



# HM Prison & Probation Service

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12 December 2023

Dear Charlie,

## **HMIP report on an independent review of progress at HMP Hewell 13 – 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress report at HMP Hewell, whereby you followed up on five concerns and three Ofsted themes from your most recent inspection in November/December 2022.

I am encouraged to note that you have seen reasonable progress being made across some of the recommendations and Ofsted themes, and note the following;

- Leaders and managers in Education, Skills and Work had improved arrangements to identify learning needs and disabilities and support for this prisoner cohort was now better targeted and co-ordinated.
- Leaders had improved local public protection arrangements with the introduction of risk management meetings which had increased oversight of high-risk releases. There had also been improvements in the backlog in phone call monitoring.
- In the area of healthcare, there had been progress in reducing GP waiting times and improving the overall oversight of this process.
- The positive impact of the reintroduction of the Early Days in Custody pilot with mental health clinicians carrying out assessments was also recognised.

In respect of the key areas and Ofsted themes where you found insufficient progress, 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;

- Time out of cell and attendance at purposeful activity will remain a priority for the Governor and Senior Leadership Team. This will include the continuation of the pilot to increase time out of cell to a minimum of 3 hours and for prisoners in full time work, the ability to have 8.5 hours out of their cell per day. Improvements will continue to increase the overall allocation to activities, taking into account the skills of prisoners.
- Leaders will continue to improve the transition into custody by structuring a more personalised approach around prisoners' arrival. This will also include introducing processes to identify vulnerabilities within consistent initial safety interviews. Additionally, the prison will continue to improve on the physical conditions on the Early Days Centre.
- Improvements around the self-harm strategy and the effective use of Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) recommendations will be prioritised. The prison will utilise self-harm data and insights to inform strategy and give direction to staff and managers on how to support individuals with these identified vulnerabilities.
- Prisoners access to effective Information, Advice and Guidance will be improved along with the additional offer of further accredited qualifications in industries and effective tracking of progress in this area.

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 Hewell'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.

Yours sincerely

**Sarah Chand**  
**Area Executive Director, Midlands**

cc:

Phil Cople, Director General of Operations, HMPPS  
Teresa Clarke, Prison Group Director, West Midlands