



HM Prison &
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9 July 2026

Dear Charlie,

HMIP Report on an Independent Review of Progress at HMP Featherstone
01-03 June 2026

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress (IRP) report at HMP Featherstone, in which you followed up on **ten** key/priority concerns and **three** Ofsted themes identified during your most recent inspection during September and October 2025.

I am encouraged to note that you have observed good or reasonable progress being made across **seven** priority/key concerns and **one** Ofsted theme. In particular, I note the following:

- The rate of assaults against both staff and prisoners was found to have declined over the last six months. Prisoner-on-prisoner assaults had decreased by 36% and assaults on staff by 61%, compared to the same six-month period before the full inspection. Levels of violence were found to be comparatively low and most prisoners were said to feel safe at HMP Featherstone.
- Many prisoners spoke positively about wing officers, witnessing good interactions across all houseblocks. Officers and middle managers were also found to be more visible on the landings with less time spent in offices. It is positive to hear that all the prisoners spoken to could name their houseblock manager.

- The governance of Public Protection was found to have considerably improved. The Inter-departmental Risk Management Meeting was now taking place more regularly (monthly) with multi-disciplinary engagement. The Public Protection Steering Group had also established a stronger strategic oversight of whole-prison issues.
- Managers and staff were found to be making effective use of new online tools to monitor activity and improve performance in key day-to-day processes. This has helped to improve the timeliness and quality of responses to complaints and prisoner applications and made the work of the Offender Management Unit more visible, so greater accountability can be set.

In respect of the **three** priority/key concerns and **two** Ofsted themes where no or insufficient progress was identified, I can confirm that the IRP findings have been carefully considered, and steps will be taken to address the issues identified. These will include the following:

- The prison will continue to work closely with estates and facilities management providers to progress remedial works at pace, while also developing and submitting business cases and bids for capital investment. These bids will be informed by risk, operational impact, and strategic need, ensuring that the most critical infrastructure issues are clearly articulated and prioritised for funding consideration.
- Leaders will continue to take a coordinated approach to reducing drug supply through intelligence-led activity, targeted security measures and environmental improvements, while maintaining strong oversight of the drug strategy. Alongside this, prisoners will continue to receive access to appropriate substance misuse support and recovery services to reduce demand. This combined approach is aimed at sustaining reductions in the mandatory drug testing (MDT) rate over time.
- Leaders will strengthen oversight of servery practices to ensure fair and consistent portion sizes, standardise breakfast pack distribution, and review regime sequencing to minimise immediate lock-up after meals, enabling prisoners sufficient time to eat in a more decent and communal environment.
- Leaders will strengthen expectations and oversight of industries to ensure instructors consistently record meaningful progress, set clear and challenging targets, and accurately capture prisoners' skills and behaviours. Work will continue to build on recent improvements, including the introduction of accredited provision and the upskilling of trainers, alongside plans to expand qualification opportunities across industries. These actions will ensure a more robust and consistent approach to recognising and developing prisoners' skills.
- The prison will continue to prioritise improvements in attendance across Industries, recognising that, while education attendance has strengthened, further work is required within workshops. This will include strengthening allocation processes, improving coordination with residential areas to support punctuality and maintaining a clear focus on promoting engagement in

purposeful activity so prisoners are encouraged and supported to attend and make progress.

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

I remain committed to ensuring continued progress against the agreed HMP Featherstone action plan. I can assure you that through my operational assurance functions and with the support of the Performance, Assurance and Risk Group, we continue to monitor progress closely.

Whilst I acknowledge that there is further work to do at HMP Featherstone, I am encouraged that progress is being made and that our monitoring of the prison is in line with your findings.

Kind Regards,

Sarah Chand

Area Executive Director – Midlands

Cc: James McEwen, Director General Chief Executive Officer, HMPPS,
Michelle Jarman-Howe, Interim Director General of Operations, HMPPS,
Mark Greenhaf, Prison Group Director, West Midlands