



Oifig An Chigire Príosún
Office of the Inspector of Prisons

Thematic Inspection on Education & Work Training: Wheatfield Prison, Mountjoy Men's Prison & Arbour Hill Prison

April - June 2022



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

**In Partnership with the
Department of Education
Inspectorate**

June 2023

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HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

This is the first Thematic Inspection Report on Education and Work Training in prisons conducted by the Office of the Inspector of Prisons (OIP), in partnership with the Department of Education Inspectorate (DE Inspectorate). The aim of this partnership is to draw on the specialist expertise of the DE Inspectorate to assess the quality of provision of education in prisons in Ireland.

The report provides an assessment of education and work training in Wheatfield Prison, Mountjoy Men's Prison (Progression Unit and Main Prison) and Arbour Hill Prison. The OIP examined and assessed work training provision in each of the prisons (Chapter 4), and the DE Inspectorate evaluated provision of education (Chapter 5). The report format is as follows:

The Introduction sets out the foundation for the Inspection (see also, Appendix A) and provides an overview of Wheatfield Prison, Mountjoy Men's Prison and Arbour Hill Prison. In Chapter 2, the OIP defines "purposeful activity", summarises the Irish Prison Service obligations, both nationally and internationally in relation to purposeful activity, and provides an assessment of systemic issues underpinning access levels to purposeful activity. The Summary of Findings in Chapter 3 brings together key thematic findings from both Inspectorates across the three prisons.

Assessment of the Provision of Work Training is provided by the OIP in Chapter 4. "Work Training" refers to both essential work in the prison (e.g., kitchen work, landing cleaning, waste management), attendance at workshops (e.g., joinery, welding, fabric) and work initiatives that are championed by prison staff and may be funded through the Prisoner Initiative Development Fund (PIDF). Each prison is assessed independently across three areas:

- i. Access to Work Training
- ii. Work Training Certification
- iii. Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives

Over the course of the inspection, the OIP was informed of proposed work training initiatives, and these are highlighted within this report as appropriate. However, the OIP is not able to determine the implementation status of these initiatives given they were not in situ at the time of inspection.

Evaluation of the quality of the provision of education is provided by the DE Inspectorate in Chapter 5. These findings were independently observed, assessed and drafted by the Department of Education Inspectorate (DE). The DE Inspectorate evaluated each prison across two areas:

- i. Teaching and Learning
- ii. Leadership and Management

Recommendations made to the Irish Prison Service, the Education and Training Board, and the individual prisons are provided in Chapter 6 with the IPS Action Plan. These recommendations are aimed at improving the quality of education and work training for people in custody. All recommendations made to Irish Prison Service Headquarters are derived from findings which arose across inspection of the three prisons and are systemic in nature. Strategic coordination between Irish Prison Service Headquarters and individual prisons will be fundamental to addressing these recommendations. Prison-specific recommendations are also provided, and are designed to address unique situations in each prison.

The OIP and DE Inspectorate would like to thank people in prison, prison staff, prison management and CDET B teaching staff and school management for their excellent co-operation and engagement throughout the inspection process.

ABOUT THE INSPECTORATE OF PRISONS & DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INSPECTORATE

The Office of the Inspector of Prisons

The Office of the Inspector of Prisons is a statutory body set up in 2007 under the Prisons Act 2007. The role of the Inspector of Prisons (Chief Inspector) is set out under Part 5, Section 30 to 32 of the Prisons Act 2007. Section 30 provides for the appointment of an Inspector. Section 31 sets out the functions of the Inspector and Section 32 outlines the requirement of the Inspector to submit an annual report to the Minister for Justice.

Under Section 31 of the Act, the Inspector of Prisons is obliged to carry out regular inspections of prisons and for this purpose may:

- (a.) at any time enter any prison or any part of a prison
- (b.) request and obtain from the Governor a copy of any books, records, other documents or extracts from such documents, and,
- (c.) in the course of an inspection or arising out of an inspection, bring any issues of concern to the notice of the Governor of the prison concerned, the Director General of the Irish Prison Service or the Minister as the Inspector considers appropriate.

Governors, prison officers and other persons employed in prisons and other prisoners must as far as reasonably practicable comply with any request for information that the Inspector may make in the performance of his or her functions.

In 2020, the Office of the Inspector of Prisons published A Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland. This document sets out how the Inspectorate conducts inspections of prisons in Ireland including the various types of inspections. This report derives from a thematic inspection (i.e., an inspection of a specific operational area) assessing the provision of education and work training across three prisons in Ireland. The Framework outlines how the Inspectorate applies assessment ratings during inspections. For a summary of how the Inspectorate qualifies its assessment ratings, see Appendix A.

The Department of Education Inspectorate

The Inspectorate of the Department of Education (DE) is responsible for the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of the provision of education in a range of early learning and care (ELC) settings, schools and centres for education; including schools attached to Special Care Units and Children Detention Centres. DE inspectors also provide advice on a range of educational issues to the communities working in and served by schools, centres for education and other learning settings, to policy makers in the DE and to the wider educational system.

The work of the DE inspection team is guided by the following principles:

- A focus on education and training experiences for learners, supports in place for post-release education and training, and outcomes in these areas.
- A focus on human rights in evaluating the relevant area (e.g. the provision of education and training), and compliance with law, international human rights standards and best practice.
- A commitment to engage with the relevant partners operating in the prison on the promotion of improvement in education, training and progression for learners.
- Respectful engagement which acknowledges effective work, progress and achievement and which promotes professional dialogue.
- Accountability; inspections of the quality and effectiveness of the provision of education in prisons are carried out in accordance with the published *Framework for the Inspections of Prisons in Ireland* and provide an objective and fair evaluation of the quality of provision.

In addition the work of the Inspectorate of the DE will be in accordance with the *Code of Practice for the Inspectorate 2015* which can be found here [Code of Practice for the Inspectorate 2015](#).

1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Inspection

- 1.1 The Office of the Inspector of Prisons (OIP), in partnership with the Department of Education (DE) Inspectorate carried out a Thematic Inspection of Education & Work Training between April and June 2022. In March 2022, both parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding¹ to work together on a collaborative basis under the remit of the OIP's *A Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland*.²
- 1.2 The Education and Work Training Thematic Inspection assessed the provision of purposeful activity for people in prison across three Dublin prisons: Wheatfield Prison (7 - 8 April 2022), Mountjoy Men's Prison (Progression Unit 4 - 5 May 2022; Main Prison 6 and 10 May 2022) and Arbour Hill Prison (18 - 19 May 2022).

For this inspection, the function of the OIP was to assess:

- i. Access to Work Training
- ii. Work Training Certification
- iii. Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives

The function of the DE Inspectorate was to evaluate the quality of the provision of education, teaching and learning in the schools.

Following on-site visits to each of the prisons, initial findings were shared and discussed with prison and school Senior Management in each prison and with the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETБ). The DE Inspectorate also provided feedback to teachers in each of the schools. In June 2022, the OIP and DE Inspectorate shared findings with the Irish Prison Service Care & Rehabilitation Directorate.

- 1.3 The Irish Prison Service and the respective Education and Training Board were provided with an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations in this report.

Rehabilitation, Education and Work Training in the Prison Estate

- 1.4 Rehabilitation is identified as a core aim of the Irish Prison Service.³ The Care and Rehabilitation Directorate of the Irish Prison Service is responsible for rehabilitation services. These include (but are not limited to) prison education, work and training, library services and sentence management.

¹ Office of the Inspector of Prisons and Department of Education Inspectorate Memorandum of Understanding, March 2022.

² Office of the Inspector of Prisons (2020) A Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland.

³ Irish Prison Service, Care and Rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation contributes to safety and security within prisons. As highlighted by the UN in its Common Position on Incarceration (2021): “Rehabilitation and security are often seen as opposites, however on the contrary, a rehabilitative prison environment enhances safety and control inside prisons, as prisoners who are involved in constructive and meaningful activities are easier to manage and less prone to violence.”⁴

1.5 The Prison Rules 2007-2020 outline the important role the Prison Governor plays in the rehabilitation process. Under Rule 75(3)(ii):

“The Governor shall assist and encourage prisoners in:

- (a) coping with their imprisonment,
- (b) achieving their personal development
- (c) taking responsibility for their lives including offending behaviour, and
- (d) preparing for reintegration into society after release.”

Rule 75(6) highlights the role of the Governor in the co-ordination of the delivery of services:

“The Governor shall co-ordinate the delivery of all services to prisoners and ensure, in so far as is practicable, the preparation and implementation of sentence management plans incorporating plans for their reintegration into society. The Governor shall endeavour to ensure that the persons engaged in the delivery of such services and the preparation and implementation of such plans co-operate with one another in such delivery, preparation and implementation.”

The role of the prison officer is also fundamental in the rehabilitation process as outlined under Rule 85(3)(c)(iv) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020:

“A prison officer shall –at all times conduct himself or herself and perform his or her functions in such a manner as to contribute to the rehabilitation and reintegration into the community and general welfare of, and prisoners [...]”

Work Training

1.6 The provision of Work Training in prisons is carried out under the auspices of the Irish Prison Service. There are four essential work areas in each prison: catering, laundry, waste management, and cleaning. There are 126 workshops across the entire prison system.⁵ At any given time between 2016 and 2020, approximately 30% of the prison population was engaged in work training activity.⁶ In March 2022, 325 of a total 371 Work Training Officer positions were filled across the prison estate.⁷

⁴ United Nations System (2021) Common Position on Incarceration. The United Nations system common position on incarceration was developed by a working group of relevant United Nations entities under the co-leadership of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Department for Peace Operations and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), within the framework of the Secretary-General’s Executive Committee.

⁵ Irish Prison Service, Work and Vocational Training.

⁶ Government of Ireland, Spending Review October 2021 “Government Work Training Spending Review”) p.15.

⁷ Care and Rehabilitation Directorate in the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Defence & Equality Rehabilitative Opportunities within the Prison System: Discussion, 29 March 2022.

According to a spending review of work training in prisons carried out by the Government in 2021 (“Government Work Training Spending Review”), costs associated with work and training in prisons for 2020 were €23.8 million, or 5.8% of the Irish Prison Service overall budget.⁸ This figure includes the costs of redeploying Work Training Officers to posts other than work training posts.

In 2020/2021, the Irish Prison Service conducted a review of Work Training Areas (“IPS Work Training Review”).⁹ The purpose of the review was to identify “suitable work areas for the cohort of prisoners accommodated at each prison.” The report found that the current work training model was not the most effective use of resources. A number of recommendations were made in the report, including the development of a prisoner progression plan for each category of prisoner which would provide a pathway for progression through the prison system. The stated aim of the progression plan is to prepare prisoners for reintegration into society while maintaining the Irish Prison Service’s mission of providing safe and secure custody.

Prison Education

- 1.7 The Irish Prison Service works in partnership with the Education and Training Boards (ETB) to deliver prison education. The Irish Prison Service is provided with a total allocation of 220 full-time teachers.¹⁰ There are 13 Head Teachers across the prison estate.

The mission for education is outlined in the joint Irish Prison Service and Education and Training Boards, Prison Education Strategy for 2019 - 2022:

“The provision of a programme that is quality assured, learner centred and that facilitates lifelong learning while helping persons in custody to respond to their sentence through personal development and positive renewal.”

Prison Library Service

- 1.8 The Prison Library Service is within the remit of the Care and Rehabilitation Directorate of the Irish Prison Service. Three full-time librarians employed by Dublin City Libraries from the Dublin City Council work in the Irish Prison Service to provide library services to all Dublin prisons. The Irish Prison Service covers the costs of Librarian salaries, office space, equipment, library material and book budget. Dublin City Libraries provide support to prison librarians and supply library resources such as books, magazines, CDs and DVDs.

Inspected Prisons

- 1.9 The three prisons inspected as part of the Thematic Inspection on Education and Work Training, are medium security prisons, each with varying population sizes: Wheatfield Prison (capacity: 610), Mountjoy Men’s Prison (total capacity: 755) which comprises the Main Prison (capacity: 575) and the Progression Unit (capacity: 180) and Arbour Hill Prison (capacity: 138). In total, the capacity of these three prisons represents over one third of the capacity of the entire prison estate.

⁸ Government Work Training Spending Review (n 6).

⁹ Irish Prison Service, *Irish Prison Service Review of Work Training Areas 2020/2021*. (“IPS Work Training Review”).

¹⁰ Joint Irish Prison Service/Education & Training Boards Ireland, *Prison Education Strategy 2019-2022*.

- 1.10** The three prisons each present a unique set of challenges for the provision of purposeful activity. For example, prisoners on protection (meaning they do not associate with prisoners in the general prisoner population) in Wheatfield Prison and Mountjoy Main Prison presented operational challenges for ensuring access to purposeful activity for all prisoners. In contrast, all prisoners could mix with each other in Arbour Hill Prison. However, the age and long-term sentence profile¹¹ of prisoners in Arbour Hill Prison presented challenges in tailoring the delivery of purposeful activity to support reintegration.

Wheatfield Prison

- 1.11** Wheatfield Prison is a closed medium security prison for adult men. It operates at a bed capacity of 610, with approximately 10% of its population on protection regimes. The prison is divided into two buildings: East Division, which accommodates prisoners on the “enhanced regime”, and the Main Prison, which accommodates prisoners from the general population including enhanced prisoners and prisoners on protection. The layout of the Main Prison differs from the majority of other prisons in Ireland in that it has many small landings (accommodating between approximately five and 30 people) set along a two-story walkway.

