



Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at HMYOI FELTHAM

**For reporting year
1 November 2019 – 31 August 2020**

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Contents

	Page
Introductory sections 1 – 3	
1. Statutory role of the IMB	3
2. Description of the establishment	4
3. Executive summary	5
Evidence sections 4 – 8	
4. Safety	10
5. Fair and humane treatment	17
6. Health and wellbeing	23
7. Education and training	28
8. Progression and resettlement	32
The work of the IMB	34
Applications to the IMB	35

Introductory sections 1 - 3

1. Statutory role of the IMB

The Prison Act 1952 requires every prison to be monitored by an independent Board, appointed by the Secretary of State from members of the community in which the prison is situated.

Under the National Monitoring Framework agreed with ministers, the Board is required to:

- satisfy itself as to the humane and just treatment of those held in custody within its prison and the range and adequacy of the programmes preparing them for release
- inform promptly the Secretary of State, or any official to whom authority has been delegated as it judges appropriate, any concern it has
- 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 Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT) is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty. The protocol recognises that such people are particularly vulnerable and aims to prevent their ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. OPCAT requires that States designate a National Preventive Mechanism to carry out visits to places of detention, to monitor the treatment of and conditions for detainees and to make recommendations for the prevention of ill-treatment. The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) is part of the United Kingdom's National Preventive Mechanism.

2. Description of the establishment

2.1 HMYOI Feltham is situated in West London, close to Heathrow Airport. The prison is made up of two parts: Feltham A, which holds young people aged 15 to 18 years, and Feltham B, which holds young adults aged 18 to 21 years.

2.2 The establishment serves some London courts and holds young people and young adults from a wide catchment area across the south of England.

2.3 At the beginning of the reporting year, the baseline certified normal accommodation (CNA) for HMYOI Feltham (A and B) was 762. During the reporting year, the operational CNA for Feltham A remained capped at 110 while still under Urgent Notification status. As several residential units remained closed on Feltham B, the operational CNA was 388.

2.4 **Feltham A** holds young people who may be on remand, convicted or sentenced. There is one first night/induction unit and there are five further residential units currently in use. All rooms are single occupancy, with in-room toilets and basins.

2.5 When operational, the enhanced support unit (ESU) cares full time for young people with complex behavioural and emotional needs.

2.6 Falcon unit provides short-term care and support for young people who have been placed on Rule 49 (R49), who are attending adjudication or formal review or who are self-isolating.

2.7 **Feltham B** holds young adults, all of whom are sentenced prisoners. There is one induction unit and there are a further six residential units currently in use. Rooms are mainly single occupancy, with a small number offering double occupancy. All have in-room toilets and basins.

2.8 The care, separation and reintegration unit (CSRU) cares for young adults who are attending adjudication hearings or have been placed in segregation following adjudication procedure or the good order or discipline (GOOD) process.

3. Executive summary

3.1 Background to the report

3.1.1 This report presents the findings of the Board at HM Young Offender Institution (HMYOI) Feltham for the period 1 November 2019 to 31 August 2020. The reporting period for 2019/20 was changed this year to bring all English YOIs into the same annual cycle – 1 September to 31 August. The Board reports for Feltham A and Feltham B use the same cycle.

3.1.2 Over the 10-month period, and as a consequence of national lockdown, Board members made 288 visits to Feltham (normal years see more than 500 visits). Evidence for this report comes from observations made on visits, scrutiny of records and data, attendance at prison meetings, informal contact with prisoners and staff, and applications by prisoners to the Board.

3.1.3 The Board has, over the past two years, made considerable efforts to structure its monitoring activities, in order to acknowledge that Feltham is increasingly run as two discrete establishments, with a variety of differing rules. This report has been laid out to reflect, where appropriate, the Board's differentiated monitoring for Feltham A and Feltham B. The findings are not intended to be comparative.

3.1.4 Throughout this report, the term 'young people' has been used to refer to prisoners aged between 15 and 18 who are held in custody in Feltham A. The term 'young adult' has been used to refer to prisoners aged between 18 and 21 who are held in custody in Feltham B. Where comments refer to both Feltham A and B, the term 'prisoners' is used.

3.1.5 During the second half of the reporting period, the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences dominated life at Feltham, as for everybody else in the country. By the end of June 2020, some of the restrictive measures put in place in March had been eased slightly, but the daily regime for staff and prisoners was very different from pre-lockdown normality. For the first five months of the reporting period, the prison was operating under normal conditions; this report aims to acknowledge that, as well as to describe the subsequent five months spent under various iterations of national lockdown.

3.1.6 Over lockdown, the Board undertook its monitoring duties to the best of its ability; this was by telephone and via email when members were unable to visit the prison. A number of members of the Board made visits in person throughout the lockdown period and found them to be a useful comparator to the findings from remote monitoring.

3.1.7 The Board is grateful for the helpful cooperation of many prison staff at all levels, and wishes to commend them for their dedication and commitment in caring for some of the most complex, difficult and vulnerable young men in the country, both before and during this extremely unpredictable period.

3.2 Main judgements

How safe is the establishment?

3.2.1 Levels of violence in the prison inevitably dropped during the period of full lockdown because prisoners were largely confined to their rooms. However, levels of all types of violence, particularly in Feltham A, had already been running at lower levels than the previous year. The cap on the top roll since being under the Urgent Notification process had enabled the prison to implement some meaningful conflict resolution and safety strategies which were starting to bear fruit.

3.2.2 The predicted rise in acts of self-harm under lockdown did not, thankfully, take place. Staff and governors worked hard throughout to provide as safe and secure an environment as possible for young prisoners and were thoughtful and creative in the initiatives they introduced.

How fairly and humanely are prisoners treated?

3.2.3 During lockdown, the Board witnessed many examples of excellent practice in the management of young prisoners during a time of greatly heightened anxiety across the whole of society. The statistics in this report show that, over the months, violence, assaults and self-harm declined significantly from pre-lockdown levels. By contrast, prisoners' own sense of personal safety and trust in staff improved.

3.2.4 However, it must be of serious concern that under the COVID restrictions young people and young adults were, by order from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), confined to their rooms for up to 23 hours a day for many weeks until the regime was permitted to ease. The effects of this extreme form of confinement may not become evident in the short term, but all involved with youth custody, at every level, should share the Board's concern that many of these young men may suffer long-term mental, emotional or physical health problems as a consequence.

3.2.5 The living accommodation continues to deteriorate across the site, particularly in Feltham B. Condensation, poor ventilation, mould and rainwater ingress have all been raised again this year as decency concerns. The extremely hot weather over some weeks in the summer proved almost intolerable for many young prisoners held on their own for up to 23 hours a day in cramped, badly ventilated rooms which still

feature open toilets. By any standards of health, safety and decency, this must be viewed as unacceptable.

How well are prisoners' health and wellbeing needs met?

3.2.6 Healthcare services at Feltham have improved this year, and liaison between staff and the healthcare team generally works well.

3.2.7 Every year, a small number of young prisoners exhibit acute mental health problems but there continue to be unacceptable delays in getting them transferred to more suitable secure settings. The impression given is that because these extremely unwell young prisoners are already in custody, their cases do not necessarily qualify as urgent. This was of significant concern to the Board between March and July 2020, when psychology interventions, and the progression of acute mental health cases, all but stopped.

How effective is the education provision for prisoners?

3.2.8 Education for young people at Feltham is a statutory requirement but delivery remains challenging owing to staff turnover, pupil behaviour, the learning environment and attendance. However, some improvement was shown in all these areas over the past year. Education staff remained on site during lockdown to provide remote learning, and the opportunity was taken to review the curriculum offered to the young people for the future. Once back in the classroom in July, small-group teaching was well received and appeared to be having a positive effect on engagement of the young people. The Board will continue to monitor progress and any changes.

