



## **HMYOI STOKE HEATH**

### **Annual Report**

**1<sup>st</sup> May 2009 - 30<sup>th</sup> April 2010.**

## **CONTENTS**

<b>Statutory role of the IMB</b>	<b>page 3</b>
<b>The Establishment</b>	<b>page 4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>page 4</b>
<b>Race Equality/Diversity</b>	<b>page 5</b>
<b>Learning and Skills</b>	<b>page 6</b>
<b>Healthcare</b>	<b>page 7</b>
<b>Safer Custody &amp; SRU</b>	<b>page 8 &amp; 9</b>
<b>Reception</b>	<b>page 10</b>
<b>Kitchen and Catering</b>	<b>page 11</b>
<b>Applications</b>	<b>page 11</b>
<b>The Work of the Board</b>	<b>page 12</b>
<b>Resettlement</b>	<b>page 13</b>
<b>Adjudications</b>	<b>page 14</b>
<b>Inductions</b>	<b>page 14</b>
<b>Applications</b>	<b>page 11</b>

### **Statutory Role of the IMB**

The prisons Act of 1952 and the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 require every prison and IRC to be monitored by an independent Board appointed by the Home Secretary from members of the community in which the prison or centre is situated.

The Board is specifically charged to:

1. Satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release.
2. Inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom he has delegated authority as it judges appropriate any concerns it has.
3. Report annually to the Secretary of State on how well the prison has met the standards and requirements placed on it and what impact these have on those in its custody.

To enable the Board to carry out these duties effectively its members have right of access to every prisoner and every part of the prison and also to the prison's records.

## **The Establishment**

HMYOI Stoke Heath is situated near Market Drayton in Shropshire it was originally built in 1964 but has doubled in size since then. It is a split site with accommodation for 202 Young People (15-17) and 548 Young Adults (18 -21)

## **Executive Summary**

### **Particular Issues Requiring a Response**

1. We are concerned, as previously about the long distance from home of many of the trainees in this prison which has an immediate effect on the attitudes to staff and increases the likelihood of disruptive behaviour, often violent. Many families cannot visit because of cost and distance and it is not unusual for us to be told by trainees that they have not had a visit for weeks or even months.

It seems to us that some transfers in are inappropriate. We report one particular instance of an obviously vulnerable trainee brought in from a prison in the south of England who on arrival was dismayed to see within a very short time one of his alleged assailants. We are surprised that this could have happened and considering his state of mind are pleased that there was no unfortunate outcome.

2. There has been frequent cancellation of education classes (see learning and skills) because of staff shortages and sickness. The classes for Young People are relatively protected because the staff cover them and so the Young Adults suffer. We understand this is because of financial constraints resulting from the contract with the provider.
3. Inevitable financial cut backs mean that resulting staff shortages have an effect on regime including the undesirable length of cell lock up time and gym time as examples. This also affects staff morale.

## **Other issues of concern or excellence not requiring a response**

### **Safer Custody.**

In our report we note the problems in showers, scalding incidents and weapons finds. We are content that these are being addressed.

### **Overall Judgement**

Overall we have no major concerns as far as this particular prison is concerned this year. Despite the volatile nature of the population and the never ending pressures on the staff we feel that the overall atmosphere in the prison is calmer. We recognise the generally high standards of the staff in dealing with the daily problems. We hope that staff morale can remain strong as financial pressure inevitably bites. We appreciate the openness of the Senior Management Team which helps us to function properly.

### **Diversity & Race Relations**

Diversity continues to be a high priority area within Stoke Heath. The monthly meeting is now chaired by the Governor. These meetings are well attended with representatives from all of the wings and other departments within the estate.

The meetings are thorough, self critical and all strands where applicable are reported on. All complaints are investigated and reported on at meetings.

The Immigration Service continues to visit Stoke Heath to assist trainees in their personal circumstances and provide a direct feedback as required.

The Education Department now run diversity sessions for those trainees involved in racist actions. The board receives very few complaints/applications concerning the management of diversity within the prison. This is evidence that the establishment is and continues to take diversity seriously.

