



HM Prison & Probation Service

Action Plan: [Prison education: a review of reading education in prisons](#)

Updated Action Plan Submitted: 8th June 2023

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A Response to: Prison education: a review of reading education in prisons

Report Published: 22nd March 2022

INTRODUCTION

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and HM Inspectorate of Probation for England and Wales are independent inspectorates which provide scrutiny of the conditions for, and treatment of prisoners and offenders. They report their findings for prisons, Young Offender Institutions, and effectiveness of the work of probation, and youth offending services across England and Wales to Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). In response to the report HMPPS / MoJ are required to draft a robust and timely action plan to address the recommendations. The action plan confirms whether recommendations are agreed, partly agreed, or not agreed (see categorisations below). Where a recommendation is agreed or partly agreed, the action plans provide specific steps and actions to address these. Actions are clear, measurable, achievable, and relevant with the owner and timescale of each step clearly identified. Action plans are sent to HMIP and published on the GOV.UK website. Progress against the implementation and delivery of the action plans will also be monitored and reported on.

Term	Definition	Additional comment
Agreed	All of the recommendation is agreed with, can be achieved and is affordable.	The response should clearly explain how the recommendation will be achieved along with timescales. Actions should be as SMART (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) as possible. Actions should be specific enough to be tracked for progress.
Partly Agreed	Only part of the recommendation is agreed with, is achievable, affordable and will be implemented. This might be because we cannot implement the whole recommendation because of commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.	The response must state clearly which part of the recommendation will be implemented along with SMART actions and tracked for progress. There must be an explanation of why we cannot fully agree the recommendation - this must state clearly whether this is due to commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.
Not Agreed	The recommendation is not agreed and will not be implemented. This might be because of commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.	The response must clearly state the reasons why we have chosen this option. There must be an explanation of why we cannot agree the recommendation - this must state clearly whether this is due to commissioning, policy, operational or affordability reasons.

ACTION PLAN: [Prison Education: a review of reading education in prisons](#)

1. Rec No	2. Recommendation	3. Agreed / Partly Agreed / Not Agreed	4. Action	5. Action Owner	6. Target Date
	HMPPS				
	The education, skills and work offer should include:				
1	Initial and ongoing assessments that pinpoint the specific knowledge and skills in reading that prisoners are missing or need to improve.	Agreed	<p>The Quality Improvement Team (QIT) will review the current Basic and Key Skill Builder (BKSB) functional skills initial assessment to establish if it adequately signposts gaps in reading education for learners and HMPPS.</p> <p>The QIT will provide guidance on the appropriate administration of initial assessments to maximise its effectiveness following a return to face to face delivery post-Covid-19 imposed restrictions.</p> <p>The QIT and Custodial Contracts Directorate (CCD) have undertaken a review of the current Learning Difficulty or Disability (LDD) screener to establish whether it is fit for purpose, accessible by all with a reading need and correctly identifies those who require additional support. This review considers the support needs of LDD prisoners, including availability of activities, appropriate adaptations and reasonable adjustments.</p> <p>The QIT and CCD will produce an initial assessment strategy which will include recommendations on both the initial and LDD assessment tools and methodology used to ensure they are fit for purpose, identify levels of reading and help to commission the right support for those who have farthest to travel. For both prisons and Education providers to implement.</p>	Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending, HMPPS	<p>December 2022</p> <p>December 2022</p> <p>May 2022</p> <p>April 2023</p>
Progress against commitments (June 2023)					
			<p>The BKSB assessment has been reviewed and was found to not be fit for purpose to assess specifically reading education. A new reading assessment was sourced and rolled out across the custodial estate from April 2023.</p> <p>Guidance on initial assessments was provided to establishments throughout 2022 in correlation with the removal of Covid-19 restrictions. A notice was recirculated in the Education Bulletin in December 2022 to remind establishments of their responsibilities for initial assessments.</p> <p>The LDD screener was reviewed by the CCD and found to be fit for purpose in identifying LDD prisoners when delivered in line with the instructions provided which included being read to the participant rather than delivered on paper. A newly implemented reading screener is used to assess the level of support needed allowing an individualised support package to be put in place. The introduction of the Neurodiversity Support Manager role within each establishment now enables cross prison support for prisoners with LDD, including the creation of personal support plans.</p> <p>All four Prison Education Framework (PEF) providers are in the process of finalising a National Reading Plan document, following pilots held in December 2022 and January 2023. All providers have agreed to use the Powell Phonics Checker (PPC) as the initial assessment tool for prisoners which was launched in April 2023. Once a learner is assessed, a Reading Support Level (RSL) is now identified, and provision is designed around the identified RSL. Providers are now collaborating to create a reading profile which will track individual prisoners' progress in reading and will be designed to be accessed following prison transfer.</p>	Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending, HMPPS	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>August 2023</p>