On the first day of inspection in Wheatfield Prison, 66% of prisoners were on an enhanced regime, 27% were on the standard regime and 7% were on a basic regime.¹²

Approximately 18.2% of the population in Wheatfield Prison were in receipt of Opioid Agonist Therapy in March 2021. 104 people were receiving support from Merchants Quay Ireland.¹³ An additional 100 persons were on the waiting list to access an addiction counsellor.¹⁴

There are two schools in Wheatfield Prison: the Main School and the North Three School. The Main School is attended by prisoners from East Division and the Main Prison. Prior to 2020, the North Three School was used to facilitate access to education for protection prisoners. The North Three School was closed at the time of inspection and had been closed for approximately two years.

A Chief Work Training Officer (WTO) was appointed to Wheatfield Prison a few weeks before the inspection. This position had been vacant for approximately six months prior to their appointment. In total, there were 55 Work Training Officers assigned to Wheatfield Prison.

¹¹ Over 35% of prisoners were more than 61 years of age. See, Office of the Inspector of Prisons (2021) [COVID-19 Thematic Inspection of Arbour Hill Prison](#), 7.

¹² Irish Prison Service (2012) [Incentivised Regimes Policy](#), which provides for three levels of prison regime: Basic, Standard and Enhanced.

¹³ [Merchants Quay Ireland \(MQI\)](#) is a service provider that delivers a prison-based addiction counselling service.

¹⁴ Houses of the Oireachtas, [Drugs in Prison](#), 24 March 2021.

Mountjoy Men's Prison

1.12 Mountjoy Men's Prison is a closed medium security prison for adult men. It is the main committal prison for Dublin city, with an operational capacity of 755. Mountjoy Men's Prison is comprised of three distinct areas: the Progression Unit, the Main Prison and the Medical Unit. In addition, the Training Unit, which was recently reopened in July 2022, falls under the management of Mountjoy Men's Prison complex. The Training Unit was closed "for refurbishment and repurpose" in 2017¹⁵, and previously provided work training to prisoners to support their employment upon release. At the time of closure, prisoners in the Training Unit were transferred to prisons across the estate, including Mountjoy West, which is now referred to as the Progression Unit. On 18 July 2022, the Training Unit, which has capacity for 96 prisoners, re-opened; however the functions of the unit have changed and it is now primarily used to accommodate elderly prisoners.¹⁶

In March 2021, approximately 21.9% of the population in Mountjoy Men's Prison was in receipt of Opioid Agonist Therapy. 99 people were on Merchants Quay Ireland caseload, and an additional 78 persons were on the waiting list to access an addiction counsellor.¹⁷ The prevalence of drug use in Mountjoy Men's Prison is an ongoing issue,¹⁸ and has an impact on the prison environment and on engagement with purposeful activity. In 2019, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) noted with respect to Mountjoy Men's Prison that the high prevalence of drug use in the prison was one factor linked to inter-prisoner violence.¹⁹

There are two distinct schools in Mountjoy Men's Prison: one school in Mountjoy Main Prison and one in the Progression Unit. One Chief Work Training Officer manages Work Training across both the Main Prison and the Progression Unit. In total, there were 55 Work Training Officer posts assigned to Mountjoy Men's Prison (across the Progression Unit and Main Prison); however, at the time of inspection, many of these posts were not filled.

Mountjoy Men's Prison - Main Prison

1.13 Approximately 530 prisoners were accommodated in the Main Prison, of which approximately 50% were on protection (Rule 63) at any given time. The Medical Unit has capacity for 51 prisoners; 46 prisoners were accommodated in the Unit at the time of inspection, including prisoners in the Low Support and High Support Units. These units were established to support prisoners with mental health needs.

The Main Prison school provided education to prisoners in the Main Prison and the Medical Unit. A fabric and signage workshop was in operation; however, the computer workshop was not open. There were no workshops available to prisoners in the Medical Unit.

¹⁵ Inspector of Prisons (2017) Report on an Inspection of the Training Unit, Mountjoy Campus.

¹⁶ Irish Prison Service, 2022 Prison Population, 18 July 2022.

¹⁷ Houses of the Oireachtas, Drugs in Prison (n 14).

¹⁸ Mountjoy Prison Visiting Committee Annual Reports 2020 and 2019; and CPT (2020) 37 Report to the Government of Ireland 2019.

¹⁹ CPT Report to the Government of Ireland 2019 (n 18), p. 25.

As part of the Irish Prison Service's forthcoming prisoner progression plan (see Section 2, Paragraph 2.13) the Irish Prison Service intends to prioritise education and drug treatment in Mountjoy Main Prison.²⁰

On 4 May 2022, under the Prison Service Incentivised Regimes Policy,²¹ 11% of prisoners in Mountjoy Men's Prison were on a basic regime, 37.7% were on a standard regime and 51.5% were on an enhanced regime.

Mountjoy Men's Prison - Progression Unit

1.14 Approximately 160 to 180 enhanced prisoners were accommodated in the Progression Unit. Prisoners in the Progression Unit have progressed in their sentence and demonstrated good behaviour. The Progression Unit carried over some of the Training Unit functions, such as external day release training programmes. There is a school specifically for the Progression Unit.

Aside from essential work areas (e.g. catering, waste management, industrial cleaning), there was only one available workshop in the Progression Unit – the Industrial Skills Workshop. Other work training initiatives included a horticulture area and a newly adopted Barista Training coffee dock in collaboration with the school.

Arbour Hill Prison

1.15 Arbour Hill Prison is a closed medium security prison for adult men. It is comprised of prisoners serving long sentences, with an operational capacity of 138. All prisoners can associate with each other, which, when combined with the relatively small prisoner population, allows for easier management of access to purposeful activity.

There is one school in Arbour Hill Prison, which is located in close proximity to the workshops. Prisoners can access school and workshops during unlock periods.

A Chief Work Training Officer oversaw 14 Work Training Officers in Arbour Hill Prison. The prison operated essential work areas including laundry, cleaning, catering and waste management. Workshops in Arbour Hill Prison include a recycling workshop, Braille workshop, fabric workshop, print workshop and joinery workshop.

At the time of the inspection, all prisoners in Arbour Hill were on an "enhanced regime" under the Irish Prison Service's Incentivised Regimes policy.

²⁰ IPS Work Training Review (n 9) p. 34.

²¹ The IPS Incentivised Regimes Programme provides for differentiation of privileges between prisoners according to their level of engagement with services and quality of behaviour.

2 PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

A. Defining Purposeful Activity

- 2.1** Rule 27 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020 provides for the provision of out-of-cell time and access to structured activity for people in custody.

“27(2) Subject to Rule 72 (Authorised structured activity), each prisoner may, while in prison, engage or participate in such structured activity as may be authorised by the Governor including work, vocational training, education, or programmes intended to increase the likelihood that a prisoner, when released from prison, will be less likely to re-offend or better able to re-integrate into the community.

27(3) In so far as is practicable, each convicted prisoner should be engaged in authorised structured activity for a period of not less than five hours on each of five days in each week.”

The Rules require, that in so far as practicable, each convicted prisoner should be engaged in a minimum of 25 hours of structured activity across five days. Structured activity is defined as work, vocational training, education and rehabilitative programmes.

- 2.2** Human rights standards in relation to access to activities in prison emphasise the need for education, vocational training and work that accounts for the individual needs of prisoners (UN Mandela Rules, Rule 4.2, and European Prison Rules 25.1 and 27.5²²). Work provided in the prison should allow prisoners to either “maintain or increase their ability to earn a living after release” (European Prison Rules, Rule 26.3), and prisoners should be provided with “access to educational programmes which are as comprehensive as possible and which meet their individual needs while taking into account their aspirations” (European Prison Rules, Rule 28.1). Prison authorities have a *positive* obligation to provide equal access to activities and services in prison.
- 2.3** At the time of inspection, the Prison (Amendment) Rules 2020²³ remained in place. This amendment allows the Director General or the Governor of the Prison, based on advice or guidance from the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive, the Director of the Prison Healthcare Service or a prison doctor to suspend, restrict or modify the entitlement to physical recreation, exercise or training. The amendment does not include a sunset clause (See IPS HQ Recommendation 2, p. 89).

²² Rule 4.2 of the UN Mandela Rules states “...prison administrations and other competent authorities should offer education, vocational training and work, as well as other forms of assistance that are appropriate and available, including those of a remedial, moral, spiritual, social and health- and sports-based nature. All such programmes, activities and services should be delivered in line with the individual treatment needs of prisoners.” Rule 25.1 of the Revised European Prison Rules states: “The regime provided for all prisoners shall offer a balanced programme of activities” and Rule 27.5 of the Revised European Prison Rules states: “Prison authorities shall make arrangements to organise special activities for those prisoners who need them.”

²³ Irish Statute Book, S.I. 250 Prison (Amendment) Rules, 2020.

2.4 “Purposeful activity” is more expansive in definition than “authorised structured activity” as provided for under Rule 27(2) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020. Not only should activity be intended to decrease the likelihood of re-offending, but it should also be designed to benefit prisoners during their period of imprisonment.

In its recent report to a neighbouring jurisdiction, the CPT has noted with respect to purposeful activity, that :

“a wider definition of purposeful activity should be developed on the basis that purpose is defined by the impact on an individual, rather than the nature of the activity and as such a wider range of formal and informal, individual and group activities can be considered purposeful. The delivery of activities should be tailored to individual needs, giving staff and prisoners more opportunities to actively participate in the regime and creating the opportunity for progression.”²⁴

The concept of “structured activity” does not fully capture the potential impact that engagement with activities and programmes can have for people in prison. The intention of “purposeful activity” is to, alongside the aim of preparing people for re-integration into the community, promote active citizenship of people in custody. In this respect, assessment of “purposeful activity” has the objective of evaluating both the quantity of activity and the quality of its delivery.

The CPT has also recommended that the daily out of cell time for prisoners (both sentenced and remand prisoners) engaging with varied purposeful activities should be a minimum of eight hours each day.²⁵

B. The Role of the Irish Prison Service

2.5 In its 2019 - 2022 Strategic Plan, the Irish Prison Service established as one of its strategic aims the further development of “the integration of prisoner care and support services to deliver more effective rehabilitation for prisoners.”²⁶ As part of this objective, the IPS committed to:

- Implementing a Joint Education Strategy with the ETB, and further developing library services
- Better resourcing and managing (of) the Integrated Sentence Management process and maximising opportunities to access constructive activities, prisoner support services and suitable facilities; and
- Delivering catering, cleaning, laundry and environment waste management in all prisons to national standards.

²⁴ CPT (2022) Report to the United Kingdom 2021, ¶51.

²⁵ CPT (2015) CPT Standards: Living Space per Prisoner in Prison Establishments (CPT) CPT/Inf (2015) 44.

²⁶ Irish Prison Service, Strategic Plan 2019-2022.

2.6 The aim of the Prison Education Service is to:

“deliver a high quality, broad, flexible programme of education that helps people in custody cope with their sentence, achieve personal development, prepare for life after release and establish an appetite and capacity for lifelong learning. The Service caters for holistic needs, ensures broad access and high participation and prioritises those with basic education needs.”²⁷

2.7 The Irish Prison Service does not have a Work Training policy or strategy. Existing policies related to the area of work training include: Sale of Work Training Products Policy (2018); Laundry Policy (2014); Prisoner Assistance Programme Fund (ceased 2021); Prisoner Initiatives Development Fund Application Process Version 2 (2022); Prisoner Gratuities and Private Cash Policy (2012) and the Incentivised Regime Policy and Protocol (2013).

2.8 The Irish Prison Service prioritises the development of support services to deliver more effective rehabilitation for prisoners. Notwithstanding this, Central Statistics Office (CSO) figures for 2019 (published in 2022) indicate a 45% re-offending rate within one year of release from prison. The report indicates that persons serving short custodial sentences lasting between three and six months in 2019 had the highest likelihood (58%) of re-offending within a year. Re-offending rates were highest (83%) among the 18 - 21 age cohort within three years of being released from prison.²⁸

2.9 Approximately 67% of prisoners that come into custody on an annual basis serve less than 12 months.²⁹

Figures below show the numbers of persons actually serving less than 12 months in the three prison inspected as of 1 June 2022:

- 11% of people in custody were serving sentences of less than 12 months in Mountjoy Men’s Prison
- 7% of people in custody were serving sentences of less than 12 months in Wheatfield Prison
- 1% of people in custody in Arbour Hill were serving sentences of less than 12 months

The Irish Prison Service has expressed concern about its capacity to support this cohort of people in custody.³⁰

²⁷ Prison Education Strategy 2019-2022 (n 10).

²⁸ Central Statistics Office, Prison Reoffending Statistics 2019.

²⁹ Stated by the Director General of the Irish Prison Service at the Joint Committee on Education to discuss Ireland’s Prison Education Strategy 2019 - 2022 & separately the current and future Education provision in Irish prisons - 4 Jul 2022, 14.00 - Houses of the Oireachtas.

³⁰ Referenced at the Joint Committee on Education to discuss the Ireland Prison Education Strategy 2019 - 2022 & separately the current and future Education provision in Irish prisons – 5 Jul 2022, Houses of the Oireachtas.

