the Standards that had to be met to satisfy the Prison Service conditions for release on temporary licence and the concept implicit in the DTO of the seamless sentence and of a graduated return to the community.

5.49 The benefits of delivering training programmes in open conditions, and the opportunity for these to be both more challenging and comprehensive, have been demonstrated by Thorncross, which has achieved commendable results with young people serving longer DTOs. An equivalent facility in the south of the country was much needed.

5.50 Open conditions were not a necessary pre-requisite for young people to participate in day or residential programmes organised by Community Service Volunteers, the Prince's Trust and other similar organisations. There should be an expectation that all establishments have links with such organisations and that participation in such schemes is considered in the reviews of all young people

PART B: A PERSPECTIVE FROM OFSTED

Education in the Juvenile Secure Estate with specific reference to Basic Skills

INTRODUCTION

Record of evidence base of the OFSTED inspections

6.01 HM Inspectorate of Schools (HMI) accompanied Inspectors from HM Inspectorate of Prisons on visits to all 13 establishments in the juvenile estate. In addition, visits were made to four prisons holding girls aged 15 - 17. A total of 152 teaching sessions were observed. Meetings were held with prison managers, prison officers, prison visitors, learners, education managers, teaching staff, librarians and careers advisers. Inspectors scrutinised documentation provided by the education contractors and education managers, including quality assurance reports, examination results and policy documents, schemes of work, learners' portfolios and financial data.

Induction and Initial Assessment

6.02 Arrangements for the induction and initial assessment of new learners were variable and ranged from good to unsatisfactory. The majority of new arrivals followed an induction programme lasting between three days and two weeks that included talks by prison staff and key workers, including a representative from the education department. In one establishment, a taster course allowed learners to sample a range of courses on offer before making a choice of the programme to be followed.

6.03 Prison staff responsible for sentence planning with specific reference to the Detention and Training Order (DTO) had access to a very limited amount of information about a young person's educational background or prior attainment. The quality of information provided on the ASSET form was, in most cases, too general and vague. Heavy reliance was placed, therefore, on the results of Basic Skills Agency (BSA) tests in numeracy and literacy taken during the induction period. A number, but not all, of education departments conducted some form of dyslexia screening during the induction period. Test results were used to allocate learners to particular levels of basic skills courses. On occasions, this system broke down because the suitable programmes were full and learners either went onto a waiting list or joined less suitable courses until vacancies occurred.

6.04 Basic skills test results showed that the majority of new learners experienced difficulty in reading and writing. Figures of between 60% and 80% were recorded in some establishments for those at or below Level 1. Test scores recorded in numeracy were generally slightly higher than in literacy. A significant minority, however, had reached a good standard. For example, results varied but 20% or more were often assessed at Level 2 or higher in reading. In one study, 80% were identified as showing indications of dyslexia.

6.05 Any analysis of the basic skills test results must, however, be treated with a degree of caution. The tests were not always conducted under ideal conditions. Confidentiality was not guaranteed; some learners did not take the task seriously and some were in no state of mind to listen to the instructions or to perform to the best of their ability in the tests. Many had taken the tests several times before.

6.06 Teachers working in subject or curricular areas usually administered more detailed assessments when setting targets and devising work programmes for individual learners. These assessments were often conducted in busy classrooms by overloaded tutors and, on occasions, the quality was poor.

6.07 In one example of good practice, the education department had devised an impressive and comprehensive set of procedures. These ensured that new arrivals were made aware of the education and training opportunities on offer through the provision of up-to-date information, the opportunity of one-to-one guidance interviews and the provision of taster courses. Subsequently, when learners were more familiar with the surroundings and the operation of the daily routines, specialists in the Education Department administered more detailed assessments in dyslexia, literacy and numeracy. These formed the basis for discussion and negotiated targets and programmes.

6.08 In contrast, induction arrangements were unsatisfactory in an establishment where the procedures were too complex and had minimal impact on the target audience. The information given at a briefing session was highly generalised and, in some cases, inaccurate. On occasions, the quality of written information given to new arrivals at the time of induction lacked sensitivity to those learners who expressed difficulty in reading or whose first language was not English.

6.09 Education staff did not play a meaningful role in the initial and subsequent training planning meetings. Initial training plan conferences for juveniles were generally well attended by representatives from 'home' Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) and, in cases, by parents. Education staff were not represented at these meetings, although they did submit basic skills test scores for consideration. As a consequence, the targets set for education were too vague and they did not relate to specific courses or agreed outcomes in terms of educational targets and accreditation. Education staff rarely attend the subsequent review meetings conducted at regular intervals during a learner's custodial sentence. Similarly, Careers Advisers, working for local careers service companies, conducted much of their guidance work with little or no reference to the work undertaken by the sentence planning teams.

STANDARDS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Overall Assessment

6.10 A total of 152 sessions were observed. Of the sessions seen, 73% were satisfactory or better and 27% were less than satisfactory. Standards in the vocational areas and in the teaching of ICT and life and social skills were generally satisfactory. The standards of teaching and learning in basic skills, the area of greatest need according to the basic skills test results, were less than satisfactory.

6.11 The mixture of remand, convicted and sentenced learners combined with unpredictable attendance patterns, different levels of learners' motivation and shortages of staff in certain curriculum areas, made effective teaching difficult, if not impossible. Tutors could never be certain which learners would arrive and often those who did included some who did not belong in that class. Most sessions were planned for between 1.5 and 3 hours. The longer sessions proved to be more difficult for the majority of learners, who could not sustain attention for long periods of time: behaviour deteriorated and tutors often resorted to containment activities including playing games and quizzes.