## **Learning & Skills**

### **Classroom Education**

The Education Dept. at Stoke Heath has been through a stressful time in the past year. Uncertainty about which provider would win the contract for the next three years was finally settled when it was awarded to Manchester City College. Since then financial constraints have seen a reduction in staff and part time staff paid on a session basis. This has resulted in poor employment relations and low staff morale. Probably as a result of this, staff absences have caused classes to be cancelled. Young people's classes are protected by moving teachers from YA classes where possible and only cancelled as a last resort. However officers on the YP's wings speak of regular cancelling of classes. YA's seem to be the main casualties as their classes are the first to go if staff cannot be transferred.

This situation should be relieved when the Local Authority take over education for the under 18's from this coming September.

### **Vocational Education**

Trainees can attend a number of courses which include car valeting, wood work, bricklaying, industrial cleaning, motor mechanics, painting and decorating, plumbing and electrics. The length of course attended can be up to twelve weeks long with the average being four to six weeks. Staff are now prepared to be trained as NVQ assessors. Trainees can work towards a Health and Safety qualification which can be used in the building trade and can also obtain a Car Valeting qualification at level one. The Performing Manufacturing Operations (PMO) course is to be carried out at Telford College.

Work areas include a laundry, welding, press section, grinding and a tailoring department.

Performance this year has been similar to the last with total value of goods dispatched amounting to £594,000.

## **Healthcare**

In the last year the health care manager has resigned and there has been a considerable delay in re appointing to the post. Along with other significant staff shortages and the need to cross cover with the health care at the Dana prison in Shrewsbury this has caused a good deal of strain on the staff and there has been a need to use agency staff.

There are often, as before, trainees with profound personality and psychiatric problems requiring intensive nursing observation adding to the staffing problems.

From time to time there have been trainees located to healthcare because of non health reasons. Whilst there are obvious reasons why prison staff have done this it is a misuse of health resources.

Despite this, all of the important nursing functions have been covered and we recognise the effort that staff have put in.

There is now a fully intergraded drug treatment service (IDTS) available for all young adults over the age of 18.

There is an ongoing concern that many health care appointments are missed because trainees do not get to them. There are various reasons for this but this is clearly wasteful and wrong.

We are pleased to note that there is now a designated staff member to clean and this area which is already making a difference.

## **Safer Custody &SRU**

### **Safer Custody**

Safer Custody meetings for Young Adults are held monthly (as are Violence Reduction meetings) and are chaired by a Governor. There is representation from the majority of departments including trainee representatives from the wings.

The meetings are proactive, constructively self critical and keen to ensure that the duty of care with which they are charged, is fully implemented. Individual follow ups are carried out on vulnerable trainees and reported on and where necessary action is taken.

One area of concern however is the quality of entries made in the ACCTS documents and action is taken to address this to ensure they meet the required standard.

The trainee listener scheme is well established and monitored by the Samaritans.

‘Gang membership’ within the establishment continues to cause concern but prompt active management by staff helps to keep it under control.

We do believe however that although the prison is dealing with a volatile section of the community Stoke Heath is a safe establishment and frequent trainee questionnaires show that in the main they feel safe.

### **YP Safegaurds**

The Young People Safeguards meetings are held, once a month. There is a good and complete representation of relevant departments within the prison, including Social Work, Samaritans, Healthcare, Mental Health, Education, Youth Offending Team, Gym staff and representation from the Young People’s wings. We are pleased to report that there is now continuity of chairmanship.

The meetings look at ‘statistics’ in regular sequence – e.g. violence reduction, suicide and self harm prevention, unacceptable behaviour (anti social and bullying ), use of force and child protection. The appointment of new listeners is discussed. An excellent feature is that one or more Young Person’s also attend for part of the time, and are invited to contribute. Each meeting finishes with a case conference in which up to six trainee problems are freely discussed; this is a genuine and concerned effort to do the best for these very unfortunate individuals.

As with the Young Adults the correct filling in of ACCT documents is a problem but every effort is being made to deal with this. We shall continue to monitor this situation.

We have reported previously that this is, because of the age of the trainees, a volatile establishment and we again report that the Young People tend to be disrespectful to staff, the lack of effective sanction being a significant problem.