- 2.10** While it is outside the control of the Irish Prison Service to decide who is or is not committed to prison,³¹ Prison Service policy is that the Integrated Sentence Management programme is only available to prisoners serving a sentence of at least one year.³² Therefore, a very significant proportion of people who come into custody are not provided with a sentence plan. CSO data indicates that those serving short sentences are most likely to re-offend, however despite this, this cohort of prisoners are least likely to have access to sentence management during their time in prison.
- 2.11** On 1 July 2022, the Minister for Justice received Government approval to draft the scheme of the Bill to place the Irish Prison Service on a statutory basis. The legislation would place a duty on the Irish Prison Service to support the rehabilitation of prisoners with emphasis on reducing recidivism post-release.³³
- 2.12** Within the wider legislative context, it is important to note the current Departmental review of the spent convictions legislation, the Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures Act 2016.³⁴ The purpose of the legislative review is to promote rehabilitation and reduce the likelihood of re-offending.³⁵ Thus, access to rehabilitative supports in prison is a key ingredient for the overall promotion of rehabilitation and reduction of re-offending.
- 2.13** At the time of inspection, the Irish Prison Service was developing a Prisoner Progression Plan.³⁶ The aim of the Prisoner Progression Plan is to pool resources, such as mental health resources, drug treatment resources and work training resources, within specific prisons. The stated objective of the plan is to develop a pathway for prisoner progression.

It is not clear yet how the progression plan will operate in practice. For example, there is lack of clarity about how prisoners are to be identified and selected for progression to other prisons and what impact this may have on their rights, such as the right to family contact (ECHR Article 8) and the right to rehabilitation (ICCPR Article 10(3)). It is also not clear what consultation has taken place with people in prison and their families.

- 2.14** The Irish Prison Service is currently at a critical juncture to address how it might ensure access to purposeful activity for all people in prison, and therefore “increase the likelihood that a prisoner, when released from prison, will be less likely to re-offend or better able to re-integrate into the community” (Prison Rules 2007 - 2020, Rule 27(2)).

As this report highlights, **shortcomings in access to education and work training, as well as availability of work training certification and concerns around sustainability of rehabilitative initiatives pose significant challenges to achieving a reduction in re-offending.**

³¹ The Criminal Justice (Community Service) (Amendment) Act 2011 requires judges to consider the appropriateness of community service as an alternative to imprisonment when considering imposing a sentence of 12 months or less.

³² Irish Prison Service, Integrated Sentence Management.

³³ Department of Justice, (1 July 2022) Minister McEntee Receives Government Approval to Prepare Draft Legislation for Statutory Prison Service.

³⁴ Irish Statute Book, Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016.

³⁵ Department of Justice, Review of the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures) Act 2016; see also, Department of Justice, (2022) Criminal Justice Policy Review of Policy Options for Prison and Penal Reform 2022-2024.

³⁶ Irish Prison Service Work Training Review (n 16).

C. Purposeful Activity in Context

Management of Prison Regimes

- 2.15** The management of regimes in prisons impacts on prisoner access to education and work training. The Regime Management Plan (RMP), which is agreed for each prison as part of a joint task review by the Irish Prison Service and the Prison Officer's Association (POA), details the posts to be covered in each prison. In the event of staff absences, posts may be "cut" and redeployed to other areas in the prison, or to complement the Prison Service Escort Corps (PSEC).
- 2.16** Each prison has a set number of prison staff posts, with the functions of the posts agreed on by the Irish Prison Service and the Prison Officer's Association. The RMP outlines specific posts, which have agreed upon tasks. For instance, in Mountjoy Men's Prison, it was reported that it is not a task for the school officer to open the main school library; therefore, this library was not open unless a specific officer was assigned to the post. Closure of the library was a regular occurrence due to staff absences and redeployments.
- 2.17** The local management in the prison also has discretion to prioritise posts and/or post tasks. For example, in Mountjoy Men's Prison, the RMP indicates that the staffing of the schools is according to "a local plan agreed by the Chief Officer and the Head teacher to reflect the number of staff available." This could mean limiting the hours or parts of the school that are open on a given day.
- 2.18** Implementation of prison RMPs should mean access to purposeful activity is rotated across prisoner cohorts to ensure all prisoners are able to engage with activities and services, even if only minimally. This means that purposeful activities and services may be opened but that only certain landings would be permitted to engage on any given day. This approach is not consistent with Rule 27.3 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, in that it restricts daily access to purposeful activity to particular groups of prisoners on a rotating basis.

In practice, staff absences and redeployments cause challenges in that school officers and work training officers may not be available to take up their posts. This leads to closures of schools and workshops, and ultimately results in the failure of prisons to ensure 25 hours of weekly engagement with purposeful activity for all prisoners (Prison Rules 2007 - 2020, Rule 27.3). The Inspectorate found that, for many staff working in prisoner services, redeployment was demotivating and a source of deep frustration.

Purposeful Activity and Incentivised Regimes

- 2.19** Access to purposeful activity is not only beneficial in terms of security of the prison and rehabilitation for prisoners, but it is also very much connected to the overall experience of imprisonment.

Engagement with purposeful activities directly impacts on the IPS Incentivised Regimes Policy by which prisoners are designated either the Basic, Standard or Enhanced regime.³⁷ The different levels of Incentivised Regimes determine prisoners' weekly phone call allocation, their cell assignment in the prison and the weekly gratuity rate they receive (Rule 29).³⁸ In consequence, in Irish prisons, access to and engagement with purposeful activity is directly connected to the exercise of human rights, including the right to family life (European Convention on Human Rights, Article 8).

Not all prisoners may access all activities in the prison. For example, individual prisoners (such as prisoners on protection) "may not be able to access structured activities because of limitations on their association with other prisoners and may not therefore be eligible for enhanced levels of regime."³⁹

- 2.20** The Incentivised Regime Policy allows for flexibility in application across prisons, and defines engagement with services as:

"regular participation in education activities under the auspices of the prison education centre, work/training activities under the auspices of the Industrial Manager or equivalent and/or offender programmes and/or activities under the auspices of the Psychology and/or Probation Services or approved in-reach services. Certified attendance at activities outside the prison as part of an agreed programme will also confer eligibility."⁴⁰

The Policy notes: "Nothing in this policy prevents the introduction of incentives and rewards specifically for prisoners undergoing residential detoxification programmes."

- 2.21** Prisoners engaged in essential work in closed prisons are eligible for the "approved working gratuity" (AWG) (maximum of €18.90/week for Enhanced prisoners: €15.40 Enhanced Gratuity + €3.50 AWG), whereas a prisoner on the Basic regime who is not engaged in structured activity receives €6.65 each week. The CPT has recently called for Member States of the Council of Europe to consider introducing a fair minimum wage for prison work, which should be inflation-adjusted and be sufficient to allow all prisoners to afford basic items from the prison Tuck Shop.⁴¹

³⁷ Irish Prison Service (2013) Incentivised Regimes Policy (n 21).

³⁸ Irish Prison Service (2012) Prisoner Gratuities and Private Cash.

³⁹ Irish Prison Service (2013) Protocol for Operation of Incentivised Regimes 27/11/2013.

⁴⁰ Irish Prison Service (2013) Protocol for Operation of Incentivised Regimes (n 39).

⁴¹ CPT (2021) A Decency Threshold for Prisons - Criteria for Assessing Conditions of Detention, CPT/Inf (2021) 5.

The Irish Prison Service gratuity policy has not been updated since its implementation in 2012. Using the Consumer Price Index, inflation rates have risen nationally by 9% between January 2012 and December 2021.⁴² Therefore, allowing for inflation, an enhanced gratuity rate of €18.90 in 2012, would be €20.57 in 2021. While Tuck Shop pricing was adjusted in 2021 to cost of goods plus 5%,⁴³ the weekly gratuity provided to people in custody does not reflect cost increases over the past decade, and is insufficient to allow people in custody who rely upon their prison income to afford many of items offered for sale in the Tuck Shop. For example, toiletries in the Tuck Shop were found to be relatively expensive with items such as shampoo priced at €3.12 (47% of the weekly income of a prisoner on Basic regime), shower gel €2.97 and deodorant €3.44. In addition, prisoners who only engage in education activities are not eligible to receive AWG; which may serve as a disincentive to prisoners participating in education (Section 4, para. 4.10).

- 2.22** While the Irish Prison Service Incentivised Regimes Policy does not allow for prisoners to be penalised if prison operations result in prisoners not being able to attend a scheduled activity, it does make clear that: “prisoners on waiting lists for structured activity will not be eligible for the enhanced regime.” Where access to activities is limited in a prison, there is a subsequent impact on access to the enhanced regime, and therefore on access to family contact and gratuity payment.

Value of Purposeful Activity to People in Prison

- 2.23** The value of purposeful activity to people in prison, and in particular the school, is evident from the comments gathered from people in prison throughout the inspection:

“Respect - I learned to read and write in the school.”

“Humanity - the way you’re being treated.”

“If I would have had those teachers on the outside, I wouldn’t be here.”

“The best part of any prison is the school.”

“I showed my wife what I am doing - [it was a] confidence boost.”

“Some of the hardest guys in this prison on this landing and they all want to go to school.”

“For those ten minutes, I wasn’t in prison.”

“School is great. 34 certs - I came from no education. You can learn to read/write.”

⁴² Central Statistics Office, [CPI Inflation Calculator](#).

⁴³ [Office of the Inspector of Prisons \(2021\) COVID-19 Thematic Inspection on Loughan House](#), p. 17.

D. Assessing Engagement with Purposeful Activity

2.24 The OIP is concerned with the integrity of work training data.

While work training information provided to the Inspectorate showed the number of prisoners notionally attending workshops in the mornings and afternoons, the data recording approach did not:

- i. clearly identify the total number of prisoners actually engaged in work training on a daily and weekly basis (i.e., the Inspectorate could not fully ascertain whether the same prisoners went to workshops in the mornings and afternoons)
- ii. include the nature/level of prisoner engagement (i.e., the frequency with which prisoners engaged in work/training activity on a daily/weekly basis)
- iii. provide the total number of prisoners engaged in both education and work training activity.

In smaller prisons, such as Arbour Hill Prison, it was possible for prison staff to hand-calculate individual access numbers and determine the total number of unique prisoners engaged in purposeful activity. However, in larger prisons, such as Mountjoy Men's Prison and Wheatfield Prison, it was not possible to determine the total unique number of prisoners involved in purposeful activity.

2.25 The current approach to collection of work training data is poor.

2.26 A Work Training Management System (WTMS) is currently in development by the Irish Prison Service, but upon delivery will not be integrated with the Prisoner Education Management System (PEMS) that records data on education attendance. These systems, if integrated with each other and across all other activities and services, would provide a much-needed understanding of engagement with purposeful activity.⁴⁴

2.27 Integrity of data on engagement with purposeful activity is fundamental to the protection of human rights and compliance with national law and international human rights standards.

For example, Rule 59(2) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020 provides that prisoners can earn up to one-third remission if they have shown good conduct by "engagement in authorised structured activity". In the absence of a system that accurately measures prisoner engagement with purposeful activity ("authorised structured activity"), it is not possible to ensure that all potentially-eligible prisoners can evidence the engagement required to receive enhanced remission.

Further, the Parole Board requests that prison Governors provide information on prisoners for use in evaluating suitability for parole.⁴⁵ The Governor is limited in what data they may provide to the Parole Board given the lack of an integrated mechanism to measure engagement with purposeful activity, and to therefore assess progress in terms of suitability for parole.

⁴⁴ Government Work Training Spending Review (n 13).

⁴⁵ Parole Act 2019, Article 13(2)(a) and Article 27(2)(e)(i).

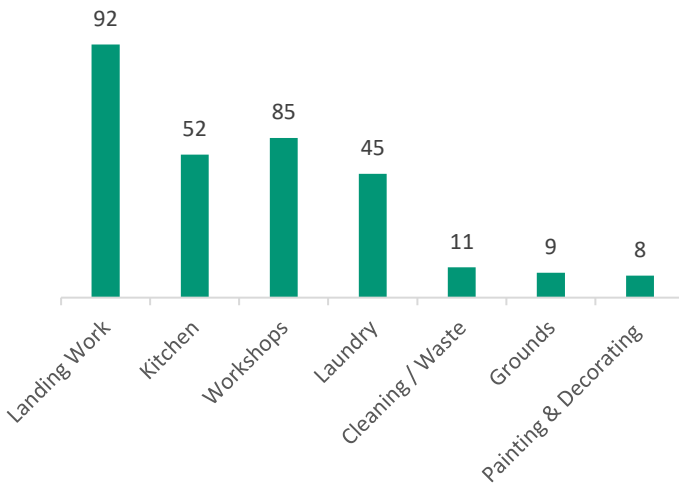
- 2.28** Further, the data on engagement with education or work training does not capture the frequency of engagement in purposeful activity. This is an important indicator to track the quality of meaningful engagement in purposeful activity as it would allow for a better understanding of access consistency.
- 2.29** Given the limitations of the available data, levels of access to purposeful activity cannot be determined statistically or compared. Much like the 2021 Government Work Training Spending Review,⁴⁶ the OIP found that data gaps hindered a comprehensive assessment of access to Work Training.
- 2.30** Despite challenges with integrity of data related to engagement with purposeful activity, the following figures provide an outline of approximate levels of prisoner engagement with education and work training across the three prisons. The outline has been compiled from multiple evidentiary sources, including verbal information provided by people in custody and prison and teaching staff, records and reports provided by prison staff and the Irish Prison Service and visits to education and work training locations during inspection. Senior management was provided with this information, and made clarifications where necessary.