6.12 Great emphasis was placed in the provision of modularised programmes and the extensive and, sometimes excessive, use of worksheets to support learning. That enabled some learners to achieve some accreditation in subjects across the curriculum.

LITERACY

Teaching

6.13 Sixty-four classes were observed. In 38%, teaching was graded as good or excellent; in 31% teaching was unsatisfactory or poor.

6.14 In the better practice, tutors provided a good variety of activities including speaking and listening, reading and writing, discussion and group work. The contexts used were interesting and relevant to the learners. In one one-hour class, the tutor was supporting learners to read aloud to the class from some quite challenging ecology materials. The class was questioned, their knowledge and experience were explored, and there was concluding written work.

6.15 In other sessions, writers in residence effectively prompted learners to write very directly about their experience and their lives, sometimes in quite extended prose and at other times in poetry. Other sessions involved the use of newspaper cuttings or magazines of interest to the learners, especially about sport.

6.16 A few classes used a wide range of materials and resources including the library, CD-ROM and texts for research. Some of the literacy work in Life Skills Art provided a very good experience. Computers were not often available but, where they were, some good use was made not only of word processing, but also of literacy software. Much more use needs to be made of ICT.

6.17 In too many classes, the disruption associated with short stays, frequent absences, learners in the wrong classes and new ones to be assessed, left tutors too overwhelmed to teach and support individuals to the extent they needed. With classes of eight, tutors were unable to do more than carry out assessments, issue standard worksheets and encourage learners to work or not be disruptive. Some tutors, especially in long sessions, resorted too quickly to the use of board games such as Monopoly or Scrabble. The extent of disruption seriously undermined the potential for learning.

6.18 In the poorest classes, there was little if any learning. Dull, mechanical, exam-related worksheets lacked stimulus, realism or challenge and failed to engage the learners in significant work. Such learners soon became disruptive and many tutors experienced difficulties in managing their behaviour. Appropriate resources such as computers, books, audio and video and newspapers were frequently lacking. Some tutors, whilst generally qualified, had no specialist qualifications or experience in basic skills work, or in dealing with learners displaying challenging behaviour and they lacked suitable strategies for dealing with their circumstances.

Response

6.19 In the sixty-four classes observed, learners responded well in just over 38% of sessions; response was less than satisfactory in nearly 35%.

6.20 Where learners had been carefully assessed, and realistic detailed targets established, more progress was made and learners responded well. Individual folders were well kept and valued as an important part of the process. Short one-to-one sessions supported the weakest. They had expectations about achievement levels and were well supported by tutors. Tutors had established an atmosphere of mutual respect.

6.21 In the best classes, learners were interested in the materials and the work and were participating effectively. These included some literacy work in support of vocational areas such as horticulture. Learners were actively engaged in a wide range of activities: group and pair-work, speaking and listening or extracting information from CD-ROMs, posters, magazines, books or leaflets. These learners, sometimes the least able, showed themselves capable of learning to work independently. Progress was being made towards understood, achievable and precise targets.

6.22 In too many of the unsatisfactory classes, disaffected learners were working only some of the time, at a slow pace, and achieving very little. Expectations were low and learners soon became disruptive. There was extensive use of rather mechanical worksheets related to accreditation more than to individuals' needs. Learners who had to wait for the attention they needed were soon off task, talking to others or asking to play games. Learners who were in the wrong class could be particularly difficult to contain and engage.

Attainment

6.23 In the sixty-four classes observed, the attainment was very varied, with 24% better than satisfactory but over 60% less than satisfactory. Attainment in literacy was assessed as weaker than either the teaching or the learning. All departments had achieved a range of appropriate accreditation for a proportion of learners but many were there for too short a time, especially when there were end tests at fixed intervals that did not fit with a learner's period of custody. Some learners worked well and made progress even though they could not be accredited.

6.24 In some classes, learners were on their own too much, using standard worksheets related to accreditation but not necessarily reflecting their own particular needs. Some learners attempted to work, albeit slowly and for short periods, but getting others to work at all, or even to be in a classroom, was an achievement.

6.25 Given the background experiences, lack of education, low attainment and low expectations of some learners, more realistic Key Performance Targets (KPTs) need to be set. KPTs should be set which reflect the low ability and prior attainment of the learners as well as the short period of time available. Level 2 qualifications were applicable to only a small proportion of learners and were distorting the balance of provision.

NUMERACY

Teaching

6.26 Thirty two classes were observed but in only 12.5% was teaching graded good or excellent; in 37.5% teaching was graded less than satisfactory. Overall the teaching was weak.

6.27 To a great extent, the use of work sheets was an expected response to the high turnover of the population in classes and the diversity of the learners. There was, however, far too much reliance on unimaginative, mechanical and unchallenging worksheets which frequently led to boredom and disruptive behaviour. Overlong sessions contained too much time filling in colouring patterns, playing games or with uninterested learners just messing around and disturbing others.

6.28 In the better sessions, there was a much wider use of contexts, resources and methods. Individual marking and feedback, with well-kept folders, encouraged learners to raise their expectations. Realistic problems based on learners' interests, such as football clubs or vocational work in paving or costing brickwork, engaged the learners' interest and resulted in appropriate work. The use of ICT in numeracy classes was rare, but in one session it was used very effectively in conjunction with a calculator and a set of arithmetic problems. Where ICT was used, oral work and mental arithmetic as well as whole class teaching proved more effective.