3.2.9 Feltham B was re-rolled in 2015 to receive sentenced-only prisoners. Despite being designated a category C training prison, the infrastructure and financial support was never put in place to provide sufficient education, workshop or training opportunities for every young adult to take part. Some courses are 'split', so that more than one young adult may attend, while other courses cannot be run because of difficulties and delays in recruiting qualified instructors. Cancellations often take place at short notice. Too many young adults choose not to engage at all. The limited teaching resources and the appalling state of the workshop buildings all compound the problem. The Board is of the view that the provision of good-quality training opportunities in prison must now take on an even greater urgency, given the impending jobs crisis after the pandemic is over.

How well are prisoners progressed towards transfer or successful resettlement?

3.2.10 The resettlement teams generally do a good job and are supportive. Before lockdown in March 2020, accommodation and support arrangements for young adults made by external agencies were frequently left late, making other post-release arrangements more difficult. During lockdown, more effort was made by local authorities and other agencies to provide accommodation for released prisoners in plenty of time.

3.2.11 The Board received some applications relating to inter-prison transfers. No prisoners were released from Feltham under the early release programme announced by the Ministry of Justice in April, although most prisoners with added days on their sentences had them rescinded by the Governor for good behaviour.

3.3 Main areas for development

TO THE MINISTER

3.3.1 Will the cap on admissions of young people to Feltham A be made permanent, and good levels of staffing be maintained?

TO THE YOUTH CUSTODY SERVICE (YCS)/HMPPS

3.3.2 Will further capital investment be made to modernise the residential living conditions for all young prisoners at Feltham, thereby offering them the most basic standards of decency and hygiene?

3.3.3 Will sufficient resources be committed, to ensure that all young adult prisoners receive a variety of relevant training opportunities to properly justify the listing of Feltham as a category C training prison?

3.3.4 Will YCS/HMPPS introduce an effective method throughout the criminal justice system, to ensure that prisoners' property is moved with them whenever they move, and is easily traceable throughout the system?

TO THE GOVERNOR

3.3.5 What do you and your team consider to be the principal lessons learned over the lockdown period? How will the prison use these lessons to improve the lived experience for all young people and young adults held in custody at Feltham?

3.3.6 What is being done to address the fact that contraband continues to be discovered during lockdown?

3.3.7 Will you ensure that reliable daily time-out-of-room figures for young adults are as easily available as they currently are for young people?

3.3.8 Will the prison guarantee to develop a wider range of outdoor activities and field sports once lockdown eases?

3.4 Progress since the last report

3.4.1 The 2019/20 reporting period has been highly unusual for the Board, principally as a result of the pandemic lockdown and inevitable changes in our monitoring and meeting.

3.4.2 There is no doubt that wide-ranging improvements set in train by the Governor and her senior management team, particularly in Feltham A, were beginning to bear fruit by the beginning of 2020. A welcome reduction in violence and self-harm already indicated progression towards a safer, more stable, more professional establishment, better prepared and better equipped to deal with increasingly complex cohorts.

3.4.3 The pandemic and the national lockdown affected every aspect of life at Feltham, and there is no useful value in the Board making direct comparisons between now and last year. However, it is worth noting that the Board found the response by staff, and prisoners, to the exceptionally difficult circumstances imposed by lockdown to be quite remarkable. The Governor and her team should be proud of the way Feltham cared for its young men in custody with compassion, ingenuity and resilience, despite the extremely trying circumstances and with no real end in sight.

3.4.4 Over the months of lockdown, the visiting members of the Board spoke with many young prisoners and were impressed by their maturity, good humour and understanding of this unprecedented situation.

3.4.5 The Board commends the work of the staff and governors at Feltham, and trusts that many useful and important lessons learned from the lockdown experience will translate across when long-awaited normality resumes.

Evidence sections 4 – 8

4. Safety

4.1 Reception and induction

4.1.1 Some new admissions and a few inter-prison transfers took place during lockdown. Both induction units in Feltham A and B were rebranded as 'reverse cohort' units; all new prisoners were isolated for a 14-day quarantine period before being located onto normal residential units. Healthcare staff monitored them closely throughout.

4.1.2 **Feltham A** – The top roll in Feltham A dropped by 14% over the reporting period, with an average of 88 young people in custody at any one time. The roll stood at 75 by the end of the reporting period.

4.1.3 The proportion of young people held on remand (either not yet brought to trial or found guilty but unsentenced) rose to 50% during the first three months of lockdown as normal court processes ground to a halt. By August, the proportion was still 40%. This figure reflects what is happening in the adult estate because of court backlogs, and is of concern.

4.1.4 **Feltham B** – In Feltham B, the average roll dropped 30%, from 348 to 248, over the reporting period. These reduced numbers ultimately proved beneficial in managing the very restricted regimes and building much needed confidence and trust between the staff and prisoners.

4.2 Suicide and self-harm, deaths in custody

4.2.1 There have been no suicides or other deaths in custody at Feltham since 2001.

4.2.2 An assessment, care in custody and teamwork (ACCT) document is a multidisciplinary file opened in response to concerns that a prisoner may be at risk of self-harm or suicide. The prisoner is checked regularly and encouraged to talk openly with key staff about problems and feelings. The Board routinely monitors the updating of open ACCT documents and visits these prisoners as part of rota duties. Staff and other agencies are encouraged to open an ACCT document immediately if they have any concerns about the risk of self-harm by a prisoner.

4.2.3 Before lockdown, psychology staff engaged daily with prisoners on open ACCTs. At the onset of lockdown, all HMPPS psychology services were withdrawn from the prison. This was a cause of grave concern to the Board. The Governor urgently raised it at the highest level with the YCS and HMPPS. However, it was not until July that psychology practitioners returned to the prison, and then only to deal

individually with the most acute cases. Prison officers and chaplains, together with external agencies, such as Wellbeing, Kinetic Youth and RoadLight, worked hard to fill the gap left by psychology services, and should be commended for their efforts.

4.2.4 Prisoners on open ACCT documents are visited daily by the duty governor and a member of chaplaincy. Board members make every effort to visit prisoners on open ACCTs, and to scrutinise the related paperwork. The Board generally finds unit staff to be helpful in this, and this year members noted the genuine concern shown by officers to those prisoners struggling to cope, particularly those who suffered bereavement during lockdown.

4.2.5 **Feltham A** – The number of ACCTs opened on young people remained reasonably consistent throughout the first part of the reporting year, with an average of 11 a month (November 2019 – March 2020). During lockdown, the number of open ACCTs dropped to an average of five a month (April – August 2020).

4.2.6 During lockdown, the Board noted that some short-term ACCT documents were opened and closed by unit staff within the span of one day, which indicated that staff were becoming more confident in identifying potentially vulnerable young people and helping directly with issues that may cause them to self-harm. The predictability of the daily regime, small group sizes, an enhanced feeling of safety and increased communications with officers all combined to create a calmer environment. The Board spoke to young people about what they were experiencing during lockdown, and for the most part their views supported the prison's perspective that officers and young people felt safer and calmer. Officers and prisoners alike spoke of a greater level of trust between them.

4.2.7 **Feltham B** – The number of ACCTs opened for young adults (November 2019 – March 2020) remained broadly in line with that of the previous year, averaging 14 a month. The anticipated rise in cases of self-harm at the beginning of the restricted regime introduced in March did not occur. In May 2020, only five ACCTs were opened, and levels have remained low, at five to eight per month, for the remainder of the reporting period.

Self-harm

4.2.8 Multidisciplinary teams meet frequently to assess the progress and ensure support for all prisoners who self-harm, including those who have been admitted as inpatients on the mental health unit.