⁴⁶ [Government Work Training Spending Review](#) (n 6).

2.31 Wheatfield Prison Engagement with Purposeful Activity

Work Training

Wheatfield Prison Work Training Engagement Levels, April 2022



- Maximum work training engagement: 302/569 prisoners = approximately 53% of prisoner population; figures do not represent daily work training participation rates which are lower (e.g., while laundry employs a total of 40 prisoners, 16 prisoners worked in the laundry on a daily basis); it was also not possible to determine frequency and length of attendance
- Cannot account for duplication (i.e., a prisoner could be a cleaner and also attend a workshop); highly probable that less than 53% of prisoners were engaged in work training
- A maximum of 85 out of 569 (15%) prisoners were engaged in workshops, despite Wheatfield Prison being designated as a “Work Training” prison; on a daily basis, a number of workshops had a maximum capacity of 16. In addition to this, workshops were not consistently open
- 20 prisoners participated in the FAI programme; a joint initiative between Work Training and Education
- 93% of prisoners in Wheatfield Prison were eligible for Integrated Sentence Management, but only a maximum of 53% of prisoners were engaged in work training

Education

Wheatfield Prison Education Engagement Levels, Week of 8 April 2022

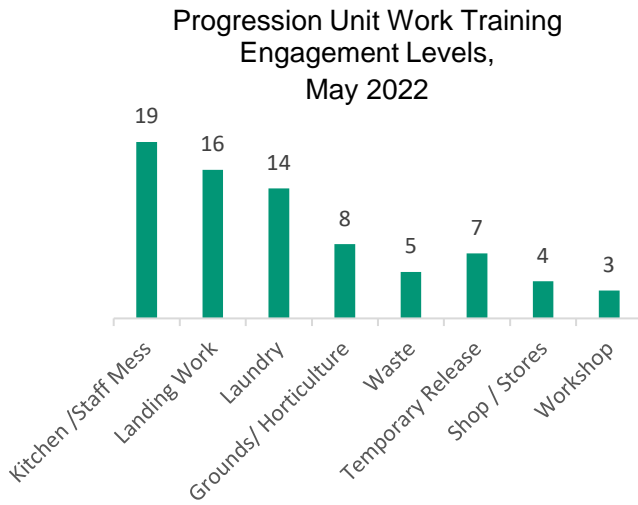


- Maximum education engagement: 175/569 prisoners = 31% of prisoner population; not possible to determine frequency and length of attendance
- Prisoners on protection not engaged with formal education provision in the prison schools, but the school facilitated an outreach service to deliver education materials
- 93% of prisoners in Wheatfield Prison were eligible for Integrated Sentence Management, but only 31% of prisoners were engaged in education

Given there is no integrated mechanism to assess individual engagement across work training and education in Wheatfield Prison, it is not possible to determine the number of unique prisoners engaged in purposeful activity. That is, of the 302 prisoners accessing work training it can be assumed a proportion also access education; it is not possible to determine duplication in participant numbers.

2.32 Mountjoy Prison - Progression Unit Engagement with Purposeful Activity

Work Training



- Maximum work training engagement: 76/170 prisoners = approximately 45% of prisoner population; figures do not represent daily work training participation rates which are lower (e.g., while laundry employs a total of 14 prisoners, 4-5 prisoners work in the laundry on a daily basis); not possible to determine frequency and length of attendance
- 12 prisoners participated in the FAI programme, 10 prisoners (young adults) were eligible for Barber training and prisoners also participated in a Barista training, which was a joint initiative between Work Training and Education

Education

Progression Unit Education Engagement Levels, May 2022

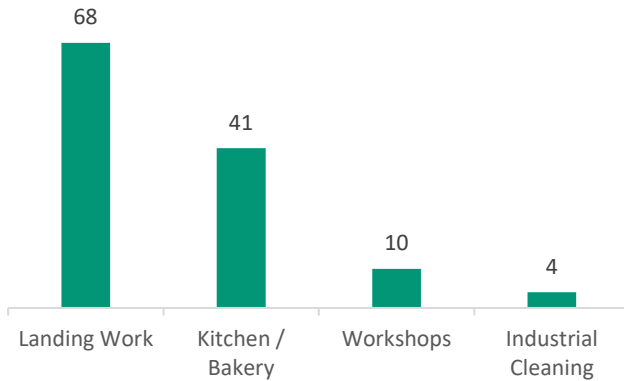


- Maximum education engagement: 100/170 prisoners = 59% of prisoner population; not possible to determine frequency and length of attendance

2.33 Mountjoy Prison - Main Prison Engagement with Purposeful Activity

Work Training

Main Prison Work Training Engagement Levels, May 2022



- Maximum work training engagement: 123/536 prisoners = approximately 23% of prisoner population; figures do not represent daily work training participation rates which are lower (e.g., while a total of 16 prisoners were employed in the bakery, 8-12 worked in the bakery on a daily basis); not possible to determine frequency and length of attendance
- Cannot account for duplication (i.e. a prisoner could be a landing worker and also attend a workshop)
- Only 10 of 536 (2%) prisoners were engaged in workshops; the Computer Skills workshop was closed. 55% of work training engagement was work done on the landing
- 89% of prisoners in Mountjoy Main Prison were eligible for Integrated Sentence Management, but only a maximum of 23% of prisoners were engaged in work training
- 46 prisoners in the Medical Unit had no access to workshops, and minimal engagement with landing work.

Education

Main Prison Education Engagement Levels, May 2022

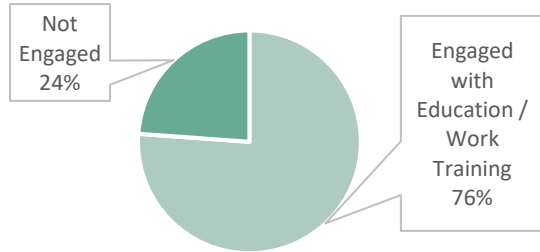


- Maximum education engagement: 210/536 prisoners = 39% of prisoner population; not possible to determine frequency and length of attendance
- 89% of prisoners in Mountjoy Main Prison were eligible for Integrated Sentence Management, but only 39% of prisoners were engaged in education
- School facilitated an outreach service to deliver education materials to prisoners who could not access the school

Given that there is no integrated mechanism to assess individual engagement across work training and education in Mountjoy Main Prison, it is not possible to determine the number of unique prisoners engaged in purposeful activity. That is, of the 123 prisoners accessing work training it can be assumed a proportion also access education; it is not possible to determine duplication in participant numbers.

2.34 Arbour Hill Prison Engagement with Purposeful Activity

Arbour Hill Prison Purposeful Activity Engagement Levels, May 2022



- Data provided shows that 99 of 131 (76%) unique prisoners were engaging with education and work training
- A small minority of prisoners chose not to engage in purposeful activity. However, it should be noted that Arbour Hill Prison has an elderly demographic profile, many of whom have healthcare needs
- Access to purposeful activity was facilitated for the daily minimum of five hours on each of five days in each week, in line with Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020

3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Findings – Office of the Inspector of Prisons

1. The value of purposeful activity for prisoners and staff was evident across all three prisons inspected. Staff demonstrated motivation, creativity and dedication to developing initiatives with partners (both internally and externally) that they felt would benefit positive outcomes for prisoners.

Purposeful activity detracted from boredom and violence in prison. It helped prisoners cope with their sentences and allowed prisoners to develop new skills. Workshops and schools were identified by prisoners and staff as “safe zones”, which allowed prisoners to spend time away from the yards and prison landings.

2. Across the three prisons inspected, there was no centralised and integrated data system to systematically record and track prisoner participation metrics on access to purposeful activity. Given this, there was no way to determine in larger prisons such as Wheatfield Prison and Mountjoy Men’s Prison the frequency of individual prisoner engagement and the total unique number of prisoners engaged in purposeful activity.

The OIP is aware of ongoing plans by the Irish Prison Service to develop a Work Training Management System (WTMS), which will capture key metrics related to work training. The rollout of the WTMS is due for implementation in quarter four of 2022.⁴⁷ However, the WTMS will not be interconnected with education attendance and participation metrics. The absence of an integrated and centralised system to capture participation in purposeful activity results in a lack of data integrity, whereby it is not possible for the OIP to reliably ascertain the number of individual prisoners engaged in purposeful activity, nor the frequency with which they engage. This also means it is not possible for the Irish Prison Service to determine the extent to which it is in compliance with Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules 2007 - 2020, which requires, “in so far as is practicable, each convicted prisoner should be engaged in authorised structured activity for a period of not less than five hours on each of five days in each week.”

3. In two of three prisons inspected, the majority of prisoners were not guaranteed their entitlement of a minimum of five hours of access to “authorised structured activity”⁴⁸ on each of five days in each week. There was evidence that prisoners in Arbour Hill Prison received five hours access to “authorised structured activity” on each of five days in each week (Prison Rules 2007-2020 Rule 27(3)); this level of access was not guaranteed in Wheatfield Prison and Mountjoy Men’s Main Prison.

⁴⁷ Department of Justice Irish Prison Service, [Performance Delivery Agreement 2022](#).

⁴⁸ The definition of “authorised structured activity” is outlined under [Rule 27\(3\) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020](#). It includes “work, vocational training, education or programmes intended to ensure that a prisoner, when released from prison, will be less likely to reoffend or better able to reintegrate into the community.”

4. Access to purposeful activity was negatively impacted by staffing structures, which included staff redeployments, staff absences and the manner in which prison officer posts and tasks were structured under the prisons' Regime Management Plans.⁴⁹ Staffing structures and shortages were identified as contributing to poor prisoner access levels to purposeful activity in two of the three inspected prisons. This is despite Ireland having a relatively high prison staff to prisoner ratio (1:1), which compares favourably against European counterparts.⁵⁰ Prisoners on protection experienced restricted regimes in Wheatfield Prison and Mountjoy Men's Prison, with limited access to purposeful activity. The Revised European Prison Rules (Rule 25.1) states that the regime provided for all prisoners shall offer a balanced programme of activities.

5. Across all three prisons, there was limited externally recognised certification available to prisoners engaged in work training. In this respect, the Irish Prison Service (IPS) is not adequately fulfilling its obligation, as set out under Rule 111 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, to provide a broadly based programme of vocational training designed to help prisoners achieve personal development, prepare for life after release from prison, develop vocational skills and talents, and improve employment prospects for people in custody after their release from prison.

6. Decisions related to purposeful activity in prisons were not sufficiently prisoner-centred. There were no formal structures in place to facilitate input from prisoners into the development of purposeful activity in prisons, particularly with regard to work training. The UN Mandela Rules, Rule 98(3) sets out that within the limits compatible with proper vocational selection, prisoners "shall be able to choose the type of work they wish to perform." The Irish Prison Service does not provide adequate opportunity for prisoners to input into the type of work training with which they would like to engage.

7. People in custody are monetarily incentivised to engage in work in the prison, under the Irish Prison Service Gratuity and Private Cash Policy. A similar incentive does not exist to participate in education, which acts as a disincentive. This policy runs counter to Rule 28.4 and Rule 105.4 of the Revised European Prison Rules.⁵¹

8. There were good examples of collaboration between work training and education across the three prisons inspected. Schools supported the development of various educational skills (e.g., literacy, finance, etc.) required to support prisoners in work training positions. This collaborative approach is mutually beneficial.

9. The development of work training initiatives is not systemic in nature. There is no formal training strategy or framework, and work training initiatives are not developed in line with a strategic assessment of labour market opportunities and a cost-benefit-analysis. Decisions regarding the work training programme are largely driven by individual staff members who possess expertise or interest in certain areas. The absence of a systematic approach contributes to a lack of sustainability in the work training programmes provided.

⁴⁹ The Regime Management Plan is a staff management tool to optimise delivery of structured activities during periods of reduced staffing levels.

⁵⁰ Council of Europe (2022) *Annual Penal Statistics, SPACE I 2021*.

⁵¹ Rule 28.4 of the Revised European Prison Rules states: "Education shall have no less a status than work within the prison regime and prisoners shall not be disadvantaged financially or otherwise by taking part in education." Rule 105.4 of the Revised European Prison Rules states: "When sentenced prisoners take part in education or other programmes during working hours as part of their planned regime they shall be remunerated as if they had been working."

10. There is no work training policy in place at an organisational level to guide the development and sustainability of work training initiatives. The development of a work training policy, that is designed to operate in collaboration with education in the prisons, would support a more systematic programme of work training, in line with Rule 111 (1) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020 and Rule 105.1 of the Revised European Prison Rules.⁵²

Findings - Department of Education Inspectorate

1. The Irish Prison Service (IPS) and Education and Training Boards (ETB) work together to provide education in the twelve prisons in Ireland. This collaborative effort is governed by the joint IPS and ETB, Prison Education Strategy 2019-2022. However, there is currently no IPS policy on the provision, delivery, resourcing, and organisation of education and training in prisons.

2. The four schools visited have approximately the same teaching resources and accommodation despite significant differences in the size of the prison populations they serve.

