



# HM Prison & Probation Service

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Charlie Taylor,  
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Dear Charlie,

## **HMIP report on an Independent Review of Progress at HMP Erlestoke 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress report at HMP Erlestoke, whereby you followed up 13 key recommendations and 3 Ofsted themes from your most recent inspection that took place 16<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

I am encouraged to note that you have seen good/reasonable progress being made across 11 of the recommendations and 3 Ofsted themes', specifically:

- **Segregation**

There were improvements in prisoner's ability to access meaningful activity and an expansion of time in the open air. Prisoners could now complete in-cell education packs, access library books and gym staff visited the unit twice a week to deliver sessions. Reintegration planning had commenced, and the psychology team worked well with Segregation staff and provided detailed guidance on some of the more complex long-term segregated prisoners.

- **Safety**

Reasonable progress was reported in early day arrangements with first night and induction cells clean and fully equipped and a reviewed Induction process. This now involves a peer led induction programme and a reviewed Induction handbook and passport to not only manage risk factors but also ensure that the Induction process covers regime information, Wellbeing, the Employment Hub, the Drug Recovery Community etc. The environmental factors of Early Days have also been reviewed with the identification of specific induction cells, the appointment of a cell readiness orderly and the introduction of a revised cell cleanliness process. A violence reduction prisoner representative meets with all new arrivals to offer support. There is an appropriate and time bound safety action plan in place and CSIP was now being used to support both perpetrators and victims of violence. As a result, reasonable progress was made against Violence Reduction.

Good progress was made against management of self-harm, and rates had reduced considerably since the Full inspection in August 2021 and a recently appointed safety analyst has begun to collect useful data on self-harm which could be used for future preventative work. The weekly SIM meeting effectively identified and monitored complex or vulnerable prisoners and the quality of support for prisoners on ACCTs had improved and prisoners generally felt well supported.

- **Cleanliness and Decency**

Good progress was reported against cleanliness and decency with cells and communal areas now generally clean and in good order. The prison has appointed a 'Clean and Decent' Lead who is overseeing improvement of living standards and prisoners said they were now able to access cleaning products and equipment when needed.

- **Contact with friends and family**

Good progress was stated against this recommendation, with the availability and take up of visits steadily increasing and Family Days have resumed. Video visits were still in use which provide a valuable way for some prisoners to maintain contact with their families. There is work to support family engagement including support from the charity Turning Point and another local charity provides transport between transport hubs and the prisons for families reliant on public transport.

In respect of the two key areas where you found insufficient or no meaningful progress I can confirm:

- **Drug Strategy**

The rural location of the prison means that items are regularly thrown over the fence. Managers work well with the police when this occurs and work to tackle staff corruption is good. However illicit drugs are still too readily available. HMP Erlestoke acknowledge that there is still work to be done in closing down routes of ingress and are committed to not only reducing access to illicit substances but also working with prisoners to tackle drug use and promote recovery. The prison is working closely with the Police and local community to create community ties outside of the prison to better manage the ingress of drugs. HMP Erlestoke is now also live with the Enhanced Gate Security processes and staff and visitors are subject to this on arrival at site. The prison has also reviewed the use of the X-ray Body Scanner to ensure this supports the work around reducing drug supply. HMP Erlestoke remain committed to a collaborative approach to reducing drug supply and supporting recovery through the dedicated Drug Recovery Unit.

- **Staff and prisoner relationships**

HMP Erlestoke acknowledge that more work needs to be done to consistently challenge low level poor behaviour. The prison has an Apprenticeship Coach to support the professionalising of training to new starters and this role is also supported by a dedicated Mentor. The establishment also has an increased focus on the Incentives Policy Framework to consistently incentivise good behaviour and this is supported by daily staff briefings setting out expectations and providing timely feedback on areas for development.

The Governor with the support of the Prison Group Director will continue to progress the full Action Plan covering all the original recommendations.

I remain committed to ensuring continued progress against HMP Erlestoke's agreed Action Plan and I can assure you that through my operational assurance functions and the support of OSAG we continue to closely monitor progress.

Whilst I acknowledge that there is still much work to be carried out at the prison, I am encouraged that progress is being made and that our monitoring of the prison is in line with your findings.

**Sarah Coccia**  
Executive Director

CC: Private Office  
Phil Copple, Director General Prisons