6.29 In the worst classes, little work was done. There was little use of test information in setting targets or planning work and many of the tasks set were fragmentary and not part of a coherent programme. Unstimulating and repetitive individual worksheets were used extensively even though some learners were known to have poor reading skills. When they failed, they were set the task again, usually without any teaching to help. There was no practical work, group or whole class work and the content was based on mechanical arithmetic without realistic contexts.

6.30 Too many tutors were too busy coping with demanding and challenging class groups to teach adequately. Diagnostic assessment was needed with new learners in nearly every lesson, weak individuals needed more attention than there was time to provide, and some were too new into the class to know what to get on with. Classes of eight learners were too large in these circumstances. Tutors coped by using standard worksheets not related to individual needs and interests but often examination related, even though some learners found them difficult to read and understand. Tutors also used rewards such as allowing them to play board games later, in order to contain bored and uninterested learners.

Attainment

6.31 In the thirty two sessions observed, the attainment was very varied, with 25% better than satisfactory but 56% less than satisfactory.

6.32 Where there was opportunity, some learners worked well and made significant progress, especially the more able. However, many less able were working at exercises that they could already do or were working slowly and making only a little progress. For some learners, actually being in a classroom and attempting some work was an achievement, given their experience and ability.

6.33 The disruptive behaviour, and short stays, combined with poor prior attainment of some learners, limited what could be achieved. All departments had succeeded, however, in enabling a small proportion of learners to gain accreditation, usually at the lower levels.

Response

6.34 In the thirty-two classes observed, learners responded well in just over 15% of sessions and were less than satisfactory in nearly 21%.

6.35 In the best classes, learners were well motivated, showed very positive attitudes and were actively participating in a range of tasks. Progress was often slow with weak learners but in some places high expectations were evident.

6.36 In too many unsatisfactory classes, disaffected learners were doing little work or working slowly. Whilst some learners were compliant, others were unwilling or disruptive. In one example, some distracted learners refused to work. In the long sessions, concentration dropped and behavioural problems developed.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Teaching

6.37 Of the 56 sessions observed, 54% were graded as good or excellent and 20% were less than satisfactory. These grades were far better than in the basic skills provision but still left scope for improvement.

6.38 In the best sessions learners were treated as individuals and often had good individual relationships with tutors who monitored their progress and discussed it with them, setting them new targets. There was planned variety in what the learners were doing, with a mixture of individual and group work including discussion. Learners were encouraged to explore for themselves, interest was stimulated, and expectations were high. Some tutors showed themselves adept at defusing tension and coping with learners who were not used to learning, or who were experiencing personal problems.

6.39 In one ICT session, the tutor used initial simple tasks to diagnose attainment and used a well-planned programme of projects to devise an individual programme. The class was well managed, clear directions were given and learners were well supported. In art, initial drawing tasks provided a good basis for setting individuals a programme of work which included diverse activities such as research and written work. Detailed evaluation of progress in conjunction with the learners enabled high expectations to be set.

6.40 In Life Skills, good materials and interesting topics led to good discussion, role-play and practical activity, which enabled interest to be sustained over quite long sessions.

6.41 Some practical sessions were well sustained, with varied activities over as long as 180 minutes. Other classes had benefited from the introduction of 90-minute sessions: in the longer ones, learners could be sitting at computers for too long for motivation and pace to be sustained, which led to chatting and disruption. Even in well planned and taught long sessions, learners' interest was not always sustained and disruptive behaviour developed. In one long Life Skills class, a chart with information about childhood diseases and immunisation provided an effective basis for extracting information for discussion that was well managed. Subsequent activities involved watching a video and using dolls for practical activities. Learners were well engaged for the early part of the session but became restless and were calling out and off task towards the latter half.

6.42 The weakest sessions were poorly conceived, delivered and inappropriate to the learners. In one Life Skills class, the tutor went through a narrowly focused worksheet and the five learners ignored the tutor. In one art class, there was no teaching. The learners worked at their own pace on various projects, or not at all, and attention lagged over time. Just four of the 11 produced reasonable work in clay or drawing.

Attainment

6.43 In the classes observed, good progress and attainment were recorded in 45%, with 18% less than satisfactory. Overall attainment was good but too many learners failed to gain as much as they might because of the poor attendance, constant turnover of learners and shortness of time.

6.44 As in other subject areas, the constant movement of juveniles and short time available limited the levels of attainment. All were using Computer Literacy and Information Technology (CLAIT) qualifications and many learners were achieving at least some modules. A few were able to move on to a higher level with IBT2. Unitised or modularised Open College Network (OCN) accreditation enabled many to gain some accreditation via their portfolios in areas of Life Skills and some also gained Food Hygiene Certificates from the cooking. The use of portfolio-based assessment and modularised courses was effective in enabling many to gain accreditation despite the turbulence and shortness of time.

6.45 In Art, the work of many was displayed around the education department or in the wider prison and some had gained awards in the Koestler competition. Opportunities for General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and GCE A level were very limited but some GCSEs had been awarded, and in one place, GCE A-levels in Art.

Response

6.46 The learners' responses were generally good. In 50% of the 56 sessions observed, response was graded as good or excellent and in nearly 20% as less than satisfactory. When the classes engaged the learners' interests, they showed themselves capable of well-sustained work for significant periods, if not over whole 90-minute or longer sessions. With quite numerous brief breaks, many learners worked conscientiously without needing much support on the ICT courses. Learners said that they could get worthwhile skills and that, with the materials and the computers, they thought that they could just get on with it themselves. In evening sessions, learners were more able to explore for themselves and there were some very positive comments made about those opportunities.