Throughout the year problems between gangs have been a continuing challenge to the staff and

have required constant vigilance, with the co-operation of the security department needing frequent transfers between wings and other prisons. The arrival of a large number of trainees from a prison in the south of the country resulted in unrest which was eventually solved by the transfer out of the problem trainees.

There have been a number of scalding incidents and a severe slashing.

There has recently been a weapons amnesty which produced good results. We shall monitor this.

### **Incidents**

In the reporting year we have attended two incidents at height.

### **SRU**

We are very pleased to note the very good report by HMCIP on this unit and it accords with our experience of it over the last year.

The staffing pattern remains much more stable which means that the department is more focused and calmer enhancing the trainee experience. We are pleased that it has been necessary to use the special cell only once in the last twelve months reflecting the good use of force management and de-escalation techniques employed in volatile situations.

Redecoration by the trainees continues and there is a large new mural in the exercise yard designed by them and the art department and painted by the trainees themselves. This has brightened up a previously rather dull and soulless area.

This year we have been notified of rule 49 reviews in adequate time and they have been largely taking place as scheduled. Our relationship with this unit's staff is good and open reflecting general staff attitudes.

## **Reception**

We are pleased to report that there has been further refurbishment including decorating, a new counter and television. Improvements have also been made in relation to a suitable Staff Room Staff room.

This department is often criticised for the size of its accommodation and general layout. We point out that this is an old building and unless there is a rebuild, which has often been requested it is pointless and unfair to level this criticism at the prison.

We are very concerned about the length of time that trainees take to pass through the department before they go to the wing. We are more concerned about the length of time that trainees sometimes wait in the prison vans when they arrive, particularly on very hot days and very cold days, before being admitted. Also we are concerned that sometimes transit prisoners going on to another prison do not readily have access to toilet facilities whilst waiting. We understand that efforts are being made to remedy the staffing requirements that would be needed to get round these problems and very much hope that there will be a resolution of this soon.

## **Accommodation**

Last year we pointed out the problems with the supply of potable water on E wing. This is an old wing and badly in need of refurbishment. The layout of the wing is far from ideal with the offices and facilities badly positioned. A decision needs to be taken as to whether to spend money on an upgrade to remedy this low grade wing or to close it. Until that decision is taken it will continue to be sub standard in many respects.

We are concerned that F & G wings which are large and relatively modern wings housing large numbers of Young Adults, where there are often tensions with resulting assaults and fights, do not, surprisingly, have exercise yards of their own. Trainees have to be taken to E wing and this not infrequently gives rise to problems.

On some wings there continues to be sharing of cells and lavatories.

I wing continues to be a good model of the ideal wing.

D wing (Young People) remains closed at the time of writing.

As in all prisons it is known that bullying, assaults and fights occur more frequently in the shower areas than elsewhere partly because of difficulties with supervision. A programme has started to modify the shower areas so that they will be safer. We shall monitor the outcome.

### **Kitchens & Catering**

The kitchen continues to be a very busy unit supplying trainees with a breakfast pack, sandwiches for lunch (which at first were not popular but have now settled into their routine) and a hot meal in the evening.

Kitchen staff numbers have been reduced by one. Whilst this has not impacted on the day to day running of the kitchen, supporting additional events e.g. the celebration of religious festivals and family days is increasingly difficult.

### **Faith**

The excellent work of the Chaplaincy continues. The lead Chaplain who has been a very good and notable part of the prisons life has just resigned to go elsewhere. Her post is advertised. The Chaplaincy team continue to run numerous courses including Being Dad, G.G.G. (Glitter, Glue & Glory) is a therapeutic course which many trainees take part in.

### **Applications**

During the reporting period we have used a system of dedicated forms in sealed envelopes which are placed in the official IMB boxes which are installed on every wing and the SRU  
During the reporting period we took a total of 234 applications compared with 127 in the previous reporting year.