4.2.9 At the outset of lockdown in March 2020, governors and staff feared that the severe restrictions would prove physically, mentally and emotionally difficult for the most vulnerable prisoners to cope with, and a consequence would be an increase in self-harming behaviours. This concern was shared by the Board.

4.2.10 **Feltham A** – The Board noted a drop in the level of self-harm in Feltham A over the reporting period. On both sides of the prison, the monthly figures often show the same prisoners self-harming on multiple occasions. A core group of prolific self-harmers left Feltham A at the end of April 2020, which resulted in a significant reduction in recorded cases. As an illustration, just one of these young people accounted for 14 of the 20 incidents of self-harm reported that month.

4.2.11

Self-harm 2019/20	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Average population	93	87	83	86	93	90	88	88	89	80
Number of self-harm incidents	27	39	24	25	25	20	7	8	0	1
Number of young people who self-harm	14	9	16	14	11	5	4	4	0	1
Number of ACCTs opened	15	14	20	21	15	8	5	8	2	3

4.2.12 Self-harm injuries continue to range from scratches to more serious acts, such as cutting, piercing and the fashioning of ligatures. The safeguarding team put initiatives in place to try to discern the trigger factors for self-harming behaviour, particularly from those young people who were habitual or prolific.

4.2.13 When lockdown began in mid-March 2020, it was anticipated that the self-harm levels would rise across the prison in response to the stress of the restrictions, and concern about families on the outside. However, the opposite happened. By May, the number of incidents had dropped to seven, and in July there were no cases of self-harm at all. The restrictions placed on the whole country during the first part of lockdown were well communicated to all young people at Feltham, and family contact through telephone calls and virtual visits was encouraged. Young people reported to the Board that the lockdown regime, although very limited in range, provided them with a highly predictable, consistent structure to their day which was efficiently delivered by staff. This was clearly a significant factor in enabling them to feel more safe and less stressed while in custody.

4.2.14 At the time of writing, the number of cases of self-harm in Feltham A continues to be in the low single figures, with most weeks showing nil.

4.2.15 **Feltham B** – Similarly, monthly figures show that it is often a very small number of young adults who repeatedly self-harm while in custody. Many of these young adults have a history of mental health problems and are already habitually self-harming before arriving in prison. As in Feltham A, this trend was demonstrated by a sudden drop in the number of incidents, from 25 in April to six in May, after the release of two of the most prolific self-harmers. More serious acts of self-harm, such

as cutting and the use of ligatures, accounted for over half of the incidents in Feltham B across the year.

4.3 Violence and violence reduction, self-isolation

4.3.1 **Feltham A** – Between November 2019 and February 2020, although significantly lower than the previous year, the level of violence between young people and against staff was still too high. There was an average of 12 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, 18 prisoner-on-staff assaults and 12 fights between groups of young people per month during that period.

4.3.2 Just after Christmas 2019, a serious incident of concerted indiscipline occurred on a Feltham A residential unit. It involved most of the young people on that unit, and as a result of the violence 13 officers were taken to hospital. This was reported by the national press. Five of the young people at the centre of the incident were immediately transferred out of the prison, and the others were placed on R49 on the separation unit. The Board attended the first set of R49 reviews immediately following the incident. The message from the young people was consistent – because the new education timetable meant that teachers were on holiday, they were being required to spend more time in their rooms with nothing to do. Useful lessons have been learned, and the prison has said that it will provide extra activities for young people when the education department is closed in future.

4.3.3

Violence 2019/20	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Average population	93	87	83	86	93	90	88	88	89	80
Total number of violent incidents	36	49	46	34	23	10	16	35	17	21
Number of young people-on-young people assaults	12	11	13	12	2	1	7	5	5	2
Number of fights between young people	12	13	9	13	14	1	1	1	4	5
Number of assaults on staff	12	25	24	9	7	8	8	29	8	14

4.3.4 The lockdown regime imposed a new order on life for everyone, and hotspots of violence, such as during movements around the prison and the education department, were out of bounds. However, after lockdown, young people did not relocate their violent behaviour to their residential units, and the number of incidents of violence dropped significantly. Between April and August 2020, the average number of fights was two per month, and the average number of assaults was four.

4.3.5 The number of assaults against staff reduced considerably across the same period, except for June, where a number of officers were injured in another serious incident of concerted indiscipline. For two days in late June, the highest average temperature in the UK (33.4 C) was recorded at Heathrow, near Feltham, and this may have acted as a catalyst for the incident. As mentioned in several previous annual reports and again in this one, the rooms that young prisoners occupy at Feltham are not fit for purpose; they become almost intolerable in very hot, very cold or very wet weather. In June, it would appear that the young people involved had reacted negatively at being asked to return indoors from exercise to their poorly ventilated rooms, where they were already spending up to 20 hours a day.

4.3.6 By the end of the summer, although the number of assaults and fights between young people remained low, the number of assaults on staff began to rise again. This may have been in response to frustrations over the slow progress in lifting lockdown restrictions within the prison. The majority of the young people had been in Feltham since before the beginning of the national lockdown. As they observed daily life easing on the outside, their frustration may have been a factor in the rise of aggression towards staff who were still imposing restrictions on the inside.

4.3.7 **Feltham B** – Young adults considered to be at risk of violence from others, as well as those involved in violent incidents, are reviewed weekly by the adult safeguarding team (AST). The AST has continued its violence reduction efforts this year, including an emphasis on conflict resolution. The embedding of the key worker scheme in Feltham B helped gain insights into the reasons prisoners have for conflict.

4.3.8 Challenge, support and intervention plans have been introduced to engage young adults in addressing the causes behind their acts of violence, to help them to drive change in their behaviour. The number of referrals to the conflict resolution team went down during lockdown owing to the reduction in violence, bullying behaviour and fights between young adults.

4.3.9

Violence 2019/20	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Average population	348	337	338	343	341	332	298	287	269	248
Total number of violent incidents	29	27	39	18	26	9	9	10	8	9
Number of young adult-on-young adult assaults	16	13	10	7	13	2	4	2	1	2
Number of fights between groups of young adults	12	12	24	11	9	1	4	6	3	5
Number of assaults on staff	1	2	5	0	3	6	1	2	4	2

4.3.10 A total of 49 fights between groups of young adults were logged between November 2019 and January 2020. By contrast, 126 fights were recorded over the same period in the previous year.

4.3.11 There were 39 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults between November 2019 and January 2020. This was broadly similar to the number in the same period in the previous year.

4.3.12 During lockdown, time out of room (ToR) was substantially reduced, and young adults only mixed in very small groups for exercise or showers. As a consequence, all types of violent incidents between young adults reduced. Between June and August 2020, there were 14 fights and just five assaults.

4.3.13 Between November 2019 and January 2020, there were eight assaults by young adults on staff, the same level as last year. After the start of lockdown in March, the number of assaults on staff rose. The Board was only able to monitor in a limited way at the start of lockdown, mostly by telephone, but the increase in April was attributed to some frustration with the extremely restricted regime. The narrative from the residential units by late April was that young adults were feeling the strain of boredom and inactivity and were starting to get 'grumpy'. The Board was sad to see that several young adults had suffered family bereavements due to COVID-19 by this time. The general atmosphere was less optimistic.

4.3.14 The number of assaults on staff fell as the weeks went on, with a total of nine between May and August.

4.3.15 **Self-isolation** – In November 2019, a group of five young adults all refused to return to normal location from the CSRU, stating fears for their own safety if they did so. The prison did what it could to persuade them, but they declared that they would rather stay on GOOD in segregation than risk being placed with other individuals who they considered to be a danger to them. Despite good behaviour throughout their stay on the CSRU, all these young adults were eventually transferred to other establishments as a consequence of their refusal to follow prison rules at Feltham. There have been no other young adults this year who have chosen to self-isolate.