6.47 Cooking was a popular course, not least because learners were able to eat what they had cooked. In general that led to well-disciplined learners working well, asking questions. They were taking care over, and pride in, what they were doing.

6.48 In art, most were well motivated and although many had had no previous tuition, they responded to the way they were treated by tackling challenging tasks.

Some of the more able learners were quite absorbed in what they were doing and needed only occasional advice from the tutor. The range of work was limited by the facilities but there was a good range of painting and drawing together with clay work, so that most found worthwhile projects to tackle.

6.49 In Life Skills, the response was generally good. Most showed genuine interest in the topics which included parent-craft, citizenship and health. The use of drama in addressing issues about drugs effectively engaged the learners, who were able to debate effectively. However, some learners remained aloof and uninterested, some were distracted and volatile and many were too transitory to become effectively involved. Overall, these classes generated more positive responses than the basic skills did.

Curriculum

6.50 All establishments were aware of the requirement to base their provision on the National Core Curriculum specified by the Prison Service, which was based on a programme of basic skills at different levels, with ICT and Life Skills, which could include art. Education managers and teachers were less certain of the requirements and policies of the Youth Justice Board.

6.51 The extent of any provision above or beyond core curriculum requirements was determined by the scale and extent of the resources and accommodation available in particular establishments. In some cases, the curriculum range was impressive, with classes in music, art, home economics, pottery, life and social skills and ICT. Some establishments concentrated on the core curriculum and failed to provide for the full range of individual needs. Some catered for those wanting some GCSE work but none had specific provision for arrivals identified as having indications of dyslexia.

6.52 Good practice was observed in a number of establishments offering a varied educational programme combined with planned training in the workshops. This was reinforced by the incorporation of key skills teaching in the vocational training areas. Two establishments were close to the introduction of an integrated regime that combined opportunities in education and training and increased the range and type of opportunities on offer. A number of establishments were restricted in combining education and training opportunities because of the paucity or non-existence of on-site workshop provision.

6.53 There were some diverse approaches to the provision of literacy. All departments had daytime provision with a focus on basic skills at different levels. Some were able to offer effective one-to-one support with the support of volunteers and mentors. Creative writing, music and drama sessions were popular in the small number of establishments where they were offered. A writer in residence, in two establishments, developed valuable additional materials, which were strongly focused on the lives and experiences of the learners.

6.54 Evening classes were on offer in over 50% of cases, but attendance levels were variable. There was no weekend provision, although one establishment had secured funding and intended to develop this provision.

6.55 The need to make discrete provision for juveniles, which meant, for example, that young offenders were taught separately from juveniles, was making planning difficult in some cases. Curriculum planning and timetabling were becoming more complicated and the lack of clarity about resource allocations from the Youth Justice Board did not help matters. Most education departments devised two programmes, one for juveniles and one for young offenders, both concentrating on the core curriculum. This resulted in staffing problems, particularly in finding an adequate supply of basic skills tutors to teach both groups, and departments struggled to maintain their commitment to providing a broad range of provision for all learners.

6.56 Most departments attempted to base their programmes on short modules leading to some form of accreditation.

There was no guarantee, however, if a juvenile moved from one establishment to another or out into the community, that there would be a natural progression towards the continuation of studies; different establishments used different awarding bodies.

6.57 Because of the emphasis on provision at Entry Level and Level 1, some learners who had already reached Level 2 were offered a Level 1 programme. ICT programmes, in some establishments, allowed little progression beyond Level 2; opportunities for independent learning varied considerably, with some, but not all, education departments making good use of distance learning packages. On occasions, good links were established with secondary schools and further education colleges to enable individual learners to continue with their GCSE or GCE A-level programme.

6.58 Most establishments made limited provision, less than 15 hours per week, for learners in the health care centre and for vulnerable prisoners who were unable or unwilling to attend classes. Typically, provision was made either in wing classrooms or by conducting cell visits. This work was valued by the learners but time-consuming and the first to be cancelled when education departments experienced staffing shortages.

Management and Leadership

6.59 The quality of management and leadership of education departments varied considerably across the 13 establishments in the juvenile estate and ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Education Managers experienced difficulty in coping with the day-to-day management of their departments and, at the same time, coming to terms with their recently required responsibilities for juveniles. Their education contracts had not always been revised to take account of YJB Standards.

6.60 A considerable amount of disruption to life within education departments was caused, particularly at the start of the year, as a result of the movement of learners and young offenders between establishments to create discrete educational provision for juveniles. This policy had major implications for staffing, timetabling and resource allocation and, in many cases, education managers struggled to deal with the competing demands on their time.

6.61 The quality of teaching and learning was undermined as a result of the movement of learners between establishments. Teachers often did not know which learners would be attending lessons, nor how many. Groups of learners who were quite unknown to the teachers, had to be provided for with no prior notice. Matters were made worse by the constant movement of learners between establishments as a result of overcrowding.

6.62 Poor prison management, outside the immediate control of education managers, meant that significant amounts of education time were lost through the late arrival, early return and failure to unlock learners on the call list. For example, in one establishment some learners arrived 30 minutes late; only 17 out of the 75 on the call list attended the morning session and 27 out of 96 in the afternoon. Call lists showed a turnover of 40% just in four days. This was not uncommon; teaching sessions were often poorly attended. In many instances, learners attended only once, many arrived late and staff rarely knew which of those called would arrive. In one cookery class, none arrived.