Breakdown of application issues:-

Accommodation	06
Adjudications	08
Diversity Related	02
Education/employment/training	08
Family/visits	13
Food/kitchen related	06
Health related	06
Property	46
Sentence related	30
Staff/trainee related	43
Transfers	37
Miscellaneous	43

Number of Rule 49,s approximately 472

Number attended 369

## STATISTICS FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS

Code	Subject	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9
A	Accommodation	0	2	0	1
B	Adjudications	0	1	0	1
C	Diversity related	2	0	0	0
D	Education/employment/training	0	8	2	3
E	Family/visits	0	3	5	0
F	Food/kitchen related	0	0	2	1
G	Health related	1	1	2	7
H	Property	12	14	19	22
I	Sentence related	0	13	25	13
J	Staff/prisoner/detainee related	11	11	49	23
K	Transfers	16	16	34	19
L	Miscellaneous	36	7	40	31
Total number of applications		78	76	178	127

## THE WORK OF THE BOARD

<b>BOARD STATISTICS</b>	
Recommended Complement of Board Members	20
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	10
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	12
Number of new members joining within the reporting period	02
Number of members leaving within reporting period	00
Total number of Board meetings during reporting period	12
Average number of attendances at Board meetings during reporting period	9
Number of attendances at meetings other than Board meetings	96
Total number of visits to the prison/IRC (including all meetings)	553
Total number of applications received	248
Total number of segregation reviews held	472
Total number of segregation reviews attended	369

## **Resettlement**

Results show the hard work that the resettlement team put in to make sure the trainees have a place to go to. Only one person in the last six months has been released to NFA (no fixed abode). The team works with a number of agencies, some internally based and others in the community. These are Jobcentre Plus, NACRO, CARATS, and CONNEXIONS all are trying their utmost to give trainees the best possible start to their rehabilitation although staff shortages and budgetary constraints often thwart their progress.

Their work revolves around seven key pathways

1. Accommodation.
2. ETE (Education, Training and Employment)
3. Mental & Physical Health
4. Drugs & Alcohol
5. Finance & Benefits
6. Children & Families
7. Attitude, Thinking and Behaviour

They strive to meet their KPT (key performance targets) and in some areas consistently exceed expectations. Housing is normally 100% even though Local Authorities are increasingly asking for details of previous convictions from the police at a cost of £10 which not all trainees can afford or photo identification before they can go on the Housing Register.

Given the current employment situation it is difficult to place trainees in full time work. After a successful trial at Stoke Heath the 'Next Steps' programme is going national to thirteen other establishments. A very successful Resettlement Roadshow was held over two days in September 2009 when Young People and Young Adults were introduced to various agencies. As a result more applications to The Princes Trust and The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme were received.

On temporary licences (ROTL) some trainees are cycling to the local Barnardos charity shop and others to community service and education. The Princes Trust usually had eight trainees going out into the community to do gardening, painting or litter picking. Some trainees have been to RAF Shawbury on a glider project and Tern Hill army camp on a cookery course. In February the twenty first 'Being Dad' course was run by the Chaplaincy and there have been several successful family days.

## **Adjudications**

The number of adjudications remains high (2707) reflecting the volatile nature of this prison although this is a decrease from last year (3289)

## **Inductions**

One of our members attends the Young Peoples weekly induction. The induction of Young Adults is done by wing staff who inform the trainees of our role.

We propose shortly to become involved with the induction of the POELTS.

We have what is now an old video which has been very useful over many years in the induction process as it neatly explains our role to the trainees. Because of its age it is no longer appropriate to use it. We would dearly like to replace it with a CD and have spent some time and effort looking into this. Cost precludes us from making one ourselves. We are extremely disappointed to learn that neither the secretariat nor the National Council has yet produced a CD which could be used by all prisons. We would regard this as a very efficient use of funds and do hope that rapid progress can be made.

In addition to Board Meetings and Rota Visits Board members visit the induction wing on a weekly basis to speak to new trainees, and we aim to attend all SRU reviews.

A Board member attends the following meetings:-

- Safeguards for Young People & Young Adults
- PCT/Prison Partnership
- Clinical Governance
- Staff Performance Recognition
- EDAT
- Violence Reduction
- Trainee Consultation Meetings.
- Resettlement
- Security
- Health & Safety
- Other meetings if required.

Val Meachin Chair.





