



HM Prison & Probation Service

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Alan Scott CBE
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Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
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10th October 2023

Dear Charlie,

HMIP report on an independent review of progress at HMP/YOI Eastwood Park 4th – 13th September 2023.

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress report at HMP/YOI Eastwood Park, where you followed up seven concerns and three Ofsted themes from your most recent inspection that took place October 2022.

I am encouraged to note that you have seen good and reasonable progress being made across some of the concerns, specifically:

- Under Leadership – the improvements made in effective retention and recruitment of staff, maximising the effective deployment of operational staff to ensure more consistent regime delivery. This has resulted in improved time out of cell giving the prison a different feel from last year.
- In the area of Safety – the noted positive practice of the addition of a coping skills programme for women in their early days and other important progress to promote safety, including better understanding of the triggers for self-harm and the improvement of ACCT case management.
- Within Children and Families – the improvement to the environment and capacity of the visits hall, the expansion of the range of activities available to support a diverse programme of family visits as well as the improved access to video visits.
- Mental Health – the significant commitment to addressing concerns on what is now Cherry Blossom Unit; the clearer purpose, improved environment, and the good quality individualised care plans and multidisciplinary teamworking leading to an improved regime and positive prisoner experiences. In addition, the investment in supporting the training and welfare of officers working on the unit.

In respect of the HMIP concerns and Ofsted themes where no meaningful / insufficient progress was being made, I can confirm that all the IRP findings have been carefully considered and steps will be taken to address them as appropriate. This will include the following:

- The effective delivery of the Governor's highly ambitious new learning strategy will become a prison priority ensuring the number of activity spaces continues to increase, attendance continues to improve and the breadth and depth of the curriculum on offer is developed to meet prisoner needs.
- The curriculum will improve the offer of a qualification in all work areas that accredits the skills and knowledge prisoners are developing and where formal qualifications are not available in prison work settings the criteria will be applied to provide a structured learning experience.
- The allocations and risk assessment processes are already under review to maximise the speed and efficiency with which women can be allocated to maths and English courses and the offer will be increased to reduce waiting lists and increase the stretch for progression for these core courses.
- HMPPS will review the guidance available to prison leaders on the management of women in crisis and share learning from sites that are managing without the need to use force or issue anti-tear clothing to prevent self-harm.
- Prison leaders were unable to further improve outcomes for mentally unwell women awaiting a transfer to specialist mental health inpatient service as the systems on site were found to be good, closely monitored, escalated, and challenged to expedite transfers – the delays are caused by accessing a suitable bed in hospital.
- Prison leaders will continue to strive to improve outcomes for remanded women by prioritising them for keywork and through partnership working with local women's centres. The national contract for resettlement is currently being reviewed with a view to providing help for people on remand.

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

I remain committed to ensuring continued progress against HMP/YOI Eastwood Park's agreed Action Plan and I can assure you that through my operational assurance processes 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.

Alan Scott CBE

Area Executive Director, North West & Women's Group

CC:

Phil Copple, Director General Prisons