6.63 In one example of good management, teaching staff were well supported and led by an experienced education manager. Learners' programmes were well planned and any emerging issues were dealt with promptly. Targets were set, monitored and realigned when necessary. Appropriate information was collected, collated and used. Effective links between the Head of Inmate Activities and the education manager meant that the education department made a significant contribution in providing courses for the wider prison population (for example, by devising a programme with supporting teaching materials, aimed at bullies).

6.64 In contrast, leadership and management in another establishment were unsatisfactory. Links between prison managers, the education contractor and education manager were under-developed. The quality of record-keeping was poor and the system of quality assurance was ineffective. Evidence of strategic thinking and planning was hard to identify. Although the majority of teachers were experienced and suitably qualified, a minority were not, and the number of teachers employed was below that required to fulfil the contract and to staff an appropriate curriculum. The education contract was too general and vague. It had not been adapted to meet, and lacked sensitivity to, the circumstances and requirements of juveniles in such an establishment.

6.65 There was a need to set demanding, meaningful and appropriate targets for literacy and numeracy attainment. However, the national targets set by the Prison Service, linked to Level 2 achievement in numeracy and literacy, distorted the curriculum and had a de-motivating effect on education managers and the teaching staff. The target figures failed to take account of the starting-point, in terms of prior attainment, of learners and paid insufficient attention to the short periods of time spent in custody by the majority of juveniles.

6.66 There were a number of examples of good practice which highlighted strong, effective links between the teachers and staff responsible for training and workshop provision in juvenile establishments. In one case, teachers from education visited the workshops to offer basic and key skills support and workshop instructors accompanied learners on their visits to the education department and provided valuable in-class support.

6.67 The range and quality of support offered by the local careers service companies to the 13 establishments in the juvenile estate varied considerably. Much depended on the policies, practices and resources allocated by each company. There was no minimum level of provision. In one example of good practice, a careers adviser worked full-time in the establishment. The post-holder had developed good working links with prison managers and was providing an effective programme of one-to-one guidance and making an excellent contribution to a preparation for work course.

6.68 Although there were some examples of effective communication between prison managers, the education contractor and the education manager, there was scope for further improvement. More regular meetings were required to discuss and review current policies for juveniles in the light of YJB plans and policies. Education contractors also needed to play a more effective role in providing appropriate staff training opportunities for part-time staff working with juveniles. The majority of part-time staff had considerable experience of working with young offenders and adults but many lacked experience (and training) in dealing with the Key Stage 4 (KS4) age group.

Staffing

6.69 The majority of teaching staff were hardworking, conscientious and employed on a part-time basis. Most teachers were in possession of, and were studying for, a recognised further education teaching qualification. A minority held a PGCE or Cert Ed. Few teachers had experience of working in secondary and/or special schools.

6.70 Education managers were finding it increasingly difficult to attract and retain full-time teachers, particularly in the areas of basic skills, ICT and mathematics. This problem was compounded by a growing shortage of supply teachers to cover for staff absence and sickness. Hourly pay rates for sessional staff and supply teachers, ranging from £13-£17, were not as attractive as the rates being paid for similar work in secondary and special schools.

6.71 Problems in attracting full-time staff and supply cover were having an adverse effect on the quality of teaching and learning. One group of learners reported

having at least three teachers for the same subject each week; there was an increased use of non-specialists providing cover, and lessons were being cancelled, particularly at holiday times. All of these factors, combined with related issues highlighted in this report (for example, poor punctuality and low attendance rates), resulted in a less than satisfactory experience of education for many learners.

6.72 Most part-time teachers had a good grasp and understanding of their subject areas but often they lacked an up-to-date knowledge of national issues relating, for example, to the national curriculum and developments in vocational education at KS4. Teaching staff needed further support and training in dealing with learners with behavioural difficulties. A number of establishments were investigating the possibility of employing classroom assistants to provide much-needed assistance. Several establishments were making effective use of mentors who were providing excellent one-to-one support, for example, in the teaching of basic skills.

RESOURCES

Accommodation

6.73 The quality of teaching accommodation ranged from excellent to poor. There were several examples where teaching took place in modern, purpose-built buildings, offering attractive furnishings and fittings and providing an environment conducive to learn. These examples were, however, in the minority. The majority of buildings were barely adequate. There were a small number of lessons taking place in poor or inappropriate settings (for example, rooms with leaking roofs or rotting window frames). In some places rooms were too small and others, there was a shortage of rooms to meet the demand.

6.74 Most establishments attempted to provide specialist teaching facilities for Art and Design, Cookery and Crafts. These rooms were generally kept in good order and valued by the learners using the specialist facilities.

Equipment and Materials

6.75 In some departments, effective use was made of a wide range of equipment and materials, including ICT, video, books and pamphlets, CD-ROM, library and diverse printed sources including posters, magazines and newspapers. In general, there were some good resources but there were also some specific shortages. In particular, there was little ICT to support basic skills and too little interesting software or CD-ROMs for researching topics.

6.76 The quality and quantity of ICT equipment varied extensively. Two inspections, conducted within two months of each other, recorded very different facilities - ranging from high quality, reliable hardware with up-to-date software packages, to old, unreliable machines with one shared printer and dated software packages.

