



Learning in the justice sector

Having access to educational activities generally supports the **well-being** of prisoners well, though staff understanding of complex ALN is too variable.

What's going well

- Access to resources such as art equipment and educational activities helps prisoners to cope with their confinement and supports their well-being.
- Prisons provide helpful induction sessions for learners on the educational opportunities available to them and assess their literacy and numeracy skills to ensure that they access the right courses. They track their progress carefully.

What needs to improve

- Prison staff's understanding of how to support complex additional learning needs (ALN) is too variable.
- A minority of learners struggled to engage with learning.



Most prisoners who access education make positive progress in their **learning** and benefit from a broad and relevant curriculum.

What's going well

- Through strong support from staff and peer mentors, many prisoners continued to access education during periods of COVID-19 restrictions.
- Most prisoners who access education make positive progress in their learning.
- Overall, the quality of teaching in prisons is good and peer mentors make a positive contribution to the educational progress of fellow prisoners.
- Prisons offer a broad and relevant curriculum, which is linked closely to the needs of employers.

What needs to improve

- In some cases, young people accessing YOS support do not progress to higher levels of training because of their low literacy skills. In other cases, despite improved access to education, learners have not made sufficient progress.
- Probation services do not have sufficiently clear strategies to support the development of young people's skills and do not track their progress well enough.



Leaders in prisons worked effectively to minimise the impact of the pandemic and to forge link with partners to ensure that prisoners had continued access to relevant educational opportunities, although not all leaders evaluate the impact of their work well enough.

What's going well

- Leaders in prisons worked effectively to ensure that prisoners had access to educational opportunities despite the pandemic restrictions.
- They have developed strong links with local employers to improve employment prospects for prisoners.
- Youth offending services leaders work well with partners to help learners progress onto appropriate educational or employment pathways.

What needs to improve

- Staff do not do enough to challenge prisoners who choose not to engage with education.
- Leaders in youth offending services do not evaluate the impact of interventions well enough or plan strategically to develop the skills of all young people.

HMI Probation used the evidence from the joint review we carried out with them on education, training and employment to produce a helpful effective practice guide. The guide contains reflective questions for practitioners the evaluate the impact of their work.

Education, Training and Employment effective practice guide ([justiceinspectorates.gov.uk](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk))