



HM Prison &
Probation Service

HMP Ashfield

A response to the HMIP inspection: 13 April to 23 April 2026

HMIP report published: 20 July 2026

Submitted: 10 August 2026

Introduction

HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) and HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) 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 priority and key concerns.

Action plans provide specific steps and actions to address these concerns, that are clear, outcome focussed, measurable, achievable, with clear accountability and appropriate timescales for completion.

Action plans are sent to the respective HMIP and published on the GOV.UK website. Progress will be monitored regularly through local, regional, and national governance structures.

Priority concerns and actions

No.	Concerns	Response: action taken / planned	Responsible owner	Target date
1	Responses to prisoner complaints, including those about discrimination and staff, were often poorly investigated and lacked sufficient scrutiny. This undermined confidence in the complaints process and risked weakening otherwise positive staff-prisoner relationships.	HMP Ashfield will take the following actions to address the concern:	See below:	See below:
	As above	All staff complaints, and any complaints involving a protected characteristic, will be subject to quality assurance by a Senior Manager to ensure consistency, proportionality, and robust scrutiny. In addition, Senior Managers will undertake monthly quality assurance checks on 10% of all other complaints to provide assurance that investigations have been conducted appropriately and that concerns have been fully addressed.	Contract Director	October 2026

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No.	Concerns	Response: action taken / planned	Responsible owner	Target date
	As above	Staff will be supported to improve the quality of complaint responses through targeted learning and development, including the sharing of best practice and lessons learned.	Contract Director	October 2026
	As above	Leaders have engaged with external organisations to explore opportunities for independent reviews of our Discrimination Incident Reporting Forms (DIRFs). While an interested partner has not yet been secured, leaders will continue to seek external scrutiny to strengthen assurance and provide independent feedback.	Contract Director	October 2026
2	Despite a clear focus on fair treatment, many prisoners from minority groups lacked confidence that issues raised would lead to meaningful change. Limited staff engagement in some protected characteristic forums and at celebratory events reduced opportunities to build understanding and reinforce inclusive practice.	HMP Ashfield will take the following actions to address the concern:	See below:	See below:
	As above	HMP Ashfield will undertake a review of its feedback and accountability processes relating to concerns raised by prisoners from minority groups. Feedback will be gathered through prisoner	Contract Director	January 2027

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		consultation groups, surveys, and other prisoner voice forums to better understand prisoner experiences and identify areas for improvement.		
	As above	Following completion of the review, a report will be produced containing key themes and associated actions. Progress against agreed actions will be monitored and reported through Diversity and Equality Action Team (DEAT) meetings to ensure oversight and accountability.	Contract Director	January 2027
	As above	HMP Ashfield will provide regular updates on actions taken and outcomes achieved to staff and prisoners, ensuring transparency in how concerns are addressed. Opportunities for prisoner representatives to contribute to discussions and ongoing improvements will also be introduced.	Contract Director	January 2027
3	Progress in mitigating identified health care risks was too slow. Gaps in staffing, skills and clinical pathways meant that some prisoners did not receive timely or appropriate care.	Oxleas, healthcare provider at HMP Ashfield, and NHS England will take the following actions to address the concern:	See below	See below
	As above	Oxleas and NHS England will continue to work with Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and community providers to strengthen referral	Head of Healthcare	December 2026

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No.	Concerns	Response: action taken / planned	Responsible owner	Target date
		pathways for patient cohorts, ensuring access to specialist services in a timely manner.		
	As above	Governance and clinical oversight will be strengthened through monthly improved monitoring of healthcare risks, medicine management and prescription delays. This will ensure that identified issues are addressed promptly and escalated appropriately.	Head of Healthcare	December 2026
	As above	The key risks identified included substance misuse and sexual health. Oxleas is actively recruiting a dedicated Substance Misuse Service (SMS) Lead. In the interim services will be provided by a seconded SMS and Primary Care Clinical Lead. Oxleas will provide sexual health training for healthcare staff and a review of specialist clinical provision to address identified workforce and skills gaps.	Head of Healthcare	December 2026
4	Leaders in education, skills and work, did not set suitable targets for prisoners to work towards, or review these effectively. Leaders did not adequately capture the knowledge, skills and behaviours that prisoners developed towards their overall targets and goals.	HMP Ashfield will take the following actions to address the concern:	See below:	See below:
	As above	Leaders and managers within Education will prioritise Individual Learning Plan (ILP) training for all relevant staff to ensure a consistent approach to learner development. HMP Ashfield will ensure that all	Contract Director	November 2026

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No.	Concerns	Response: action taken / planned	Responsible owner	Target date
		eligible prisoners have an ILP in place, with SMART targets set and reviewed regularly to assess progress and effectiveness.		
	As above	Compliance and the quality of ILPs will be monitored through the monthly Quality Improvement Group (QIG), with any emerging issues and areas requiring improvement escalated through the Education, Skills and Work subject matter expert.	Contract Director	November 2026

Key concerns and actions

No.	Concerns	Response: action taken / planned	Responsible owner	Target date
5	Prisoners had limited access to self-catering facilities, and this reduced opportunities to promote independence and prepare prisoners for release.	HMP Ashfield will undertake a review of the Asset Renewal Programme to assess the feasibility of redesigning the existing servery layout to increase opportunities for prisoner self-catering. Simultaneously, leaders will identify and evaluate alternative options for improving self-catering provision ensuring full compliance with fire safety regulations and statutory requirements.	Contract Director	January 2027
6	Leaders had not ensured that there was sufficient staffing capacity to provide all prisoners with ongoing high-quality careers	HMP Ashfield will take the following actions to address the concern:	See below:	See below:

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	information, advice and guidance reviews.			
	As above	An initial meeting has been held between the Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) Coordinator, leaders, and managers to identify current requirements, gaps, and support needs.	Contract Director	December 2026
	As above	HMP Ashfield will implement a structured training programme for members of the Education, Skills and Work (ESW) team to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and confidence required to undertake six-month prisoner reviews effectively. The training will improve the quality, consistency and timeliness of prisoner reviews, ensuring compliance with CIAG requirements and supporting prisoners' employment, education and resettlement outcomes.	Contract Director	December 2026
7	Leaders had been too slow to develop the quality monitoring processes required to accurately oversee the quality of education and training provided. The recently introduced processes were too new to have made a significant impact on the quality of education, skills and work and	HMP Ashfield will take the following actions to address the concern:	See below:	See below:

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	did not accurately capture all areas for improvement.			
	As above	HMP Ashfield has implemented a structured programme of themed Learning Walks to provide ongoing assurance of teaching and learning standards, with findings reviewed through the QIG.	Contract Director	December 2026
	As above	Leaders have also implemented specific Continuous Professional Development for the Education Team to identify areas of improvement and areas of good practice. This will improve the standard of teaching and training for prisoners.	Contract Director	December 2026
	As above	HMP Ashfield will standardise the teaching observation process for all staff, ensuring any staff member identified as requiring improvement is provided with clear development objectives and a follow-up observation within eight weeks.	Contract Director	December 2026
8	Too many prisoners experienced significant delays in progressing their sentences. Many, for example, were often waiting several years beyond their eligibility date to move to open conditions.	HMP Ashfield will take the following actions to address the concern:	See below:	See below:

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	As above	HMP Ashfield has increased the number of programme places for Building Choices 2026-2027, by 60% from the previous period to improve the availability of progression.	Contract Director	January 2027
	As above	The Offender Management Unit will also continue consideration of progressive moves to other prisons should programmes become available sooner than at HMP Ashfield.	Contract Director	January 2027