3. There are highly effective processes and practices for supporting the work of the school in Arbour Hill Prison and the Progression Unit in Mountjoy Prison. However, the quality of support for the school within the prison context was fair⁵³ in Mountjoy Main Prison School and in Wheatfield Prison School.

4. The relationship between school management and prison management was either very good or good in the schools visited.

5. In Mountjoy Main Prison and Wheatfield Prison there are significant issues in relation to student access to the school. In these schools, there are additional challenges related to the unpredictability of the opening of the school, the erosion of the start and finishing times, the inaccessibility of accommodation and resources, and difficulties in providing outreach support for the most vulnerable students.

6. There has been very meaningful engagement between each of the four prison schools evaluated and the Organiser of Education in CDET in the Inaugural Quality Improvement Planning Process 2021-2022.⁵⁴

7. The overall quality of teaching in all four schools visited was very good. The teachers demonstrated a very high level of pedagogical skill, and were flexible, creative and innovative in their teaching.

8. The learning programmes were designed around student needs and available teaching expertise, with teachers commendably upskilling to provide courses beyond their subject specialisms.

9. Well-established and effective process were in place in all four schools to assess students' individual needs and facilitate student choice in relation to accessing the subjects and programmes provided.

⁵² Rule 105.1 of the Revised European Prison Rules states: "A systematic programme of work shall seek to contribute to meeting the objective of the regime for sentenced prisoners."

⁵³ A summary of the Department of Education Inspectorate Assessment Ratings can be found in Appendix A.

⁵⁴ Education and Training Boards (ETB) are currently engaging in a comprehensive Quality Improvement and Planning Process across all of the learning settings under their remit, the first of which covers the period 2021-2022.

10. The quality of student outcomes varied from satisfactory to very good across the schools visited; Arbour Hill and the Progression Unit in Mountjoy Prison achieve very good outcomes. In Mountjoy Main Prison School and to a lesser extent in Wheatfield Prison School, despite teachers' best efforts to support learning and achievement, student outcomes are negatively impacted by difficulties in relation to substance use amongst students, and access to the school.

11. Students with identified literacy needs require regular contact with their teachers to have a reasonable chance of experiencing success in overcoming reading, writing, and comprehension difficulties. In Arbour Hill Prison and the Progression Unit in Mountjoy Prison literacy is well addressed. However, in the other prisons students achieve less positive outcomes due to infrequent and inconsistent access to regular teaching.

12. The students unanimously described the school as a vital service, which is essential for helping them to gain skills and qualifications, and to cope with their sentences. They expressed great appreciation for the care and support they receive from their teachers. The relationships between students and their teachers in all of the schools were characterised by very high levels of mutual respect, kindness, and warmth.

13. The quality of education provision for people in Wheatfield Prison and Mountjoy Prison who are on protection regimes is fair. Additionally, there was almost no education provision for people who were in Mountjoy Prison's Medical Unit at the time of the inspection.

4 PROVISION OF WORK TRAINING

- 4.1** For purposes of assessment, “work training” comprises attendance at workshops and all essential work carried out by prisoners in the prison.

Workshops are structured activities managed and facilitated by Irish Prison Service Work Training Officers (WTOs). Workshops include activities such as: woodshop/joinery, construction, recycling and print shops.

Work is defined in prisons as activity that is essential to the operation of the prison (Rule 28 (1) and (2)), which includes: laundry, grounds maintenance, waste management, landing cleaning/painting, kitchen/catering, industrial cleaning and tuck shop/stores. The degree to which work is “structured” varies, with landing cleaners working on a more ad hoc basis over the course of the day and kitchen workers working in alignment with a daily meal schedule.

Rule 27 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020 outlines association and activity in the prison. Rule 28 requires that prisoners do work “consisting of the performance of tasks necessary for the maintenance and operation of the prison”. The Rules permit prisoners to be excused from work on medical grounds, but do not require that all prisoners be permitted to work.

The Prison Rules 2007-2020, Rule 111(1) highlights that a “broadly based programme of vocational and pre-vocational training shall, as far as is practicable, be provided in each prison designed to help prisoners to – (c) prepare for life after release from prison, and (e) improve their prospects of employment after their release from prison.”

Rule 105.1 of the Revised European Prison Rules states: “A systematic programme of work shall seek to contribute to meeting the objective of the regime for sentenced prisoners.”

In 2021, the CPT published a “minimum decency threshold” of which “effective access to, and fair remuneration for, work, as well as ready access to other activities” was one of five key criterion.⁵⁵

- 4.2** Assessment of the provision of Work Training in Wheatfield Prison, Mountjoy Men’s Prison and Arbour Hill Prison included an evaluation of the following:

- i. Access to Work Training
- ii. Work Training Certification
- iii. Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives

⁵⁵ CPT Minimum Decency Threshold (n 41).

A. Wheatfield Prison

- 4.3 Wheatfield Prison has a range of work training facilities available to people in custody. Alongside essential work in the prison, such as laundry, industrial cleaning, waste management, and catering, a number of workshops are also available: joinery, construction, metal and welding. Three additional workshops, the print unit, computer workshop and hurley repair were closed at the time of inspection. The print shop was being redesigned and the hurley repair workshop had not been in operation for a number of years.

Conditions in the work training facilities were well equipped with modern industrial quality machinery and tools. It was clear that significant investment in the physical infrastructure was provided. There was evidence of the production of high quality craftsmanship in a number of areas including woodwork, stonemasonry, and bricklaying projects. Some of these crafts, such as *Buddy Benches*, were provided to the local community. (Figures 1 and 2)

Figure 1: Construction Workshop



Figure 2: Joinery Workshop



Access to Work Training

- 4.4 Access to work training in Wheatfield Prison is fair. Despite Wheatfield Prison being characterised as a “Work Training Prison” only approximately half of the prison population had access to work training activity in Wheatfield Prison (Section 2, para 2.31).
- 4.5 Optimum use is not being made of the workshops as valuable resources within the prison. Prisoners who participated in work training had an insufficient amount of time to engage in these activities. Morning workshops commenced at 09.30 and finished at 11:30. Prisoners returned to their cells for “dinner” from 12:00 to 14:00. In the afternoon, prisoners attended workshops from 14:20 to 15:30. In sum, workshops were open a total of three hours and ten minutes each day. Early closing for dinner and delays in returning, along with early closing of the workshops in the afternoon reduced the time available and contributed to underutilisation of the workshops and the valuable resource that they represent.

Essential work was carried out throughout the course of the day. For example, prisoners who worked in the kitchen, laundry and waste management were out of their cells for the duration of the working day which was positive.

The school operated during the same period as workshops. Previously, the school operated a variety of evening activities to facilitate access to education for people who worked during the day or engaged in training. This provision was very valuable. However, in recent times the evening activities in the school have ceased (DE Inspectorate, Section 5, para. 5.28) further limiting opportunities for engagement with purposeful activity.

4.6 The management and staff in Wheatfield Prison are to be commended for their efforts to implement new work training initiatives for prisoner engagement, particularly given challenges of staff absences and redeployments. A number of positive initiatives were identified over the course of inspection:

- FAI Programme (Football Association of Ireland): delivered in conjunction with partners in the community, St. Patrick's Athletic. The programme is a good example of joint collaboration between work training and the prison school. Subsequent to the Inspection, 20 prisoners were awarded an FAI Adult Amateur Coaching Licence. Benefits of the FAI programme included:
 - Fostering collaboration and connection between the prison and community
 - Fostering collaboration between work training and the school in the prison; which encouraged prisoners to attend other activities in the school
 - External certification for prisoners who completed the course
 - Development of skills and knowledge through the completion of modules (e.g., drug awareness, suicide awareness, child protection) the programme.
- There were examples of prisoner-led initiatives, led by Red Cross Prisoner Volunteers: a Wellness Week, an appeal for Ukraine (raised €1000), and a run in aid of charity.

4.7 Future planned initiatives included:

- Building of a fountain as part of a sensory garden. The aim of the sensory garden was to support children who may be upset while visiting their parent in prison. The garden was due to open in the summer of 2022.
- Development of digital literacy workshops to enhance the digital literacy skills (e.g., learn how to do a contactless payment) of prisoners particularly aimed at those serving long sentences to aid them in the development of independent living skills. Certification for this workshop is to be provided by the school.
- Development of an accredited electronics recycling programme in collaboration with a third-level institution.

4.8 Access to work training was impeded by a high number of prison staff on sick leave, which included COVID-19 related sick leave. Absences impacted on the filling of posts in the prison, whereby work training activities were closed when Work Training Officers were redeployed to other posts in line with the Regime Management Plan. The regime in Wheatfield Prison was inconsistent, with workshops and other activities opened based on staffing in the prison. This disruption to the prison routine impacted negatively on prisoners as well as on their sentence progression.

- 4.9** Limits on the number of prisoners permitted to attend workshops also impacted on access levels. The ratio of Work Training Officers to prisoners is set at 1:8, regardless of the capacity of the workshop. Therefore, redeployments of officers led to low attendance at workshops.

Poor access levels resulted in work training waiting lists; 26 prisoners were “actively seeking a position in Work and Training.”

- 4.10** **The 2012 IPS Prisoner Gratuities and Private Cash Policy in Wheatfield Prison is not in line with the European Prison Rules (2020).** A small number of prisoners noted that they would prioritise engagement with work training over education because of the increased financial payment associated with work training, known as the Approved Working Gratuity (AWG). Prisoners would earn up to €3.50 extra a week if they were engaged in certain work activities. Some prisoners explained that there was little financial incentive to engage in education. For prisoners with little familial financial support the lower gratuity was particularly challenging.

The European Prison Rules make clear that “education shall have no less status than work within the prison regime and prisoners shall not be disadvantaged financially or otherwise by taking part in education” (Rule 28.4), and that “when sentenced prisoners take part in education or other programmes during working hours as part of their planned regime they shall be remunerated as if they had been working” (Rule 105.4).

- 4.11** Prisoners on protection had poor access to work training in the prison. The main reported activity available for protection prisoners was the yard. The gym was frequently closed for prisoners on protection, and the “North Three School”, which was attended by protection prisoners prior to 2020, was closed. It is unacceptable that a situation where people are left with little or nothing to do for such extended periods of time has been allowed to go on for over two years.
- 4.12** Of 569 prisoners in Wheatfield Prison, 13% were between the ages of 18 and 24. While the vast majority of young adults participated in education, less than one-fifth of this age cohort was engaged in work training activity (week of 9 March 2022). Over 50% of young adults were on a waiting list to access a work training interview.

This low rate of engagement with work training for young adults is of concern given the national figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO), which indicate that this age group has the highest rate of re-offending (Section 2, para. 2.8). The European Prison Rules, Rule 26.5⁵⁶ specifically note the importance of vocational training for young prisoners.

- 4.13** Prisoners reported mixed levels of engagement with ISM. In total, there were three Integrated Sentence Management (ISM) officers working in the prison. This was a ratio of 1:190 ISM officer to prisoners; the ideal ratio is 1:100.⁵⁷ It is evident that the level of provision is insufficient to provide an adequate ISM service.
- 4.14** Alongside work training, access to other purposeful activity in the prison required improvement. Prior to COVID-19, vital essential services such as NA/AA and Merchants Quay Ireland were not in place and other evening activities such as Toastmasters were not facilitated in the prison.

⁵⁶ Rule 26.5 of the Revised European Prison Rules states: Work that encompasses vocational training shall be provided for prisoners able to benefit from it and especially for young prisoners.

⁵⁷ Office of the Inspector of Prisons, COVID-19 Thematic Inspection of Mountjoy Men's Prison 1-4 March 2021, p. 41.

4.15 Enhanced prisoners on the East Wing had access to a library. However, the library in the Main Prison was closed and had been for a long period of time.⁵⁸ (See, Section 5, para. 5.45). Closure of the library is in contravention of Rule 110(7) of the Prison Rules 2007 - 2020: “Subject to the maintenance of good order and safe and secure custody, each prisoner shall be entitled to avail of the library service provided in the prison at least once a week and be actively encouraged to make full use of it.”

Assessment - Access to Work Training: FAIR

- Wheatfield Prison had high quality work training facilities available including construction and joinery workshops.
- Approximately half of the prisoner population had access to work training activity. (This level of activity is low especially within the context that the Prison is deemed a “Work Training” Prison.)
- The prison was not compliant with Rule 27(2) and Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules, 2007. For example, workshops were not recorded as opened for five hours on a daily basis.
- Key cohorts of prisoners such as those on protection and young adults had limited access to work training activity.
- Staffing structures and absences limited the number of prisoners who could access work training activity.

⁵⁸ Office of the Inspector of Prisons. COVID-19 Thematic Inspection of Wheatfield Prison 6-7 April 2021, p. 41.

Work Training Certification

4.16 Despite the high quality of work produced by prisoners in workshops, externally accredited certification was low. This negatively impacts on support for rehabilitation and prevention of re-offending.

4.17 There was no certification available to people in custody in essential work areas such as laundry, kitchen and waste management. Over the course of the pandemic, 30 prisoners received third-level institution accredited certification as gym instructors.

Welding was the only workshop through which prisoners received externally accredited certification. In March 2022, 17 candidates were put forward by the prison for welding certification. This certification was approved by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI). Between 2019 and 2021, 37 certificates were awarded to prisoners in the welding work training area. This certification is welcome as it provides prisoners with recognised certification to use for employment upon release from prison. While it is in keeping with good practice that accreditation is achieved in the area of welding, it is unacceptable that welding is the only trade area with accredited outcomes.