6.77 The hardware and software packages did not always provide access to current versions of application packages and, in some cases, response times were slow. There was very limited provision to meet the needs of the minority of learners who had already reached Level 2 in Information and Communication Technology and wanted to work on desktop publishing or other areas requiring faster machines with larger memories.

6.78 Specialist equipment for cooking and other practical subjects was generally adequate if not well maintained. Some cookers, for instance, had been out of action for several weeks. Knives and other implements were securely stored and carefully accounted for. Lack of some facilities, for pottery and music for instance, restricted the curriculum that could be provided. In art, there were often good reference libraries but in other subjects there were few books. Art materials were generally adequate for the limited range of work undertaken and the limitations of the storage space available.

6.79 Worksheets were used extensively and many were commercially produced in connection with particular courses and

their accreditation. Some were very mechanistic and many lacked suitable contexts to engage the interests of the learners. Some would have been more appropriate to younger learners. The best were well related to current activities, especially on vocational courses and relevant to the experiences and attainment of those using them.

Libraries

6.80 Libraries were being used, primarily, as places for the selection and exchange of books rather than as a fully-developed resource to support learning. In most establishments, learners were allocated a 20-minute library visit each week, on a rota basis, but this did not always take place. In one case, planned visits were frequently cancelled at short notice. In another example, many opportunities and programmes planned by the librarian did not materialise because of the regular closure of the library due to staffing problems within the prison. In November 2000, 50% of the planned morning sessions were lost because prison staff were not available to support the librarian. Seventy-seven per cent of the afternoon sessions were lost, in the same month, for the same reason.

6.81 The majority of libraries offered a stimulating and welcoming environment for learners although in one or two cases the library resembled a 'Cash and Carry' warehouse with no tables or chairs for the learners to use.

6.82 There was generally a good range of paperback titles on offer. The quality and range of reading material for learners with reading difficulties and those for learners whose first language was not English were variable. Talking books and audio-cassettes were available in only some of the libraries. Policies and practices varied considerably in relation to censorship and in determining which books or magazines should be available to the learners.

6.83 Committed librarians and their support staff responded positively to requests and special orders from learners. Librarians made good use of support services offered through the local authorities in their areas. In one example, 25% of book stock was replaced annually in an exchange system organised in conjunction with other prison libraries in the locality.

6.84 Insufficient use was made of ICT either as a means of assisting librarians in their day-to-day work (for instance with cataloguing), or in using computers as a learning resource. In one establishment, up-to-date computer hardware and software had been kept in a storeroom for over six months waiting for the installation of plug socket points in the adjoining library.

6.85 The range and quality of careers information in libraries were generally poor and limited to a small number of reference books and leaflets. On occasions, the material on offer was out-dated. The careers library initiative, a scheme organised by the careers service companies, had made little impact on raising the quality and range of careers information on offer in juvenile establishments.

APPENDIX 1

The Overall Context

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 translated into statute the policies and principles set out in the Government White Paper 'No More Excuses'[3]; the new arrangements came into effect on 1 April 2001. The Act places all those working within the youth justice system under a statutory duty to have regard to its principal aim of preventing re-offending by children and young people.

In order to oversee and co-ordinate the most radical overhaul of the youth justice system in England and Wales since 1908, the Act established the Youth Justice Board, the primary objectives of which were to:

1. Significantly reduce the time between the apprehension of a young person and the decision in a court, or elsewhere, as to what should be the consequence of the offence.

2. Develop and extend the range of community penalties, in which reparation to the victim was to play an important part.

3. Establish, where it was judged that there could be no alternative to custody, a 'seamless' sentence, half of which was to be served in the community.

4. Act as the purchasing agency for all custodial placements through contracts with a range of providers, the largest of which would, for the time being, continue to be the Prison Service.

In order to achieve objective 2 above, each local authority was required to establish a Youth Offending Team (YOT) under the leadership and management of its Chief Executive. The personnel of this team were to be drawn from all relevant disciplines, including the education, police, health, probation and social services.

In regard to objective 3, the YJB was to take over the responsibility for managing the entire national budget for custodial care, apart from a small number of remands of those under 15 to secure accommodation where the costs could continue to be partly borne by local authorities. The YJB was thus to become the purchasing and placement agency for custodial provision. It did this through a range of arrangements with the Prison Service, with whom it contracted for approximately 2,850 places for boys, the three secure training centres (125 places) and up to 250 places in local authority secure units.

The case for a complete overhaul of the youth justice system, and the custodial elements in particular, had been building up for much the previous decade.

- The Audit Commission report 'Misspent Youth' in 1996[4] had exposed the highly inefficient and ineffective use of existing resources, with the bulk of expenditure being concentrated on extended investigations and court processes which frequently had little practical outcome or consequence for the child concerned.

- 'Misspent Youth' also pointed to the huge, and unjustifiable variations in the costs across the custodial sector. Although these have narrowed slightly over the last five years, the variations continue to be immense, with, for example, £3,000 per head per year

[3] Home Office (1997) No more excuses: a new approach to tackling youth crime in England and Wales. London: Home Office.
[4] Audit Commission (1996) Misspent Youth: Young People and Crime. Abingdon: Audit Commission Publications.

spent on education in Prison Service establishments, £16,000 in secure training centres and £21,000 rising to £31,000 in local authority secure units.

- The unacceptable level of provision for, and quality of care of, children in prison establishments was exposed in HM Chief Inspector of Prisons' thematic review of young prisoners[5]. This report indicated that less was being spent on these children per head than on many adult prisoners.