4.4 Safeguarding

4.4.1 **Feltham A** – The Board receives regular updates from the safety group, and this continued during lockdown.

4.4.2

Safeguards 2019/20	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Average population	93	87	83	86	93	90	88	88	89	80

Number of safeguarding concerns received	11	12	10	10	6	7	9	15	13	7
Number of cases for which the threshold for external referral was not met – dealt with internally	6	9	8	9	4	5	9	13	12	6
Number referred to local authority designated officer (LADO)	5	3	2	1	2	2	0	2	1	1

4.4.3 In July 2019, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Prisons criticised the prison for a lack of due process and poor record-keeping with regard to safeguarding issues. Since then, by bringing it under the safety group’s wider remit, significant progress has been made in the reporting and management of all aspects of safeguarding. The Board acknowledges that the information certainly appears more transparent, understandable and accessible. It is clear that the majority of safeguarding issues are now satisfactorily resolved ‘in-house’, with the most serious allegations still referred out for investigation by the LADO.

4.4.4 Lockdown saw a reduction in the number of safeguarding referrals, until June and July, when the restrictions began to ease. These complaints mostly concerned allegations of excessive force used in restraint or inappropriate language from staff. The majority of these were investigated and resolved by the prison, with participation by the young people concerned. The Board received a total of 11 applications from young people during the reporting period, only one of which was referred to the safeguards team.

4.4.5 Barnardo’s withdrew from the prison at the beginning of lockdown but maintained contact with young people via a freephone number. Kinetic Youth and RoadLight teams maintained a live presence in the prison throughout lockdown and picked up some of the daily issues that Barnardo’s may otherwise have handled. The Board saw an increase in the number of applications from young people over the summer, which may also have reflected their absence. Barnardo’s staff returned full time to the prison in August.

4.4.6 The national court backlog, as well as delays in transfers, has resulted in more prisoners passing their 18th birthday while still in Feltham A. The number of violent incidents increased between prisoners where the perpetrator is over 18, and the victim under 18, and this is potentially a cause for concern.

4.4.7 **Feltham B** – The AST hosts a weekly multidisciplinary safety interventions meeting, where the progress of all young adults regarded as being at risk from others, to others or to themselves are discussed and their ongoing support is reviewed. These meetings have continued throughout lockdown and have included some participants attending via telephone links.

4.4.8 In addition to weekly meetings, the AST holds a monthly safer custody meeting, which is regularly monitored by Board members. At these meetings, the wider management strategy relating to safety is discussed, statistics relating to violence, self-harm, ACCTs and use of force are reviewed, and trends are identified. Again, some participants during lockdown have attended by telephone.

Mobile phones

4.4.9 A number of specially modified mobile phones and components have been found in prisoners' possession during the year, both before and since lockdown. Many of these items are discovered by officers during routine 'wandering' and rub-down searches of prisoners when they move between locations within the prison.

4.5 Use of force

4.5.1 The Board receives and monitors use of force figures for both sides of the prison on a monthly basis. When visiting the establishment, the Board scrutinises entries made in the observations logbook and daily briefing notices. No applications from young people relating to use of force were received this year. Three applications were made by young adults about being restrained, all of which were investigated and concluded.

4.6 Substance misuse

4.6.1 At the time of lockdown in March 2020, mandatory drug testing failure rates were in excess of internal targets for the first time in several years. At lockdown, when visits were stopped, all drug testing was suspended. Staff continue to report 'smells' coming from prisoners' rooms from time to time, and when followed up by searches, some drugs, mainly cannabis, have been found.

4.6.2 It is clear that items of contraband are still coming into the prison, despite the lockdown. The cessation of social visits removed one of the main routes of illegal items coming into the prison, although attempts to conceal drugs within prisoners' post continue.

5. Fair and humane treatment

5.1 Accommodation, clothing, food

5.1.1 There were regular heating issues in the winter months, including problems with the supply of hot water to some residential units. A temporary plant installed in the boiler rooms resolved the immediate issues, but the heating and hot water systems across the prison are antiquated and barely fit for purpose. The problem will only increase when the new library and workshops are opened.

5.1.2 A considerable amount of works staff time is still taken up dealing with acts of vandalism by prisoners.

5.1.3 There have been no complaints to the Board about food, either in terms of quality or quantity. The kitchen staff are to be commended for the way they have generated a variety of good-quality food throughout lockdown. Comfort packs and extra bottled water were handed out throughout lockdown, which was a welcome extra during the very hot weather in June.

5.1.4 A long-overdue roof repair programme got under way across the prison in 2020, which should start to address the damp issues. A programme of window and ventilation replacement is expected to roll out next year.

5.1.5 **Feltham A** – Residential units in Feltham A were redecorated and upgraded this year in a rolling programme of improvements to communal showers and serveries. This will continue in 2021 for Feltham B. Some new self-contained shower and toilet ‘pods’ were installed in a few rooms as a trial but are still under review.

5.1.6 A newly built designated library for Feltham A is waiting to be fitted out; however, there have already been delays to this work, and the Board is concerned that the date for opening this much-needed resource will be put back again. The construction of new workshops for Feltham A started in the summer and they should be open in early 2021.

5.1.7 **Feltham B** – Feltham B workshop refurbishments began in the summer, with a programme of skylight and roof repairs. However, it has since become clear that several years of water ingress have damaged the buildings and will present ongoing structural problems. The Board commented in its 2018/19 annual report that the leaking roofs, damp and general dilapidation of all the Feltham B workshop spaces were a significant barrier to training and purposeful activity.

5.2 Segregation and separation

5.2.1 **Feltham A** – The enhanced support unit (ESU) accommodates young people whose long-term challenging behaviour makes them unable to engage with mainstream services in Feltham A.

5.2.2 Before the ESU closed for refurbishment in December 2019, the top roll stood at between three and five young people at any one time, and the regime was structured to allow for interventions and interaction. However, there were so few young people housed on the unit that when they could not mix for safety reasons, they would find themselves automatically placed on R49 and treated as separated prisoners. This fact alone went against the policy of the ESU as a place of therapeutic care and reintegration.

5.2.3 The ESU is due to reopen in autumn 2020, and to form part of a national resource. The Board hopes that the ESU, when reopened, will fulfil all its original promise for the safe rehabilitation of the most complex young people, and so justify such a big investment of money and resources.

5.2.4 Falcon unit was opened in April 2019 to provide a smaller specialist unit for the purpose of respite and reintegration for young people who sometimes struggle to cope. It is not a punishment or segregation unit, nor is it a replacement for secure mental health accommodation. The Board monitors this unit regularly and is of the view that it has developed well during the reporting period.

5.2.5 Falcon unit staff are specially trained to meet the needs of young people who are not managing their feelings and behaviour. This year, the Falcon unit team began a programme of early interventions with young people whose behaviour consistently raised concerns with residential staff. These young people may be asked to move to Falcon unit for a short period of separation, in order to provide respite and avert a crisis. Once on the unit, they are helped to settle down and encouraged to return to their units within the shortest practicable time. The Board is informed of all admissions and reviews via email or telephone.

5.2.6 The Board welcomed the more child-friendly setting on Falcon unit for multidisciplinary meetings, adjudications and reviews. There are four rooms adapted to accommodate young people waiting for adjudication, in a suite separate from the main unit. This represents a huge improvement on the conditions in which young people were held on the CSRU.

5.2.7 The dedication and expertise of Falcon unit staff should be commended. The unit has provided an excellent resource for the safe management of complex young people.

5.2.8 **Feltham B** – The number of young adults held on the CSRU on GOOD over the reporting period was 67. Problems of non-compliance are now more likely to be sorted out on the residential units, although acts of violence against members of staff or other prisoners do mean a spell on the CSRU.

