



HM Prison & Probation Service

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Dear Charlie,

HMIP report on an independent review of progress at HMP Pentonville 11th – 13th April 2023.

Thank you for your Independent Review of Progress report at HMP Pentonville, whereby you followed up nine concerns and two Ofsted themes from your most recent inspection that took place July 2022.

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

- The focus of the team on getting it right from the moment prisoners arrived at HMP Pentonville has had an impact. This has positively affected the experience of prisoners.
- Lots of progress had been made on tackling self-harm at HMP Pentonville and in the 6 months prior to the IRP the prison were recorded as the lowest rate of self-harm in comparator prisons. The fact there had been no self-inflicted deaths since the last inspection was a sign of real progress.
- The fact that relationships with partners had improved and the procedure for security clearance had become more efficient was encouraging and was testament to the commitment of the team to improve outcomes for all. Weekly scheduling of security inductions had facilitated quicker access to keys for new staff.
- The improvements made on access to mental health services were acknowledged and there were clearly improvements in healthcare outcomes across the board. The impact of the new Head of Healthcare had been noted as very positive.
- The commitment of the Governor and his team to increasing access to education was encouraging and the early appointment of a New Head of Education, Skills and Work was bringing dividends. It was pleasing to see that prisoners could now access the full range of provision, regardless of which accommodation wing they lived on.

- Improvements in the quality and experience of education staff were tangible and the careful selection and management of staff in that department was clearly having a positive impact.

In respect of the four areas of concern where you found insufficient or no meaningful 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 will continue to be a priority for the Governor and his Senior Leadership Team. Leaders will ensure there is an establishment approach to reduce regime curtailment, and to improve attendance and punctuality at activities to increase time out of cell for prisoners.
- A review of the establishment resettlement provision will be conducted to ensure that we have adequate provision for remand prisoners prior to their eventual release back into the community.
- The performance of the Offender Management Unit (OMU) will continue to be a priority for the Governor. Recent progress made to provide stability and oversight of the processes essential to the functioning of the unit will continue to be embedded to improve staff morale.
- Whilst there are no immediate plans to reduce the prison population at HMP Pentonville, there will continue to be investment in infrastructure to ensure that prisoners are held in the best conditions possible.

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 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 conducted at the prison, I am encouraged that progress is being made and that our monitoring of the prison is in line with your findings.

Sarah Coccia
Executive Director

CC: Private Office
Phil Copple, Director General Prisons