- Few of the provisions of the Children Act 1989, particularly in relation to child protection, had been incorporated into Prison Service procedures.

- Many of the recommendations on staff selection, vetting and training in 'Choosing with Care'(the Warner Report[6]) still awaited implementation, in the Prison Service in particular.

- Many of the custodial conditions in which children were being held did not conform to any reasonable interpretation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, which came into force in the United Kingdom in 1992.

The creation of the Youth Justice Board was not an isolated initiative by Government, but just one component of a much wider strategy for social and economic change, many aspects of which had direct implications for the youth justice system. These included:

- The reports of the Social Exclusion Unit, in particular 'Bridging The Gap'[7] which set out a new overall strategy for 16-18 year olds not in employment or training. This placed particular emphasis on the level of such provision for those in custody.

- The new Connexions Service, which would provide personal advisers for all 13-19 year olds, with a particular focus on those with multiple problems or those at risk of disengaging.

- The 'Quality Protects' programme of the Department of Health within which a new charter for those leaving care was laid down.

The new custodial orders

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 replaced the sentence of Detention in a Youth Offender Institution, in the case of those under 18, with the new Detention and Training Order (DTO). This was to be served, at the discretion of the Home Secretary, in any of the three types of custodial establishments, although in practice the decision as to which it was to be has been determined by the clearing house of the YJB.

The principle underlying the DTO was that it should be served half in custody and half in the community. The latter component was intended to be an active continuation of a training programme which had been determined at the outset of the custodial period in a conference involving the young person, his/her YOT worker and staff of the establishment. It was, therefore, to be significantly different from the provision for the release on licence contained in the former orders. The DTO could be made for periods of four, six, eight, 10, 12, 18 or 24 months and in all orders, apart from those of four or six months, there was provision for up to two months' early or late release.

Sentences over 24 months, including detention during Her Majesty's Pleasure, were made under the provisions of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. This was replaced from 2001, in almost identical terms, by Sections 90 -92 of the Criminal Courts (Powers of Sentencing) Act 2000. Although the funding was to come from the YJB budget, decisions as to placement and training plans were to continue to be overseen, on behalf of the Home Secretary, by a special section of Youth Offender

5 HM Inspectorate of Prisons for England and Wales (1997) Young prisoners: a thematic review. London: HMIP.

6 Warner, N. (1992) Choosing with Care: Report of the Committee of Enquiry into Selection, Development and Management of Staff in Children's Homes. London: HMSO.

7 Great Britain Cabinet Office, Social Exclusion Unit (1999) Bridging the gap: new opportunities for 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training. Cm.4405. London: Stationery Office.

Group (subsequently redesignated as the Juvenile Operations Management Group) of the Prison Service.

Children and young people remanded into custody were to be funded and placed by the YJB, apart from the small numbers remanded into local authority care.

Youth Justice Board Standards and Prison Service Order 4950 'Regimes for Young Prisoners under 18 Years Old'

The YJB issued its national Standards for youth justice on 4 April 2000. These were to be immediately implemented, with the one exception of those which applied to 'integrated work with young offenders subject to the DTO during the custodial phase'. For the time being these Standards were to have 'draft status and be more akin to good practice guidance'. The youth justice services were encouraged 'to work towards these particular Standards as resources and the development of shared working arrangements with the juvenile secure estate allow'. Although the draft status of these Standards was scheduled to be reviewed in October 2000, this was subsequently deferred until Spring 2001.

The YJB Standards related largely to the timescales within which initial conferences to prepare the training plan and the subsequent reviews thereof were to be held. They also required monthly visits to the young person by his YOT worker, a resettlement review within ten days prior to his return to the community and a further one within ten days after his transfer. All of these meetings were to involve staff of the YOT and the custodial establishment, as well as the young person and, if possible, his parents or carers.
The decision of the YJB not to enforce mandatory standards for the custodial care of sentenced young people reflected the widespread doubts as to whether Prison Service establishments and the YOTs, many still in embryo, had anything approaching the resources to comply with them. Ironically, the Standards laid down for young people remanded in custody, which in the event have been those which all parties have most frequently failed to meet, were from the outset mandatory.

The YJB indicated that for the time being, it expected the Prison Service to concentrate on achieving the targets it had set for itself in Prison Service Order 4950 'Regimes for Prisoners under the Age of 18' issued in July 1999. This was a significant document - indeed a mission statement - that was to set the framework of planning and subsequent operation for the Young Offender Institutions contracted to the Youth Justice Board.

APPENDIX 2

THE PROCESS OF PREPARATION

The Starting Point

During the course of 1999, the 13 establishments were identified which between them provided the 2,850 boys' places which the Prison Service had contracted to the YJB. Some establishments were entirely devoted to those under 18; others continued to be split sites where young offenders over 18 and under 21 were also accommodated. Some establishments held both sentenced and remanded juveniles.

The process of preparation was a challenging one:

- Overstretched management staff had to undertake this on top of their normal day-to-day duties; the approach and time allocated to the task thus varied greatly across the estate.

- Establishments were setting out from very different starting bases; smaller establishments such as Thorncross and Werrington were well endowed with education and training facilities whereas Brinsford, Onley and Stoke Heath had very little. Unit costs per place varied widely from approximately £40,000 per year at Werrington to little more than £20,000 at Brinsford and Onley. The quality of experience that young people were to have in custody was thus, and still remains, a lottery largely dependant on where they happened to be sent.