5.2.9 The CSRU continues to be an under-resourced unit (see previous annual reports), but it is well run by staff and the Board has received no complaints, either written or verbal, from any young adults held there this year.

5.2.10 The Board monitored a number of adjudications and GOOD reviews this year and receives weekly updates on all young adults held on the CSRU. The Board welcomes the efforts made by the prison to keep young adults on GOOD for as short

a time as possible. There have been no stays over 13 days this year, except for those young adults who refused to move (see paragraph 4.3.15).

5.2.11

CSRU 2019/20	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Number self-isolating/refusing to move unit	5	2	1	3	2					
Number of threats/assaults on staff	5	2	6		1	1	1		2	
Number of cases of continuous poor behaviour/acts of vandalism/fire setting		1			1					1
Use of drugs				1				1		
Indications for contraband	3	3	4	4	6	2	2	3	1	3

5.2.12 The Board raised concerns about the lack of education and distraction packs for young adults on the CSRU, given that there is so little else for them to do. Young adults often request wind-up radios in their rooms, to help pass the time. However, the prison had run out by early summer, and sourcing more radios became impossible during lockdown. Young adults held on the CSRU are allowed to request books from the library in the normal way.

5.2.13 As reported throughout the past two years, the CSRU exercise yard continues to have a serious problem with roosting pigeons and the accumulation below of droppings, feathers and dead birds. The yard is already a bleak, fenced-in courtyard, with little direct sunlight, which only provides for minimal levels of exercise. The seemingly unresolvable pigeon problem compounds the issue, making any time spent outdoors an unpleasant and unhygienic experience for young adults and staff alike. It is the Board's continued view that this exercise yard is dismal and entirely unfit for purpose.

5.3 Staff/prisoner relationships

5.3.1 Board members regularly observed greater engagement between officers and prisoners across both sides of the prison during early lockdown. Young adults and young people appeared to adapt quickly to the regime and said that they felt safer within their small residential 'bubbles'. They also commented favourably on the delivery of a much more predictable and consistent, if very limited, daily regime. Prisoners on both sides clearly perceived a legitimacy and procedural justice in the lockdown as it affected the whole country. They said they were happy 'to do their bit'. The tensions only started to arise when wider community rules began to diverge from their own experiences.

5.3.2 The simplification of the daily regime, with prisoners coming out in very small groups, provided more time for staff to make good-quality interventions on residential units. Some prisoners told the Board that they missed the larger group association periods, but others said that they felt less peer pressure from higher-status boys, and as a consequence did not feel the need to play up.

5.3.3 Under lockdown, the practicality of keeping prisoners apart for gang-related reasons no longer applied, although many prisoners still identify as gang members and say that they cannot or will not mix with others who they perceive to be a risk.

5.3.4 The Feltham B key worker scheme, which had been running for over a year, had proved to be beneficial to prisoners and staff alike by the beginning of 2020. The opportunity to talk regularly to an individual officer from another residential unit about problems or issues was appreciated by most young adults. However, for operational reasons, the scheme was put on hold during lockdown.

5.4 Equality and diversity

5.4.1 **Equalities action team (EAT)** – The EAT is composed of a multidisciplinary group of staff from across both side of the prison. It met monthly during the reporting period, apart from a three-month break over the height of the lockdown. The information below was compiled from the data presented and recorded at those EAT meetings.

5.4.2 **Foreign nationals** – Over the reporting period, the monthly average number of foreign national prisoners held at Feltham was approximately 70, comprising roughly 20 young people and 50 young adults.

5.4.3 Prisoners declaring at least 32 different nationalities were resident at Feltham during the reporting period.

5.4.4 Over the course of the reporting period, prisoners were often held beyond their sentence owing to their immigration status, as they were awaiting either deportation or extradition. Many of these were held on an IS91 order. The Board understands that there are new arrangements in place between HMPPS and the Home Office to ensure that IS91 orders are issued in advance of a prisoner's certified release date. This is welcomed by the Board, as it should ensure that prisoners are made aware in good time that their period of detention may be extended.

5.4.5 **Discrimination incident report forms (DIRFs)** – Data on DIRFs was available for six of the 10 months of the reporting period. Over that time, 39 DIRFs were submitted: 23% (nine) were submitted by prisoners about staff behaviour; 64% (25) were from staff concerned with prisoners' behaviour; 8% (three) were from

prisoners complaining about discriminatory behaviour by other prisoners; and another 8% (three) did not fit clearly into any of those categories. The average number of DIRFs received per month showed a slight decrease on last year, although a larger share of those received were from staff concerned with prisoner behaviour.

5.4.6 Black Lives Matter – The Board attended the July EAT meeting, which was dedicated to a wide-ranging discussion of the Black Lives Matter movement. The meeting raised some complex and difficult issues, which were thoughtfully discussed, and it highlighted the need for further diversity training, both for staff and prisoners. An ongoing working group, headed up by the Governor, has been convened to help staff address these important issues within Feltham.

5.5 Faith and pastoral support

5.5.1 Formal acts of worship for all faiths ceased in March after lockdown. The chaplaincy has maintained a very active presence since then, ensuring that all residential units are visited every day by representatives of different faiths. The Board has made referrals to the chaplaincy on several occasions where prisoners have asked for their help. Chaplaincy staff have offered invaluable support to prisoners and staff who have suffered bereavement as a result of COVID-19.

5.5.2 Ramadan started on 24 April 2020, and despite lockdown restrictions the kitchen accommodated all fasting requirements very efficiently, delivering hot flasks of food to all prisoners taking part. The Board noted that a number of non-Muslim prisoners opted to adhere to the Ramadan fast in solidarity with members of their residential 'bubble'.

5.5.3 At their own initiative, young people on two residential units donated 225 items of food from their personal supplies to the local Feltham food bank in December 2019.

5.6 Rewards and sanctions

5.6.1 Televisions, DVD players and games consoles were issued quickly and efficiently at the beginning of lockdown, effectively placing every prisoner on an enhanced regime. This action was very well received. The Board spoke to several prisoners over the months who had had items temporarily forfeited for poor behaviour, but they all said that they understood why the sanctions had been imposed.

5.6.2 Additional telephone credit as a reward strategy also worked very well during lockdown.

5.6.3 During lockdown, the prison dealt internally with those adjudications which in normal circumstances might have been referred to the independent adjudicator (IA). There were three outstanding referrals at the start of lockdown, and these were remanded by the IA, as they did not meet the current seriousness threshold. One case was referred to the IA in June 2020 and the prisoner received an additional 10 days on his sentence.

5.7 Complaints

5.7.1 Between November 2019 and March 2020, the prison received 93 first-stage complaints from young people and 198 from young adults. During the subsequent five months of lockdown, the numbers fell to 53 and 143, respectively. Across the reporting period, 97% of complaints were responded to by the prison within the required time limit.

5.7.2 The main topics for complaint from young people were issues concerning staff, accommodation and property. For young adults, this was property, accommodation, issues concerning staff, sentence management and letters.

5.8 Property

5.8.1 The handling of prisoners' property, whether in prison or on transfer to prison, remains a serious unresolved issue. Prisoners can wait a significant and unreasonable time to receive their property. The Board has continued to deal with issues around missing property, notably property lost during transit between prisons, but lockdown appears to have created an even more impenetrable barrier to communications between establishments.

5.8.2 The Board still encounters considerable difficulty in resolving property complaints with other establishments within a reasonable time limit. Four separate applications to the prison, and to the Board, regarding property missing after transfer from HMP Pentonville are still unresolved after more than six months – not for the want of trying.

