



HM Prison & Probation Service

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Dear Charlie,

HMIP report on an independent review of progress at HMP Lowdham Grange 11th - 13th May 2026

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress report at HMP Lowdham Grange, whereby you followed up thirteen priority/key concerns and four Ofsted themes from your most recent inspection in March 2025.

I am encouraged to note that you have seen good progress being made across eight priority/key concerns, and note the following:

The prison has worked closely with the new providers, Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, to safely manage handover, development and assurance of their service. As recognised from your review there are improved outcomes for prisoners through a better resourced healthcare team supported by operational teams.

A full review of first night and induction was completed leading to improvements being made, the reception area has been made more welcoming with dedicated and private interview and peer support areas.

Since the 2025 inspection leaders have placed significant focus on the Segregation Unit. This work has been recognised with encouraging improvements in the oversight and governance of segregation, with stronger review processes, better record-keeping and a continued reduction in its use. The regime is also more consistent, with prisoners benefiting from servery meal collection, working in-cell telephones and access to in-cell education.

In respect of the three priority/key concerns and one Ofsted theme where you found insufficient progress, I can confirm that the IRP findings have been carefully considered and steps will be taken to address them as appropriate. These will include the following:

To reduce the use of force, focus groups will be completed with prisoners to better understand the drivers of incidents, reviews will be strengthened by including relevant officers to support learning and identify alternatives to force, and maintain a clear focus on emerging issues so that prompt action can be taken.

Reducing incidents of self-harm remains the highest priority, and the prison is strengthening the response to ensure this work delivers sustained improvements in outcomes for those at risk. The Prevent Future Deaths action plan will be further developed to capture both the work already undertaken and the actions currently in progress, providing a clearer framework for oversight and accountability. While leaders' understanding and monitoring of these issues has improved, we recognise that this must now translate into consistent positive outcomes.

A full review of all prisoners requiring reasonable adjustments will take place to ensure needs are identified, recorded, and met, alongside plans to introduce a Reasonable Adjustment Panel. Introduction of a bi-weekly Accommodation Fabric Check by the Equalities Officer will take place, initially focused on prisoners with physical disabilities, their accommodation, and associated adaptations. Staff awareness and accountability regarding disability support, living conditions, and the importance of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans will be reinforced. The recruitment for a Buddy role to provide additional peer support is in its final stages.

A weekly meeting will take place with the education provider with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) as an agenda item; this will also be monitored through the monthly contract meeting. ESOL sessions have been rescheduled to allow all learners to attend. The stepping stones sessions will continue until the ESOL teacher, currently going through vetting, begins employment whilst observations will be carried out to check the quality of the teaching and learning.

The Governor, with the support of the Prison Group Director, will continue to progress the full action plan covering all the original priority/key concerns.

I remain committed to ensuring continued progress against the HMP Lowdham Grange agreed action plan and I can assure you that through my operational assurance function and the support of Performance and Assurance and Risk (PAR) group 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. The Governor has done an excellent job, with effective support, to make clear progress.

Ed Cornmell

Executive Director, Long Term & High Security Estate