- Each establishment had to bid for additional capital and revenue resources from a central fund of £51 million established under the Comprehensive Spending Review. Governors and their staff reported that there seemed to be little clarity as to the rationale underlying the allocation of this fund.

- Staff capacity, cultures and traditions varied markedly in their readiness and preparedness for the new task. Establishments such as Huntercombe had had a long tradition of positive work with young people; Brinsford was still rooted in the remand centre role which had, until recently, been its role.

- Buildings varied widely in their suitability; Thorncross had recently been purpose built to a high standard; Portland was one of the nation's oldest prisons, built by convicts in 1848 on an exposed promontory in the South West. There should have been very little surprise at the consequences of this variable suitability in terms of contrasting cultures and qualities of regime.

- In the case of Ashfield, the one privately managed establishment for young people, there were some fundamental incompatibilities between its recently negotiated contract with the Prison Service and the performance that would henceforth be required of it by the YJB and the PSO. These difficulties would continue to hamper the quality of service its staff were able to provide.

From the outset there was general agreement that few of the establishments selected were ideally located, particularly as YJB Standards quite correctly placed considerable stress on accessibility to home area and close collaboration between custodial and community based YOT staff. These problems were to prove particularly acute in Wales, London and the South East.

The Buildings

The building programme benefited establishments variably. In the main the programme was concentrated on establishments with split sites to enable them to create visiting, reception and education facilities that would be separated from those aged over 18. Thus, Hollesley was able to convert a large hangar previously in industrial use into an education and activity centre and Onley built new visits, reception and education areas. Other apparently equally needy establishments such as Brinsford, Stoke Heath and Portland received little or nothing by way of building development. Substantial amounts were devoted to the conversion of the specialist Section 53 CYPA units at Castington and Hollesley. However, for many of these projects the lead time was too short for them to be available by April 2000 and most establishments had to embark on providing for those serving the new DTO without the necessary facilities and were often surrounded on all sides by ongoing building works.

Staffing, Training and Development

Most establishments were able to submit bids for quite substantial increments of staffing, in the main to their prison officer quotas, although in some places additional social workers, probation officers or psychologists were sought. There appeared to be no standard formula.

Almost without exception, establishments sought to select a ring fenced group of officers, teaching, vocational training and other specialists to work with juveniles, although in shared sites certain staff such as those in the PE department had to work with the whole population, although at different times. These new staff groups were created by trawling for volunteers from within the establishment and by external public advertisements. The proportions of staff appointed from outside varied; Ashfield, for example, had just opened and was still in the process of appointing its staff and developing its regime. Like Huntercombe, it was in an area where both employment and house prices were high, and therefore had high levels of vacancies and turnover of staff. By the end of 2000, less than 50% of the main grade officers of both these establishments had been in post for more than a year. With the exception of Ashfield, which as a privately managed establishment had its own 'in house' arrangements, all new officer staff underwent the standard point of entry training.

Although a modest amount of training was devoted to working with adolescents, many of these new staff subsequently commented to inspectors about how poorly they felt they had been prepared for their new work. The staff who were particularly disappointed were those who had specifically applied to the Prison Service because of the opportunity of working with this age group.

These new staff had to be trained in the use of control and restraint and other tasks common to all custodial settings. However, at the time when most of these officers were being trained, they represented a large proportion of those passing through the training school and it was unfortunate that the curriculum could not have been more responsive to their needs, particularly as it appeared that the training format as a whole was in a state of flux. Some establishments such as Hollesley became so frustrated with what was being offered to their future staff that they took the initiative to develop training materials which they subsequently used at the training school in special sessions with staff recruited to join their establishment.

Staff reported to inspectors that they felt that the weaknesses in the initial point of entry training were compounded by the near absence of any continuing staff development programmes once the staff returned to their establishments. In well-managed units where there was a clarity of purpose and direction, support for the new staff was seen as a priority and efforts were made to link up with local external training resources. For Huntercombe, where the need was well recognised, the situation was much more difficult. The numbers of

new staff were much higher, and the vacancy situation meant that they could only be released from front line duties with great difficulty.

One of the major brakes on the change of culture and the development of creative and constructive regimes has been the failure to relate initial training for work with adolescents to the task in hand. The problem has been exacerbated by the absence of any centrally directed strategy for ongoing staff development. In some establishments this has also had a serious effect on the morale of staff who had originally joined full of enthusiasm and commitment. If this staff commitment is to be retained, urgent action must be taken.

These developmental needs were not confined to new staff; a number of existing staff had greatly benefited in their former roles from programmes set up by the Trust for the Study of Adolescence. Unfortunately, most of the momentum behind these was lost in the run up to April 2000 as the YJB was putting its resources and energy into the six-day joint training events which it required all YOT and custodial staff to attend together. The intention was commendable, and certainly many prison staff spoke warmly about the opportunity of meeting and working with staff from community settings.

However, most prison staff were frustrated by the content of the training course which either went over their heads because they simply had not yet got the context into which to place it, or because it did not relate to their priority need which was to relate effectively to adolescents in a custodial setting. Governors of establishments became similarly disillusioned, seeing their entire annual allocation of training days being consumed by a programme of doubtful value. The Governor of Brinsford concluded that it was having a negative effect, which was not surprising given the point from which most of his staff were setting out, and aborted the programme.

Other staff, in particular teachers and vocational training instructors, spoke of their need for training to prepare them for work with challenging adolescents. A number of governors and education managers have cited the absence of such training and support as one of the reasons for the high turnover amongst these groups.