5.8.3 Lockdown generated some complaints to the Board when prisoners' property sent in by relatives was returned to sender or confiscated on arrival at reception. This was investigated by the prison, which concluded that the new rules about the parcelling and labelling of personal items had not been effectively communicated to all officers on the residential units. This problem seems to be resolving itself, although it has taken an inordinate amount of time in certain cases to get the property released.

6. Health and wellbeing

6.1 Healthcare – COVID-19

6.1.1

	Young people	Young adults	Staff A/B/administrative
Number of positive tests declared for COVID-19 March – August 2020	1	1	9
Number self-isolating with/without symptoms (some multiple times)	0	0	304
Number shielding for underlying health conditions (12 weeks)	0	16	27

6.1.2 All new admissions are seen by a nurse on the arrival bus, and their temperature is taken before entry to the prison buildings.

6.1.3 Both induction units on Feltham A and B were designated as reverse cohort units for transfers and new admissions. Prisoners spend 14 days in isolation on the reverse cohort units before being allocated to a residential unit. If arriving from the same establishment, they are permitted to mix in small groups as other prisoners are. They are monitored daily by healthcare staff. No visitors, including the Board, are allowed on to the reverse cohort units, unless by prior arrangement.

6.1.4 A protective isolation room was identified on each residential unit for use by any prisoner suspected of having the virus. A residential unit on Feltham B was identified as a shielding unit for young adults with underlying conditions that make them more at risk (for example, asthma). Some prisoners refusing to shield had the risks explained to them and they were asked to sign a disclaimer.

6.1.5 Initially, some operational staff complained of a lack of available personal protective equipment, although the hub at HMP Pentonville was fully stocked by May. Despite a large number of hand-sanitiser dispensers being installed throughout both sides of the prison in April, they remained empty throughout the summer, apparently because of a national shortage of the correct inserts. Officers and prisoners were encouraged to wash their hands as often as possible. Masks were not permitted to be worn at all in the prison (except by healthcare staff) until October 2020.

6.1.6 The Board has commented at almost every visit throughout lockdown that the majority of staff found it almost impossible to maintain appropriate social distancing, especially in offices and meeting rooms. Prisoners, meanwhile, appeared generally more conscientious in their efforts to keep at a safe distance from one other.

6.1.7 Healthcare issues all prisoners nearing the end of their sentence with a 'Being released in COVID-19' pack. A language specialist helped to compile clear concise

information on the disease and how to stay safe. It also contains a pair of gloves and a facemask.

6.2 Physical healthcare

6.2.1 The healthcare department has had a challenging time during the reporting period, coping with both COVID-19 and a change of service provider. Leadership of the department has been much more stable this year, an improvement over 2018/19. The new head of healthcare has a well-developed vision for the department and communicates well with all, including the Board.

6.2.2 Central and North West London (CNWL) NHS Foundation Trust took over as healthcare provider from Care UK in April. Restructuring consultations with staff have since taken place, and a mobilisation phase involving recruitment, information technology, resources and training has begun. The CNWL team increased from 40 to 61 staff over the year. It now provides a full-time GP and a team of clinical nurses, plus access to two consultant psychiatrists, a consultant nurse with expertise in managing disability, a clinical psychologist, a diabetic nurse, a dentist, a dietician and a sexual health specialist nurse.

6.2.3 The Trust also provides extra support with public health, learning disabilities, social support, as well as some speech therapy, mental health support and art therapy. Addaction (a charity concerned with substance misuse) and wellbeing services are now under the healthcare umbrella. There are also plans to appoint a paramedic to act in emergencies without disrupting clinics. A podiatrist now attends one day per week.

6.2.4 **Outpatient unit** – The outpatient facility logged 10,927 healthcare appointments during the reporting period; these include individuals who attended the same clinic multiple times or several different clinics/services. Of these appointments, 44% were for the variety of mental health services offered; 35% were to see the nurse and 13% were to see the GP. There were 369 appointments to see the dentist, 106 to see an optician and 103 vaccinations. All types of healthcare appointment continued during lockdown, and numbers are in line with last year.

6.2.5 Six per cent of these appointments were not attended by prisoners, which is a significant improvement on previous years. Where a prisoner is not able, or chooses not, to attend, another appointment is made for him.

6.2.6 Between May and August 2020, there were 32 scheduled visits to hospital clinics and 12 unplanned emergency visits. This is a reduction on previous years.

6.2.7 It is anticipated that the use of telemedicine will increase. Cameras will replace telephones for some consultant-led appointments. These will take place in a room with a nurse present. A high-resolution camera has been purchased by the provider, so skin conditions can be effectively photographed and sent to a dermatology consultant, reducing the need to make escorted hospital visits.

6.3 Mental healthcare

6.3.1 Wren unit is a residential inpatient facility with specialist mental health staff, clinicians and security staff based there. It is the only residential unit at Feltham still to house both young people and young adults, although this is under review as it raises a number of safeguarding concerns. Prisoners may be admitted for mental health reasons, medical issues, substance misuse or as a place of safety. Generally, there are between four and six residents on Wren unit at any given time.

6.3.2 Psychology staff were absent from the prison during the whole of lockdown, leaving a significant vacuum in the care of the most vulnerable young people. Even before lockdown, there were long delays in transferring residents with extreme mental health problems to secure hospitals with more appropriate facilities. The Board continues to monitor the care of some extremely vulnerable young prisoners at Feltham and, as in previous annual reports, would strongly urge the development of more specialist secure mental health resources at a national level.

6.4 Social care

6.4.1 'Listeners' are trusted young adults, who receive special training via the Samaritans, and make themselves available to help others if they are feeling low and need a one-to-one chat. The service was already diminished before lockdown, as most trained Listeners had finished their sentences and replacements had yet to be found. Training was suspended in March 2020, so there was no access to the service throughout the summer. New Listeners have recently completed their training and the service has now resumed.

6.4.2 All the dedicated Samaritans telephones on residential units were operational throughout the reporting period. This is a welcome improvement on previous years.

6.5 Exercise

6.5.1 Both in and out of lockdown, attendance at the gym is the highlight of most prisoners' week. Lockdown brought these sessions to a halt; however, the gym staff continued their positive work by providing daily workout sessions on the exercise yards. From the middle of April, PE staff took groups of young adults out to the sports fields to play football each week, which proved immensely popular. Prisoners

returned to using the gym by the end of August but have told the Board that they would very much like the field sports and outdoor activities to continue.

6.5.2 One rugby course was completed before March 2020, but the very popular football course was cancelled just before completion.

6.5.3 In the months before lockdown, the resettlement team, with the support of gym staff, continued to organise weekly 'parkruns' around the sports field for young adults and young people. Up to 15 prisoners took part, joined by people from the community, including local running clubs.

6.5.4 Six mountain bikes and helmets were obtained in May 2020, and prisoners and officers alike enjoyed riding round the grounds in fine weather.

6.6 Time out of room

6.6.1 Under the terms of the lockdown between March and May 2020, all prisoners were confined to their rooms for nearly 22 hours a day. Once the regime was permitted to ease, a little more time was allowed out for exercise and housekeeping, although full association was not reintroduced. The Board is satisfied that the prison monitored the general welfare of prisoners effectively, and was responsive to any emerging problems, but the concern remains that serious long-term mental, emotional and physical health problems may arise later on as a consequence of such an extended period of confinement.

6.6.2 **Feltham A** – With the reduced top roll and the new interventions rolling out, ToR was steadily increasing for all young people during the first half of the reporting year. By early March 2020, the average time a young person was spending out of his room was approximately nine hours a day during the week and slightly less at the weekends.

6.6.3 In accordance with the national lockdown regulations, young people were behind their doors for nearly 22 hours a day, every day. During this time, they were offered three sessions of 45 minutes each for showers, outdoor access and PE, all in the same groups of three. There were no opportunities for young people to leave their home units at all.