4.18 With the exception of welding, there was evidence that external certification in other trade areas had declined over time and ceased in the prison. External accreditation such as *City and Guilds* had lapsed prior to 2020 and was reportedly absent from Wheatfield Prison since 2014.

While it was reported that Work Training Officers are required to undertake training (Train the Trainer) in their work within the first 12 months of their appointment, not all Work Training Officers had availed of this training. Incompletion of training was attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to support Work Training Officers in development of their skills and their ability to offer effective training to prisoners, all Work Training Officers should receive frequent and regular “in-service education and training.”⁵⁹

The absence of recognised externally accredited certification negatively impacts on access to employment opportunities for people in prison upon release. As a result, Wheatfield Prison is not adequately fulfilling its requirement under Rule 111 (1) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020.

Assessment - Work Training Certification: FAIR

- Externally recognised certification was available for one workshop, welding.
- The prison introduced positive new work training initiatives, which provided some prisoners with external certification (e.g., the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) Programme.)
- The limited external certification available in the prison weakened compliance with Rule 111(b)(c)(d)(e) of the Prison Rules 2007 (i.e., it limited opportunities for personal achievement, preparation for life after release from prison, development of vocational skills and talents and improving prospects of employment upon release).

⁵⁹ Council of Europe. (2019) Guidelines Regarding Recruitment, Selection, Education, Training and Professional Development of Prison and Probation Staff.

Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives

4.19 Alongside standard activities in prison, prison staff may also identify initiatives, including work training initiatives, to support prisoner rehabilitation. Staff can apply to fund these initiatives through the Prisoner Initiative Development Fund (PIDF). This fund is centralised within the Irish Prison Service and the Care and Rehabilitation Directorate is responsible for decision-making in relation to initiative funding. Prison officers propose initiatives, which are signed off by the Governor before they are submitted to the Irish Prison Service Headquarters for approval. While this fund encourages individual staff members to identify and establish opportunities for increased engagement with purposeful activity, it also has the unintended consequence of encouraging person-led rather than system-led initiatives.

4.20 The processes for the development and running of work training programmes in Wheatfield prison are not sufficiently systematic to ensure long-term sustainability. Many of the initiatives in place and proposed for future development in Wheatfield Prison have been developed and are being led by individual staff members. While it is commendable that these individuals show interest and put effort into increasing access to purposeful activity for people in prison, that these initiatives are person-led rather than system-led means they are negatively impacted by routine and regular changes in personnel.

For example, the hurley workshop was closed for a long period of time. As a result, resources for this workshop, including the facility and specialist technical equipment, had not been in use for a number of years.

4.21 Wheatfield Prison established a committee comprised of work training and education staff to assess the development of new initiatives in the prison. It is essential that the work of this committee should include the development of a work training programme which meets the vocational needs of people in prison, and is informed by employment opportunities in the community. To achieve this outcome the committee should ensure that the prison has reliable access to qualified trainers to deliver a work training programme and has a means of replacing a trainer when they move on.

Additionally, there is no formal consultation process in place in Wheatfield Prison to afford prisoners an opportunity to have an input into decisions made in relation to work training initiatives in the prison. Some areas of work identified by prisoners as being of interest included car valeting and a project similar to the Equine Centre in Castlerea Prison.⁶⁰

Assessment - Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives: FAIR

- Individual staff members were committed, and championed work training initiatives in the prison.
- While the development of new and innovative work-training initiatives was positive, the sustainability of initiatives is negatively impacted by changes in the prison environment, including personnel redeployment.
- The prison established a Committee comprised of Work Training and Education Staff to help assess the development of future work-training Initiatives.

⁶⁰ The Equine Centre in Castlerea Prison allows prisoners to train and develop skills for employment in the horse industry post-release.

Wheatfield Prison Recommendations

Wheatfield Prison Recommendation 1:	The Governor of Wheatfield Prison should take all necessary action to guarantee that all prisoners, in particular young adults and prisoners on protection, are provided with a minimum of five hours of purposeful activity for five days per week, in line with Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020. Wheatfield Prison should work towards the CPT's recommended <u>minimum</u> eight hours out-of-cell time for prisoners engaged in purposeful activities.
Wheatfield Prison Recommendation 2:	As recommended by the OIP in 2021, and in line with Rule 110 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Wheatfield Prison should immediately re-open the library in the main prison and ensure access to all prisoners in that area of the prison on a consistent basis.
Wheatfield Prison Recommendation 3:	The Governor in consultation with management in Wheatfield Prison should systematically and strategically identify opportunities for work training certification to be offered to people in custody, with a particular focus on people who do not already have a certification and/or vocational experience (such as young adults).

B. Mountjoy Men's Prison

Progression Unit

4.22 Mountjoy Men's Prison Progression Unit accommodates prisoners on the enhanced regime who have progressed during their sentence.

There was only one workshop available to people in the Progression Unit, the Industrial Skills workshop (**Figures 3 and 4**). The Industrial Skills workshop was open on the day of inspection. The optimum number who could attend the workshop was 12, but only two prisoners were in attendance on the day of the inspection. There was some evidence of craftsmanship in the workshop with finished products such as picture frames and candles. Workshops in construction, woodwork and computers were closed. The computer workshop was closed due to longstanding staff redeployment. There were a number of work training initiatives taking place at the time of the inspection, such as a horticulture project which was taking place in an area for grounds workers (**Figure 5**) and a Barista training programme which operates in collaboration with the school.

Figure 3: Industrial Skills Workshop



Figure 4: Industrial Skills Workshop



Figure 5: Grounds – Horticulture



Access to Work Training

4.23 Access to work training was fair in the Progression Unit. The primary source and focus of purposeful activity in the Progression Unit was engagement with the school. There were limited opportunities to work in the Progression Unit. Approximately 45% of people in custody in the Progression Unit were engaged in work training activity. Essential work carried out in the Progression Unit included: laundry (for the Progression Unit and the Main Prison), Tuck Shop, cleaning, kitchen/staff mess and horticulture/grounds.

The Industrial Skills Workshop is underutilised. During the inspection visit, it was the only open and operational workshop in the prison, and was reported to accommodate the same three prisoners each day. Prisoners who attended the workshop also engaged in COVID-19 cleaning tasks with the Work Training Officer.

Evening activities, such as choir practice and addiction support groups, are available for people in the Progression Unit. However, the scheduling of these activities requires attention. For example, it was reported that the scheduling of choir practice conflicted with the operation of essential services such as Narcotics Anonymous.

In addition to the sole workshop, Work Training coordinated with external partners to introduce and offer positive new work training initiatives to people in custody in the Progression Unit. The staff in the Progression Unit are to be commended for their efforts to implement new work training initiatives for prisoner engagement, particularly given staffing resource challenges. A number of positive initiatives were identified over the course of inspection, which include: Barista training, a Barber workshop, the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) programme and a Driving Simulator course:

- **Barista Training Programme:** A programme established by the school in conjunction with work training (See, Section 5, Section 4.54). Prisoners completed relevant courses such as First Aid and Food Safety in the school in preparation for barista training.
- **Barber Workshop:** A barber workshop for young adults under the age of 24 had recently opened in the Progression Unit. This workshop was run by a community-based organisation in conjunction with the prison. Ten people were eligible to participate in the workshop and there were plans to expand the workshop. The Barber Workshop was also available in Wheatfield Prison and is a good example of a systemic approach to embedding new work training initiatives across the prison estate.
- **Driving Simulator Course:** This course covered site safety and safety around machines and was delivered by an external facilitator with links to the construction sector. Although limited in participation, the course is representative of good practice in identifying a labour market need and determining a pathway to employability.

The management team in the Progression Unit is to be commended for its effort to establish community links and identify and address challenges with regulations and requirements to work. This approach, which embeds community engagement and employability into a work training model, is one that should be adopted across the prison service. However, at present, this initiative was driven by individual staff and may not be sustainable in the long-term without systemic Prison Service support.

- FAI programme: The Football Association of Ireland (FAI) course was delivered in the Progression Unit. This programme was also facilitated in Wheatfield Prison, and is a welcome example of a more systemic approach to work training initiatives that centre collaboration with external partners across prisons.

Other planned work training initiatives included: solar panel repair; bike repair as a Community Employment scheme and continued coaching courses with the Bohemian Foundation as part of the FAI programme.

- 4.24** On 22 June 2022 (post-inspection), the Progression Unit hosted, for the first time, a Social Enterprise event in collaboration with the Irish Association for Social Inclusion Opportunities (IASIO). The event was attended by a number of social enterprises, and had the objective of highlighting employment opportunities for people in custody on release.

The Social Enterprise event was an important initiative as it brought together agencies working to achieve a shared objective of support for rehabilitation and reduction of re-offending.

The Inspectorate attended this event and spoke to various stakeholders at the event. However, the Inspectorate was informed that people in prison were given very little notice of the event; prisoners reported only being informed of the event that morning, and were therefore not able to prepare a curriculum vitae or dress appropriately for the event. In the future, sufficient time and notice should be afforded to people in prison so that they are best-positioned to engage in such events. At times prisoners received mixed messages in relation to available opportunities. For example, prisoners were informed that they could be granted Temporary Release to attend external employment despite this practice being very restricted at the time of the event (See para. 4.26). It is essential that joined-up initiatives such as this are aligned so that misinformation or outdated information is not accidentally shared with people in prison.

- 4.25** During the inspection, prisoners reported a lack of work training opportunities available in the Progression Unit, and noted limited opportunities for people interested in practical work or manual activities, such as bricklaying and painting. Many prisoners expressed frustration regarding limited opportunities to develop skills and qualifications in the Progression Unit. Prison staff also raised concerns about the lack of work training opportunities in the Progression Unit.

- 4.26** Over the first quarter of 2022, four prisoners in the Progression Unit were approved for daily temporary release training programmes. An additional three prisoners attended an external grounds work party, and 11 prisoners were granted day release from the prison to work in the staff mess [canteen] contained within the Mountjoy Prison Campus.

Given the objective of the Progression Unit is to assist people nearing the end of their sentence with reintegration into society, the number of people accessing day release training programmes was low.

- 4.27** There was no information provided to prisoners to explain the formal selection process for prisoners to participate in essential work. Work Training management selected those individuals deemed to be best-positioned to leverage training into employment upon release.

Many prisoners perceived unfairness around work-training decisions and did not understand the rationale behind the work selection process. Some prisoners reported that despite being engaged in essential work in Mountjoy Main Prison, they were not able to work upon transfer to the Progression Unit.

Furthermore, information was requested by the OIP on waiting lists for work training activity, but this information was unavailable as it could not be accessed through a centralised system.

4.28 Prisoner wellbeing was negatively impacted by limited in-person family contact as part of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions in the prison. As a result, many prisoners felt de-motivated in their engagement with education and work training.

4.29 Access to the library is not available for the majority of people in the Progression Unit. The library on C-wing was run by a prisoner during periods of unlock each day, but was not accessible for prisoners on A and B wing, and only minimally accessible to prisoners on D wing.

Assessment - Access to Work Training: FAIR

- There were insufficient opportunities available for prisoners to engage with work training activity.
- There were limited jobs available to prisoners in the Progression Unit. This is of concern given that prisoners in the Progression Unit are nearing the completion of their sentence and preparing for release.
- The Progression Unit contained one workshop (Industrial Skills). In total, only three prisoners had access to this workshop.
- A large number of prisoners expressed a desire for more work training opportunities be made available to them.

Work Training Certification

4.30 There was limited externally recognised work training certification available in the Progression Unit in 2022. Between 2019 and 2021, 94 certificates were awarded to prisoners in the following work training areas: kitchen/mess, manual handling, driving simulator course, and barista training. Outlined below are the various work training areas and availability of certification.

- *Laundry*: There was no training or certification programme in the laundry work area in 2022. Certification from the Launderer Guild of Scotland was due to commence for Work Training Officers in May 2022. Prisoners working in laundry were not able to receive externally accredited certification because Work Training Officers were not trained to be trainers.

- *Kitchen:* The school facilitated basic courses on food safety for people working in the kitchen. However, there was no externally recognised certification for kitchen workers in 2022. In 2021, 21 prisoners in the kitchen and staff mess were awarded the MTU Professional cooking level 6/level 2 Environmental Health Association of Ireland (EHAI), and 21 prisoners received certification in barista training. In 2020, City and Guilds accreditation in the courses 3528/50 Foundation and 3529 Proficiency was available for prisoners working in the kitchen.
- *Waste Management:* There was no certification available in Waste Management.
- *Construction:* In 2022 the construction workshop was closed. 18 prisoners were certified in manual handling in 2021.
- *Driving Simulator Course:* In 2021, eight prisoners completed a four-day Safety Awareness course and received externally recognised certification for a driving simulator course. According to Work Training management, upon release from prison, five of the eight prisoners who completed the course reportedly obtained employment.
- *FAI Programme and Gym Certification:* In 2022, 15 prisoners participated in the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) course and received accreditation shortly after the inspection. There was no accredited gym certification at the time of inspection.