2	A distinct part of the curriculum offers dedicated to teaching reading.	Agreed	<p>The Reducing Reoffending Directorate will provide curriculum guidance to curriculum commissioners to include specific guidance on reading provision, encouraging Governors to prioritise reading interventions where there is a need within the prison population.</p> <p>CCD will ensure through the second tier contract assurance process that contracted education providers have staffing and capacity in place to deliver against commission of delivery by Governors.</p> <p>CCD will ensure through contractual levers that all Prison Education Framework providers are delivering against the updated 2021 (and as updated) City & Guilds specifications for Functional Skills curricula and assessments, which now provides a specific reading curriculum.</p> <p>The Reducing Reoffending Directorate are conducting a series of Education, Skills and Work Digital content pilots throughout 2022. Included within these will be a pilot of content designed to support adults to learn to read.</p> <p>The Reducing Reoffending Directorate have recently made available, through collaboration with the Shannon Trust, a series of self-led study videos based on the well-established 'Turning Pages' programme. Several videos are already available and more will be coming online in the near future. These videos are available to learners utilising in-cell laptops, both online and offline, and to prisoners using the Virtual Campus computers in Education.</p> <p><u>Progress against commitments (June 2023)</u></p> <p>Curriculum intent guidance with a reference to the need for reading to influence curriculum intent was distributed to establishments in December 2022.</p> <p>Assurance and compliance checks are now in place to ensure PEF providers are delivering against the updated 2021 (and as updated) City & Guilds specifications for Functional Skills curriculum and assessments.</p> <p>Following a procurement exercise for Education, Skills and Work Digital content pilots, evaluation and moderation is now nearing completion with contract awards for the new content to support adults to learn to read expected by July 2023.</p> <p>The full range of videos from the Shannon Trust Turning Pages programme are now available on the Virtual Campus and further literacy specific content intervention is being sought via the procurement for content pilots to support adults to learn to read.</p>	<p>Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending</p> <p>Director CCD</p> <p>Director CCD</p> <p>Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending</p> <p>Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending</p> <p>Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending</p>	<p>December 2022</p> <p>Complete – monthly reviews</p> <p>May 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
3	Specialist training and development on teaching adults to read.	Agreed	<p>CCD will provide second tier contract assurance to ensure education providers are compliant with the Prison Education Contract Service Level 3 and have provided the required Careers, Professional Development (CPD) to enable their staff to be appropriately qualified to support adults learning to read.</p> <p>The Reducing Reoffending Directorate are conducting a series of Education, Skills and Work Digital content pilots throughout 2022. Included within these will be a pilot of digital CPD materials to teach both HMPPS staff and prisoner mentors how to teach adults to read. This will also consider how HMPPS ensure good support for the 'peer mentoring' approach to teaching reading, delivered by the Shannon Trust and other providers.</p> <p><u>Progress against commitments (June 2023)</u></p> <p>The PEF providers have devised and delivered CPD materials to enable their staff to be appropriately qualified to support adults learning to read, monitored via second tier contract assurance.</p> <p>Following the delivery of a series of successful Education, Skills and Work Digital content pilots to support HMPPS staff and prisoner mentors how to teach adults to read, contracts will be awarded to providers in June 2023.</p>	<p>Director CCD</p> <p>Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending</p> <p>Director CCD</p> <p>Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending</p>	<p>May 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>June 2023</p>