6.6.4 During lockdown, welfare checks were carried out daily by unit staff, and any young people who were not engaging with the regime or appeared not to be coping were visited more regularly and encouraged to engage.

6.6.5 ToR increased gradually from May onwards as the regime plans allowed. In July, young people were mixing in larger groups of six, and said that they were

pleased to be going back to class-based education. In July 2020, the average ToR stood at approximately seven hours a day.

6.6.6 **Feltham B** – Until recently, ToR figures for Feltham B were less easy to access as they had not been consistently recorded or collated. The Board formally raised its concerns with the Governor about young adults opting to stay in their rooms all day rather than engage in activities, education or work. Clearly, the paucity of work and training opportunities provides staff with very limited options to offer these young adults to encourage them out of their rooms.

6.6.7

Time out of room 2019/20	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Hours per 24-hour period	4.0	4.6	4.9	4.8	3.1	1.2	1.3	1.5	2.5	2.8
					Lockdown began 24/03/20				Social groups expanded 4 to 12	

6.6.8 At lockdown, young adults were placed in groups of four and the regime followed a similar pattern to that in Feltham A. All young adults were offered at least 20 minutes of exercise outside every day, with regular PE sessions provided by gym staff. In July, the ‘bubbles’ expanded to groups of 12 young adults, which helped staff to allow them more time out. By November 2020, the average ToR had increased to 4.5 hours a day.

6.6.9 Young adults were encouraged to clean their rooms every day and wash their clothes frequently. Time out for showers was increased, although some young adults said that they were uncertain that the facilities were being cleaned down properly in between groups. Young adults who were isolating or shielding were offered the same regime but came out separately.

6.6.10 The in-room telephony service was not fully installed on Feltham B until the beginning of June, so the unit telephone kiosks were still in use for the first three months of lockdown. Extra time out and telephone credit were offered to all young adults, so that they could stay in close contact with their families. The Board heard no complaints about this, although it was a relief when BT completed the work, and the in-room telephony was available to all.

7. Education and training

7.1 Education

7.1.1 **Feltham A** – A standard curriculum for young people is provided by Prospects Ltd. The manager left in January 2020 after three years, and her deputy was duly appointed to the post.

7.1.2 There continued to be a high turnover of staff, but by February 2020 the department was fully staffed. The eight-week term timetable allowed teaching staff to take regular holidays all at the same time, with a two-week break at Christmas.

7.1.3 Between November 2019 and March 2020, young people received 27 hours of education per week, compared with 17.5 hours in October 2019. Only 2% of all classes were cancelled in January and February.

7.1.4 Attendance by February 2020 was approximately 74%, which was a significant improvement from July 2019, when it was 37%. Staff are working to minimise interruptions due to other interventions (for example, legal visits), by scheduling them in at the beginning or end of the school day.

7.1.5 A total of 14 young people studied for their GCSEs in mathematics, English, history and psychology. The normally transient population presents some difficulties in these courses being completed. A pupil progress package helps to track attainment, with the aim of the data being transferred to their next school or college after release.

7.1.6 Poor behaviour by young people in the classrooms continued to be a barrier to education. A behaviour specialist provided help for staff, to enable them to deal with it more effectively. Teaching staff remain at significant risk of assault. A serious assault on a mathematics teacher in January 2020 led to her being off sick for four weeks. However, in a survey of young people, 92% of them said that they felt safe in education.

7.1.7 The poorly equipped and dilapidated state of the classrooms do not, in the opinion of the Board, provide a stimulating environment which aids or encourages learning.

7.1.8 Between November 2019 and March 2020, outreach education on the residential units was provided for young people by six teachers on a one-to-one basis. Their weekly target was to provide each young person with 15 hours of education, but actual delivery averaged approximately eight to nine hours per week.

7.1.9 After lockdown in March 2020, remote learning packs were introduced to all young people for them to complete in their rooms. Teachers said that they used this time to improve the quality of the workbooks and their marking regime. Compliance, and feedback, from young people was generally positive. In March, only 20 packs per week were being returned to teachers for marking and feedback. By July, this had increased to 200 per week. A new award, 'Learner of the Week', was won by two young people who had never before attended any classroom-based education while in custody.

7.1.10 Classroom-based learning was reintroduced in July 2020, when the prison moved to level 3. Young people were taught in groups of three from their residential units and were offered two full morning or afternoon sessions per week plus supplementary remote learning material.

7.1.11 As on the outside, lockdown affected all public examinations; 14 young people gained GCSEs in mathematics and psychology, with grades 2–5. Insufficient course work was submitted for English to be graded. This may become a real problem if all public examinations are cancelled in England next year.

7.1.12 Prospects reports that some of the changes in education delivery imposed by the lockdown have since proved beneficial for young people in the custodial setting. Teaching in smaller groups, more independent learning, and the range of subjects on offer will, in future, be considered when planning the curriculum and timetables.

7.1.13 **Feltham B** – Novus follows the Prison Education Framework, which offers certificated qualifications in English, mathematics, English for speakers of other languages, information and communications technology, and industrial cleaning. Courses vary in length from one day to 12 weeks. Novus reported that 1,259 individual courses had been started by March, with a retention rate of 99% and a pass rate of 82%. This year, 20 young adults took part in some form of distance learning, with two doing Open University courses. Between November and March, 204 young adults took functional skills in English, with a pass rate of 77%, and 165 young adults took functional skills in mathematics, with a pass rate of 75%.

7.1.14 Classroom-based education is not a statutory requirement for young adults, but they are required, under prison rules, to take part in regular education, training or work. The reality is that, even before lockdown, many young adults were opting to stay in their rooms during the day rather than take part.

7.1.15 From lockdown in March 2020, the education department was closed, and Novus staff were no longer on site. Working from home, they created work packs which were delivered to the units. The Board spoke regularly to young adults during

this time and found that they had almost no interest in engaging with remote learning. Some did not appear even to be aware that it was available.

7.1.16 Meanwhile, a range of in-room distraction packs, containing puzzles, art projects and wordsearches, were made available to all young adults by the learning and skills team.

7.1.17 Although classroom-based education in Feltham A had resumed in July, Novus carried out its own risk assessments in Feltham B and, following advice from their union, declared that no face-to-face education sessions with young adults could be delivered.

7.1.18 In July, Novus wrote to all young adults, offering them the opportunity to take up new, individualised in-room learning programmes on a weekly turnaround. At the end of August 2020, only 42 learning packs had been requested by the 250 young adults in Feltham B.

7.1.19 Discussions between Novus and the prison continue, in the hope that delivery of education and workshops can be resumed. The Board remains extremely concerned that, by October 2020, there was still no offer of face-to-face education sessions or any type of vocational training available for young adults.

7.2 Library

7.2.1 In March, following lockdown, Hounslow Library Services withdrew all staff from the site. This vital service was subsequently managed by two part-time prison staff, under the guidance of the senior librarian, who remained off-site. A mobile library and book exchange service was introduced, with visits to each unit at least weekly. Prisoners were able to choose books from a list, and over 1,000 orders were fulfilled every month during lockdown. The Board commends the dedication and resourcefulness of the library staff throughout this very difficult period.

7.2.2 A long-overdue designated library for young people in Feltham A is in the process of being built but has not yet been brought into service.

7.2.3 The provision of DVD players and games consoles to all prisoners during lockdown meant a huge increase in demand for material to watch and play. Over this period, prison staff and local volunteers donated several hundred DVDs to supplement official purchases.

7.3 Vocational training

7.3.1 At the November, December, and January Board meetings, the Board reported consistently small numbers of young adults taking part in education,

workshops and employment. A lack of vacancies for work, last minute cancellations of education classes, and flooded workshops were the reasons given at the time. A spot check on several units showed that up to 20% young adults had been allocated no activity at all, and others were simply opting not to go as they were not interested in what was being offered.