4.31 Certification plans for the remainder of 2022 included:

- Driving simulator course accommodating a maximum 4 persons x 2 courses with certification valid for 2 years : 8
- FAI coaching course accommodating a maximum 12 persons x 3 courses: 36
- SafePass course accommodating a maximum of 20 persons x 1 course with certification valid for 4 years: 20
- Location of Underground Services (LUGS) accommodating a maximum of 4 persons x 2 courses with certification valid for 5 years: 8
- Health and Safety at Road Works (HSARW) accommodating a maximum of 20 persons x 1 course with certification valid for 5 years: 20
- Basic First Aid accommodating a maximum of 10 persons x 1 course with certification valid for 4 years : 10
- Forklift training accommodating a maximum of 3 persons x 1 course with certification valid for 3 years: 3

- 4.32** While certification in prison is of benefit to people in custody, the ways in which the certification is facilitated and identified are also important considerations in terms of employment. Certification programmes provided by the prison often displayed the name of the prison on the certificate, and thus posed challenges for people seeking to use the certification in their efforts to gain employment on release from prison.⁶¹
- 4.33** Given that the objective of the Progression Unit is to prepare people for re-integration into society, more focus should be placed on certification opportunities. The school serves a fundamental purpose in the Progression Unit, and it would be of significant benefit to maximise all opportunities for collaboration between education and work training so that people in the Progression Unit may acquire externally recognised vocational certification. This is especially important given limited facility resources and staffing issues in the prison.

Assessment - Work Training Certification: FAIR

- While the School provided kitchen workers with certification, there was no certification available in other core work production areas such as the laundry.
- There were positive examples of newly developed work training initiatives that provided certification such as the barista training programme and the driving simulator course.
- The limited externally recognised certification weakens compliance with Rule 111(b.) (c.) (d.) (e.) of the Prison Rules, 2007 (i.e., it limited opportunities for personal achievement, preparation for life after release from prison, development of vocational skills and talents and improving prospects of employment upon release).

Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives

- 4.34** Aside from essential work and the sole workshop in the Progression Unit, all other work training initiatives were developed and driven by individual staff members. Initiatives were proposed through the IPS Prisoner Development Initiative Fund (See Section 4, para. 4.19), and were more likely to be approved for first-time initiatives and in instances where additional staffing and funding resources were not requested.

An agreement with the staff industrial relations body required that new initiatives identified for implementation in the prison could not compete with already existent work training programmes in the prison. This was even the case for initiatives that had notionally been in existence, but that had not actually been in place for a number of years, or if there was no staff in the role to lead these programmes. Practically, this means that unfilled work training positions cannot be filled by external work training initiatives; this limits opportunities for engagement with external employers and subsequently for successful employment upon release.

⁶¹ As highlighted under Rule 26.3 of the Revised European Prison Rules: “As far as possible, the work provided shall be such as will maintain or increase prisoners’ ability to earn a living after release.”

Individually championed work training initiatives, while indicative of motivated staff, raise concerns about the sustainability of initiatives. For instance, the success of the Driving Simulator on a long-term basis should not be contingent on individual staff relationships in the community but should rather be embedded into a strategic approach to work training and external accreditation. Staff-driven initiatives should be supported by the Prison Service to ensure they are sustainable in design, replicable and also labour-market tested.

- 4.35** Joint collaboration between work training and education was evident in several areas. The school provided courses such as food handling and financial management skills to prisoners working in the kitchen and Barista coffee dock. Funding for a Disc Jockey (DJ) and sign language course was one of the latest initiatives developed in collaboration between work training and the school. Collaboration initiatives such as these are welcome and are a useful way to maximise resources and engagement.
- 4.36** A number of reported planned work training initiatives did not come to fruition. These included funding for a sign-making course to be delivered with FÁS (former employment agency in Ireland, now referred to as *Intreo*), and a certified framing course. There were also two high-quality embroidery machines installed but not in use in the workshop.

Assessment - Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives: FAIR

- Individual staff members championed the development of many positive work training initiatives such as the driving simulator course and the barista training programme.
- There was limited evidence to show how current work training initiatives in the prison might be sustained in the future.

Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendations

Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendation 1:	In line with Rule 111 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Mountjoy Prison should ensure that all prisoners in the Progression Unit have access to a structured programme of training.
Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendation 2:	A formal selection process that systematically and strategically identifies opportunities for work training certification should be adopted by the Governor of the Prison. This should ensure rotational engagement with work training for those prisoners who would like to engage, and should be targeted to all prisoners regardless of sentence length. This process should be clearly communicated to prisoners.
Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendation 3:	In line with Rule 110 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Mountjoy Prison Governor should ensure that all prisoners in the Progression Unit are able to access library services on a consistent basis
Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendation 4:	The Mountjoy Prison Governor of the should expand work training activity and ensure the option of accredited certification is available for people in custody in the Progression Unit, with a particular focus on people who do not already have a certification and/or vocational experience.

Main Prison / Medical Unit

- 4.37** As part of the forthcoming Prisoner Progression Plan,⁶² Mountjoy Main Prison is not intended to be a “work training” prison. Rather, only essential work (catering, industrial cleaning, laundry, waste management) will be carried out in the prison, and all other activities will be facilitated through the Main Prison school. Under this Plan, the primary function of Mountjoy Main Prison will be to provide access to education and therapeutic services to people in custody.

Access to Work Training

- 4.38** The only operational workshop in the Main Prison was the fabric workshop, which was open at the time of inspection.
- 4.39** The OIP made a number of data requests to ascertain the total number of individual prisoners participating in essential work, workshops and engaging in both work training and school. These information requests could not be filled given the lack of an integrated data system to assess engagement with purposeful activity (See Section 2, para. 2.25).
- 4.40** Essential work in Mountjoy Main Prison included the bakery, kitchen, and industrial and landing cleaning. Approximately 14 prisoners worked in the bakery, which supplied bread to the entire prison, and 20 prisoners were on the kitchen worker list. In total, there were 68 landing cleaners.
- 4.41** Prisoners in the fabric workshop produced towels for the prison estate, and also COVID-19 pull up banners for all the prisons, as well as signage for prison staff recruitment drives. A maximum of nine people, but usually between five and eight prisoners, worked in this workshop, which was reportedly often closed. People in the Medical Unit had no access to this workshop, and only nine of more than 500 people in custody in the Main Prison attended this workshop. The computer skills workshop was closed.
- 4.42** Workshops in the Main Prison had diminished over the years with the closure of the carpentry, window repair, and European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) workshops. Given that Mountjoy Main Prison accommodates approximately 536 people, there was very limited access to work training activities.
- 4.43** In total, there were 55 Work Training Officers assigned to work training activities in Mountjoy Main Prison. It was reported that more than 20 work training positions remained vacant over the previous three years. Training for Work Training Officers took place every two years and required the completion of ten modules.

Work Training Officers were often redeployed as a result of staff shortages, in line with the Regime Management Plan. For prisoners engaged in work training and prison officers employed as Work Training Officers, ongoing redeployment and closure of work training activities were demoralising and frustrating. Prisoners and staff alike reported wanting more consistency and availability of workshops, such as woodwork, metal workshops, barber skills and construction.

⁶² IPS Work Training Review (n 9), p.34.

4.44 Prisoners reported long waitlists for work in the prison. Work was not available for prisoners on protection, with the exception of landing cleaning. Given that approximately 50% of prisoners in Mountjoy Main Prison are on protection, this restriction impedes access to purposeful activity for approximately 250 people in custody.

There was almost no provision of work training activity for prisoners in the Medical Unit. People in the Medical Unit are particularly vulnerable, and there were no therapeutic supports in place for prisoners who were struggling with addiction. The Medical Unit, initially designed to provide prisoners with structured access to drug treatment programmes had not been in operation for more than two years.

4.45 The selection process for work training was not systematic. It was the duty of the Class Officer or Assistant Chief Officer to nominate prisoners deemed eligible for work. Prisoners who were identified as having a “good work ethic” were prioritised for work. There was less focus on supporting or encouraging prisoners with limited work experience to engage in essential work.

4.46 While three officers had been assigned to the role of Integrated Sentence Management (ISM) for both the Progression Unit and the Main Prison, one ISM officer had been seconded. On a daily basis, there was one ISM officer on duty. The ISM officer post was on the redeployment list and was not ring-fenced to ensure adequate ISM provision across the prison. In total, there were two ISM officers for the Main Mountjoy Prison, Medical Unit and the Progression Unit, which had a total capacity for 755 prisoners. There was no training in place for ISM officers.

4.47 The Main Prison library was located in the school and was typically closed. It was reported that the prison officer post tasks did not include opening the library, despite it being located very near to the area where they were stationed. (See Section 5, para. 5.100).

Assessment - Access to Work Training: POOR

- There were insufficient opportunities to engage with Work Training.
- The fabric workshop was the only workshop in the prison. It catered for a maximum of nine prisoners out of a prison population of 550.
- The prison did was not in compliance with Rule 27(2) and 27(3) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020.
- The prison was not in compliance with Rule 111 of the Prison Rules, 2007.
- Prisoners in the Medical Unit and prisoners on protection had poor access to work training activity.

Work Training Certification

4.48 Over the period of 2019-2021, 31 certificates were awarded to prisoners in the work training areas of kitchen/mess, manual handling and industrial cleaning in Mountjoy Main Prison. In the past, there had been some certification offered in the three essential work areas: kitchen, bakery and cleaning.

However, there was no certification available to prisoners partaking in the fabric workshop. Furthermore, there was no certification available for the 46 people in custody in the Medical Unit.

- *Kitchen:* Prisoners in the kitchen completed a basic Food Hygiene Course in the school and a short induction course in the kitchen. In 2022, prisoners working in the kitchen were not facilitated to receive external certification, although this was available in previous years.
- *Bakery:* Aside from a basic induction training, certification had not been provided in the bakery for over five years. In the past, prisoners could obtain the Scottish Bakery Qualification (SBQ).
- *Industrial Cleaning:* Three new Work Training Officers trained in industrial cleaning had recently been assigned to the Main Prison. In the two years prior to this there were no trained industrial cleaning staff in the Main Prison; as a result prisoners could not obtain this certification. Plans were in place for four to eight prisoners to undertake, on a rolling basis, a two-week QQI Clean Pass course. This certification would support prisoners in accessing cleaning jobs in institutional settings.
- *Fabric Workshop:* An induction course on machine safety was conducted by the Work Training Officer with prisoners in the fabric workshop. However, there was no externally recognised certification associated with the only workshop in the prison.

4.49 There are challenges in relation to the sustainability of programmes for certification. Staff reported that a challenge in identifying certification was ensuring that the structure of the programmes identified could be adapted to align with the prison schedule and movement of prisoners across and in and out of prisons. Further, frequent movement amongst prison staff and management impeded the sustainability of certification programmes.

Assessment - Work Training Certification: POOR

- Prisoners working in core work production areas (e.g., laundry and waste management) did not have the opportunity to avail of externally recognised certification.
- Prisoners engaged in the fabric workshop did not have the opportunity to avail of externally recognised certification.
- Certain groups of prisoners such as those on protection and those in the Medical Unit had no access to work training certification.

Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives

4.50 The fabric workshop and essential work positions were the only opportunities for engagement with work training in the Main Prison.

Staff expressed frustration about the lack of follow-through with initiatives.

There were no initiatives available to the 46 people in custody in the Medical Unit.

4.51 There were some examples of joint collaborative initiatives between work training and the school. For example, classes in Microsoft Office programmes were provided in the school and in turn supported work for the small number of prisoners working in the Fabric Shop.

4.52 There was no mechanism by which prisoners were consulted or facilitated to input into the decision-making process around activities and initiatives in the prison.

Assessment - Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives: POOR

- There was limited evidence of structures in place to support the development and sustainability of work training initiatives.
- There were examples of initiatives that had been developed or implemented in the prison but were no longer in place.

Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendations

<p>Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 1:</p>	<p>The Governor of Mountjoy Prison should adopt measures as a matter of urgency to increase access to purposeful activity, including work training for prisoners on protection and prisoners in the Medical Unit.</p>
<p>Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 2:</p>	<p>The Governor of Mountjoy Prison should take all necessary action to guarantee that all prisoners, in particular prisoners on protection, are accommodated with an absolute minimum of five hours of purposeful activity for five days per week, in line with Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020. Mountjoy Prison should work towards the CPT's recommended <u>minimum</u> eight hours out-of-cell time for prisoners engaged in purposeful activities.</p>
<p>Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 3:</p>	<p>As recommended by the OIP in 2021, and in line with Rule 110 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Mountjoy Prison should ensure the library is consistently open, and that prisoners who do not attend school are facilitated to access library services on a consistent basis.</p>
<p>Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 4:</p>	<p>The Governor of Mountjoy Prison should ensure facilitation of certification for prisoners in all work training activities, with particular focus on protection prisoners and prisoners in the Medical Unit who have little to no opportunity to access and achieve vocational certification.</p>
<p>Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 5:</p>	<p>A formal selection process that systematically and strategically identifies opportunities for work training certification should be adopted by the Governor of Mountjoy Prison. This should ensure equality of opportunity for prisoners with rotational engagement for those prisoners who would like to engage with work training, and should be targeted to all prisoners regardless of protection status.</p>
<p>Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 6:</p>	<p>In line with Rule 111 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Mountjoy Prison should ensure that prisoners have access to a programme of training. Given the intention to remove work training, aside from essential work, from the prison, Mountjoy Prison should proactively identify and implement opportunities for sustainable work training initiatives to be brought into the prison through external community engagement and through collaboration with the school.</p>

C. Arbour Hill Prison

4.53 Arbour Hill Prison is a closed medium security prison for adult men, and is comprised of prisoners serving long sentences. 14 Work Training Officers assigned to the prison, with two vacancies. Essential work in the prison included kitchen, waste management, laundry/reception and cleaning. There were high quality workshop facilities available in Arbour Hill Prison which included: a Woodwork shop (**Figure 6**), a Fabric Shop (**Figure 7**), and a Braille Workshop in which prisoners transcribed Braille books in Braille (**Figure 8**). There was also a Recycling workshop and a Print shop.