	Prison Governors				
	Governors should lead a whole-prison approach to reading that facilitates reading for pleasure, purpose and rehabilitation. This would include:				
4	Having an ambitious strategy to improve prisoners' reading skills.	Agreed	<p>Prison Leaders will include their approach to reading in their Education, Skills and Work strategy and curriculum intent; QIT will assure the quality of the statements and ensure it is in the establishment's continuous quality improvement plan with appropriate targets and measures of success.</p> <p>The Reducing Reoffending Directorate will produce the next iteration of clear curriculum guidance to encourage Governors to prioritise reading interventions where there is need within their prison population.</p>	Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending, HMPPS	<p>April 2023</p> <p>April 2023</p>
Progress against commitments (June 2023)					
			<p>Ofsted workshops have taken place for Governors and Prison Group Directors (PGD). Wider training has been delivered to education leaders within establishments which has included guidance on the creation and implementation of a Reading Strategy.</p> <p>All establishments have created and implemented Reading Strategies. The National Quality Team created a reading training Power Point which has been shared with establishments.</p>	Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending, HMPPS	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
5	Making sure the library promotes reading for pleasure and purpose effectively and provides appropriate texts for adults who are learning to read.	Agreed	<p>CCD will increase second tier contract assurance of the library provision to ensure it is in line with existing contractual requirements which include the need for the library to promote reading for pleasure and purpose and the provision of appropriate texts for all levels of ability including those who are learning to read.</p>	Director CCD	April 2023
Progress against commitments (June 2023)					
			<p>Governor and PGD training events took place in 2022, led by Ofsted, where the appropriate use of the library was outlined. An assurance template is now in place requiring each establishment's Reading Strategy to define the library's role in supporting and encouraging reading for pleasure and the provision of appropriate texts for all levels of ability including those who are learning to read.</p>	Director CCD	Complete
6	Using appropriate interventions that support reading as well as systems to assess, monitor and share information on prisoners' reading ability and the progress they make.	Agreed	<p>Establishments will ensure through the weekly meetings between Learning and Skills Managers and Education providers that CURIOUS (the system where interventions are monitored and shared) is updated in accordance to agreed protocols.</p> <p>CCD will assure through second tier contract assurance that CURIOUS is being utilised correctly by establishments. The correct utilisation of CURIOUS provides a system which captures assessment and allows the monitoring and sharing of information, on prison transfer, on learner progression and including where appropriate reading ability.</p> <p>The Reducing Reoffending Directorate will develop personal learning plans for prisoners, and promote more consistent use of the current data and CURIOUS in partnership with CCD. This will ensure that, subject to any new assessments of reading ability being introduced following the QIT initial assessment strategy (<i>see recommendation 1</i>), the result of these reading assessments will be shown on the prisoner's learning plan.</p>	<p>Director CCD</p> <p>Director CCD</p> <p>Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending, HMPPS</p>	<p>December 2022</p> <p>April 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p>
Progress against commitments (June 2023)					
			<p>Commissioned interventions are captured onto CURIOUS and subject to regular compliance/assurance checks. Establishments are required to record and upload reading levels on the Virtual Campus workspace to support sharing of records following prison transfer.</p> <p>PEF providers have commenced using the Powell Phonics Checker (<i>see recommendation 1</i>) and have agreed to share results using the Virtual Campus workspace. PEF providers are currently working together to design a 'Reading Profile' which can be used to track progress and impact of the support in place.</p>	<p>Director CCD</p> <p>Deputy Director Reducing Reoffending, HMPPS</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>September 2023</p>

Recommendations	
Agreed	6
Partly Agreed	0
Not Agreed	0
Total	6