7.3.2 Crucially, some workshop areas that should have been available for a range of activities this year were declared unfit for purpose owing to extensive rainwater ingress, and most have now been closed for repair.

7.3.3 From the courses on offer, bricklaying, barbering and music workshops are generally the most popular. Some limited work experience in gardening and coffee roasting was also available. Plans for a bicycle repair workshop have now been in development for three years but there is no sign yet of it opening.

7.3.4 The gardening course is available for six young adults at any one time and is in the process of accreditation for a City and Guilds qualification. The kitchens continue to provide short courses for young adults to gain catering qualifications. This year, 13 level 1 and 28 level 2 general national vocational qualifications were gained in food preparation and cooking. Six prisoners completed the first stage of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

7.3.5 The Board has stated in previous annual reports that if Feltham B is to function properly as a training prison, it needs to offer every young adult in its care a consistent, relevant and purposeful set of skill-building opportunities to help them avoid reoffending after custody. At the beginning of 2020, there were some signs of improvement, and several initiatives were tentatively announced, but lockdown has now halted them, and progress is likely to be slow.

8. Progression and resettlement

8.1 Resettlement planning

8.1.1 **Feltham A** – Resettlement of young people is managed directly by prison staff. While every effort is made to settle young people near their families, they are not released into the community without accommodation having been arranged.

8.1.2 Between November 2019 and March 2020, resettlement officers had biweekly meetings with young people who were nearing the end of their sentences. After lockdown, this was harder to facilitate.

8.1.3 The transition of young people to the adult estate is organised by the receiving prison at least 12 weeks before the move. Over lockdown, transfers

between prisons became extremely limited, and as a consequence 10% of the current population is over 18. This creates potential safeguarding issues within any YOI.

8.1.4 **Feltham B** – Resettlement for young adults is managed by two charities, Catch 22 and Depaul. Catch 22 deals with preparing for life outside prison, and Depaul deals with accommodation. There is one housing officer for the whole of Feltham B.

8.1.5 Resettlement varies greatly between receiving local authorities. With some, no arrangements can be made before the young adult's actual day of release. The Board has commented in previous annual reports that this creates unnecessary stress for them as they may not have families or be permitted to live with them. During lockdown, because of the government's stated intent to eliminate homelessness, it was easier than normal to find temporary housing for young adults who had completed their sentences and were without a home address.

8.1.6 Under normal circumstances, staff from the local Jobcentre Plus would come into Feltham to arrange post-release appointments. During lockdown, young adults were instructed to telephone Jobcentre Plus after their release, to arrange an appointment.

8.2 Case management and progression

8.2.1 Even before lockdown, it was difficult for some prisoners to get transfers across to the adult estate as they reached 21 years of age. Young people reaching the age of 18 also found it difficult to transfer to more suitable establishments, particularly those with sentences of eight years or more. Young people reaching 18 with shorter sentences were routinely admitted to Feltham B unless they had less than six months to serve.

8.2.2 **Feltham A** – By December 2019, 80% of young people had been allocated their custody support plan officers. A provision of 1.5 hours was made in the weekly timetable for young people to meet with their allocated officers, but this was not always possible because of staff shift patterns and clashes with other activities.

8.2.3 **Feltham B** – Before lockdown, the Board received generally good feedback from young adults about their key worker officers. The Board continues to direct some issues raised in applications by young adults to their key worker officer, and this has proved very helpful in resolving matters. It is hoped that the programme will resume as soon as possible after the lifting of lockdown.

8.3 Family contact

8.3.1 Family and legal visits continued right up to March 2020 but, as with everywhere else, were halted after lockdown. They resumed again in a controlled fashion in mid-July, although it became clear that many families, particularly those with vulnerable relatives, were reluctant to either travel on public transport or visit a closed establishment. The 'two-child' rule did not affect many prisoners at Feltham, unlike those in the adult estate.

8.3.2 Family days are always popular and are well organised. However, as mentioned in previous annual reports, the facilities for visitors remain inadequate, particularly for families with small children.

8.3.3 The installation of in-room telephony was completed in Feltham A in early March, just before lockdown, and in Feltham B in early June. This has been very well received by prisoners, especially since social visits stopped. The previous system of queuing to make calls from unit telephones often created flashpoints for violence and bullying between prisoners, as all calls were made in public. The in-room telephony has provided invaluable support for young prisoners who miss their families. Additionally, if a prisoner appears not to be contacting people by telephone, welfare checks are carried out to ensure that he is not self-isolating. Existing restrictions remain on permitted numbers, and prisoners' calls continue to be monitored.

8.3.4 It is concerning to the Board that the cost of BT telephone calls is significantly higher for people in custody in UK prisons than in the wider community.

8.3.5 The Governor awarded all prisoners at Feltham extra weekly telephone credit between March and July 2020, and the time available for them to make telephone calls was extended until midnight at weekends. The Board raised the issue of restricted status prisoners, particularly young people, having a much reduced time allowance for telephone calls. This is a central instruction and relies on specially trained staff being available to monitor all calls.

8.3.6 A number of iPads were deployed to allow prisoners to make closer contact with relatives, sometimes at very short notice, on compassionate grounds. One young adult was able to speak directly with his mother while she was in an ambulance being taken to hospital. Using the iPads, other prisoners were able to attend remotely the funerals of close family members who died during the pandemic.

8.3.7 Once all face-to face visits were suspended, 'Purple Visits', a system of free video calls, was introduced. However, to begin with, it was not as popular as expected, largely for technical reasons. Some families could not access the app, and when they did, it did not always work satisfactorily. Other prisoners' families objected to surveillance by prison officers.

The work of the IMB

Membership and training

Before lockdown, the Board welcomed a number of guest speakers to explain their roles in the prison, enabling members to gain a clearer understanding of prison processes.

During the year, three new members were appointed. The Board currently has 16 members and is able to fulfil all required duties.

The Board was not able to hold its annual Board development day; however, the Board development officer (BDO) organised a detailed written question and answer form, which has allowed each member to identify key areas for personal and general training over the coming year. The webinars and online training provided by the secretariat during lockdown proved popular and were well received.

The Board attended a training day in February with the regional representative and the Board at HMP Bronzefield. Three members of the secretariat visited Feltham A in January 2020.

The Chair attended both YOI forums in 2019 and 2020 and took part in the regular London Chairs group meetings.

Board statistics

Recommended complement of Board members	16
Number of Board members at the start of the reporting period	13
Number of Board members at the end of the reporting period	16
Total number of visits to the establishment	288

Applications to the IMB

Code	Subject	Previous reporting year		Current reporting year	
		Feltham A	Feltham B	Feltham A	Feltham B
A	Accommodation, including laundry, clothing, ablutions	0	12	1	16
B	Discipline, including adjudications, incentives and earned privileges, sanctions	0	42	2	9
C	Equality	0	0	0	2
D	Purposeful activity, including education, work, training, library, regime, time out of cell	1	16	2	3
E1	Letters, visits, telephones, public protection restrictions	1	18	2	9
E2	Finance, including pay, private monies, spends	0	1	0	2
F	Food and kitchens	0	0	0	0
G	Health, including physical, mental, social care	0	11	1	8
H1	Property within this establishment	0	43	0	8
H2	Property during transfer or in another establishment or location			1	11
H3	Canteen, facility list, catalogue(s)	0	5	0	3
I	Sentence management, including home detention curfew, release on temporary licence, parole, release dates, recategorisation	0	16	0	4
J	Staff/prisoner concerns, including bullying	0	26	1	11
K	Transfers	0	14	1	6
L	Miscellaneous, including complaints system	n/a	n/a	0	3
	Total number of applications	2	204	11	95



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