Figure 6: Woodwork Shop



Figure 7: Fabric Shop



Figure 8: Braille Workshop



Access to Work Training

4.54 A high proportion of people in custody in Arbour Hill Prison were engaged in work training (99/131). There were no reported issues around access to work training activity. Work training facilities typically opened from 9.00-12.00 and 14:00-16.00 on a daily basis; which afforded a minimum of five hours of access to purposeful activity each day. This is consistent with Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020.

The majority of prisoners who engaged in workshops also attended school for at least two days a week.

Nine prisoners were timetabled for the woodshop workshop; up to 15 prisoners could attend the fabric workshop at any given time; and 14 prisoners could attend the Braille workshop each session. The print shop had a maximum capacity for eight to nine people.

A small number of prisoners worked in waste management. The prison also contained a large recycling yard, where people in prison disassembled electronics to prepare them for recycling. This initiative was developed in partnership with an external recycling company. With the exception of the recycling initiative, which was a trustee workshop, there were no waiting lists to access work training.

Three prisoners worked in the horticulture/grounds work area. There were four landing cleaners. One prisoner worked in the Tuck Shop and two prisoners worked in the stores.

A small minority of prisoners choose not to engage in work training activities; this should be considered in the context that the profile of people in Arbour Hill Prison is characterised by an elderly demographic, many of whom have medical needs.

The prison regime was less restrictive in comparison to other prisons inspected. Cells were unlocked during the course of the day, which provided more autonomy to prisoners in accessing purposeful activity. People were able to move between the school and workshops. One hour of engagement with school or a workshop was counted as having attended an activity. The benefits of a reduced capacity prison were evident as it afforded more engagement with purposeful activity and a more open prison regime.

- 4.55** Approximately 16% of people in custody in Arbour Hill Prison were engaged in essential work, which included cleaning, grounds, reception/laundry, the tuck shop and the kitchen. Kitchen workers prepared meals beginning at 07:00 each day, and provided meals to the Criminal Courts of Justice. Approximately 60% of people in Arbour Hill Prison received the approved working gratuity.
- 4.56** Access to work training activities was overall very good in Arbour Hill Prison. There were no reported issues by prisoners with access to these workshops. However, activity levels in the workshops were lacking. This was particularly the case in the Print shop and the Braille workshop where prisoners in attendance were not facilitated to carry out activities in the workshops. For example, only one prisoner was actively working in the Print Shop at the time of inspection. The Braille Shop was not popular with prisoners. Low levels of engagement may be attributed to the lack of up-to-date and relevant training as well as the repetitive nature of the workshops over long periods of time.
- 4.57** The print shop, which at one time operated on a busy daily schedule, did not offer much in the way of projects or activities for prisoners. By contrast, the wood shop was well-attended and items produced by prisoners could be shared with families and local community organisations.
- 4.58** Unlike the larger prisons inspected, opportunities for external engagement and collaboration with community partners were limited. According to prison management community engagement was limited given the profile of prisoner in Arbour Hill Prison. There was one initiative developed in conjunction with a partner in the community, however the work completed by prisoners for the project had not been collected by the partner agency.

- 4.59** A core component of rehabilitation in Arbour Hill Prison is engagement with the *Building Better Lives* (BBL) programme. This programme was run in groups of eight prisoners, and there was a waiting list to access this programme. For prisoners who completed the programme there was a lack of follow-up psychological support.
- 4.60** A concern for people in custody was a delay in the introduction of a regulation to remove parole eligibility from prisoners serving fixed-term sentences, under Section 24(3) of the Parole Act 2019.⁶³ For some prisoners, this delay impacted on the incentive to engage in rehabilitative activities.
- 4.61** There was no Integrated Sentence Management officer in the prison. However, in the closeout meeting with senior management, it was confirmed that an ISM officer would be allocated to the prison on a full-time basis. In the absence of the ISM officer, who would normally work with prisoners to coordinate access to activities and services, work training management took on this role. Whilst this was commendable, **the Inspectorate would appreciate receiving confirmation that the full-time ISM officer is now in place.**
- 4.62** The Arbour Hill Prison library is prisoner-led. The library is open seven days a week; therefore the prison is in alignment with Rule 110(6) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020. Dublin City Library coordinate with the prisoners who run the library.

To support people soon to be released from prison, the prisoner-led library developed a map of all the River Liffey bridges; the objective of the project was to provide people coming out of prison with reference points in Dublin City Centre (**Figure 9**). This is an excellent example of a prisoner-led initiative to support the resettlement needs of prisoners.

Figure 9: River Liffey Project



- 4.63** While access to work and training activity in Arbour Hill Prison was very good, consideration should be given to the suitability of work training activity for the population of people in custody in Arbour Hill Prison. Work training activities offered should take account of often long sentence lengths, and consider how work training activity can be improved to meet current labour market needs. Further, work training offered should provide stimulation to a cohort of persons who are often previously educated or have acquired certification prior to committal to prison.

⁶³ Parole Act 2019 (n 45), Section 24(3).

Arbour Hill Prison, with support from the Irish Prison Service should identify strategies how to increase the benefit and utility of workshops, with particular consideration to current employment opportunities and required skillsets and the development of work training partnerships with the community.

Assessment - Access to Work Training: GOOD

- There were a number of workshops available in the prison including Braille, carpentry and print.
- The Prison complied with Rule 27(2) and Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules, 2007-2020. Prisoners had five hours access to 'authorised structured activity' and reported no issues with access to workshops.
- Overall activity levels in some workshops were low and lacked stimulation for prisoners. Some workshops were in need of updating to improve chances of employment upon release, in line with Rule 26.3 of the Revised European Prison Rules: "As far as possible the work provided shall be such as will maintain or increase prisoners' ability to earn a living after release' can be fully realised."

Work Training Certification

4.64 Between 2019 and 2021, five certificates were awarded to prisoners in the work training areas of laundry and Braille in Arbour Hill Prison. The only formal certification available in the prison was that provided by the school, which included cardiac first response and food safety.

A positive example of joint collaboration between education and work training was the facilitation of a stock control QQI course for prisoners working the stores. The stock control course was 80% work skills based and 20% school-based assignments.

While collaboration with the school to facilitate certification is good, the overall lack of formal work training certification in the prison is poor.

There was no formal training and certification in waste management and recycling. Arbour Hill Prison did not have a Work Training Officer assigned to the prison to facilitate industrial cleaning training to prisoners. There was no SafePass or CleanPass certification available in Industrial Cleaning. There were no industrial cleaners trained during the pandemic.

4.65 Operational prison staff (and not Work Training Officers) were assigned to oversee essential work areas such as industrial cleaning and laundry. There was no externally accredited certification for laundry, which had reportedly not been taken place for over eight years.

Staff in the prison were not adequately qualified to provide accredited training to prisoners. For instance, one officer in the wood shop and one in the laundry were trained, but could not provide certification to prisoners without a second trained officer.

Kitchen workers received on the job training in food hygiene, manual handling and knife handling.

4.66 At the time of the inspection visit, Arbour Hill Prison was not facilitating sufficient training and certification to people in custody. In many areas people in custody were highly credentialed prior to entering prison. As such, there is a great need for work training and prison management, in collaboration with the Irish Prison Service, the City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB) and prison school, and people in custody, to identify and implement work training certification programmes that are appropriate for the prisoner population, and that prioritise employment upon release.

4.67 An omnipresent concern expressed by staff and prisoners alike was that it would be unlikely for prisoners to gain employment upon release from prison.

There may be challenges associated with opportunities for employment for people released from the custody of Arbour Hill Prison, and it is recognised that prison staff and management show the utmost respect for the people in their care. However, there remains an onus on all prison Governors and officers to support the rehabilitation of prisoners so that they may better reintegrate upon release (Prison Rules 2007-2020, Rules 75 and 85). Therefore, further accreditation opportunities and measures to increase the involvement of external organisation and community bodies should be developed.

4.68 Certification awarded to prisoners included the prison name. This posed challenges for people who sought to furnish this certification in their efforts to gain employment.

Assessment - Work Training Certification: FAIR

- Many of the men in Arbour Hill prison were over the retirement age and had qualifications prior to their imprisonment.
- While prisoners contributed to society by producing items for charity, they were not provided with the choice of externally recognised certification. There was no externally recognised certification for work or workshops.
- Over the period of 2019-2021, less than a handful of prisoners gained an externally recognised work-training qualification.

Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives

4.69 While there were a number of workshops available in the prison, stagnation was evident for several of these as many were outdated or prisoners had been engaging with them for many years. For example, the print shop contained Heidelberg Print Presses. These machines were not in use for a number of years, but were recently repaired by a prisoner.

In the past, the print shop had offered print apprenticeships in conjunction with a third-level institution. However, this programme was no longer offered in the prison. Given advances in digital technology, print apprenticeships are no longer as relevant in the labour market. However, the print workshop could be updated to reflect current employment opportunities in this area and to allow prisoners to develop digital skills. Similarly, proposals to implement carpentry apprenticeships were not implemented.

It was reported that prisoners were disinterested in attending the Braille workshop. While the Braille workshop is a unique activity, and has provided a service to repair Braille machines and transcribe reading materials into Braille, opportunities for employment upon release are limited. The Prison should seek out additional activities that could be carried out in the Braille workshop as this would encourage participation and also possibly provide training in skills that offer more opportunities for certification and employment.

- 4.70** The prison had engaged with the community initiatives to develop the recycling work training initiative and to build garden structures. While local charity initiatives are important as a means for people in prison to positively contribute to society, there was no evident long-term strategy in place to assist prisoners to overcome obstacles in gaining employment upon release.
- 4.71** Several work training areas could benefit from joint collaboration with the school. For example, activity levels in the print and Braille shops could be improved if there were to be certifications in computer skills. Prisoners in the woodshop could avail of advanced design and technical drawing courses in the school.
- 4.72** There was recognition by prison staff of the need to review work training initiatives against the wider landscape of employment in the community. Similarly, prisoners identified areas such as bike repair, computer skills and cookery/life skills as potentially being of relevance for future employment.

Assessment - Sustainability of Work Training Initiatives: FAIR

- While some workshops in the prison had been in place for a long time, these workshops had low levels of prisoner activity.
- There were very limited community engagement work training initiatives available in the prison, which limited opportunities for prisoners to gain employment on release.

Arbour Hill Prison Recommendations

Arbour Hill Prison Recommendation 1:	The Governor of Arbour Hill Prison should ensure, in collaboration with the school, that the option of accredited work-training certification is available for people in custody. Focus should be on meeting the needs and requirements of people who may be elderly, or who have already received certification and thus may require intermediate and advanced training.
Arbour Hill Prison Recommendation 2:	In line with Rule 111 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Arbour Hill Prison should ensure that prisoners have access to a programme of work training. Arbour Hill Prison should proactively identify and implement opportunities for work training initiatives to be brought into the prison through external community engagement and through collaboration with the school.

D. IPS HQ Recommendations - Provision of Work Training

Recommendation 1:	The Irish Prison Service, in particular the Director General and Prison Governors, should review the ongoing imposition of Rules 32A and 36A (Prison Rules 2020 Amendment), with a view to removing related restrictions as soon as possible (see paragraph 2.3).
Recommendation 2:	A centralised and integrated data recording system should be put in place to accurately identify, track and report on engagement with purposeful activity. This data should be shared with the Inspectorate of Prisons and made publically available on a regular basis.
Recommendation 3:	The Irish Prison Service should develop an individual risk-assessed approach to determining maximum attendance numbers in work training activities.
Recommendation 4:	The Irish Prison Service should ensure that all prison officer posts are maximised to ensure access to and engagement with purposeful activity for all persons in custody. Prison officer posts and associated tasks should be flexible and designed to allow Governors to respond to changes in staffing structures.
Recommendation 5:	The Irish Prison Service should review and update its Prisoner Gratuities and Private Cash Policy to ensure it aligns with Rule 28.4 and Rule 105.4 of the revised European Prison Rules.
Recommendation 6:	The Irish Prison Service should ensure that the prisons have reliable access to fully qualified trainers to deliver a work training programme, which is aligned to the needs of people in custody and responsive to prevailing employment opportunities, and has a means of replacing a trainer when they move on. This measure will support the Irish Prison Service to provide suitable opportunities for people in custody to be trained to a certifiable standard commensurate with recognised qualifications frameworks and to facilitate opportunities for certification. Additionally, Work Training Officers supporting the work-training programmes should be provided with initial training and frequent and regular in-service education and training to support them in this role. Attendance in this training should be compulsory.
Recommendation 7:	The Irish Prison Service should ensure that all prisoners have access to externally accredited qualifications in all work training areas. Certification offered to prisoners should be labour-market tested and should be recognised by employers to improve employment prospects upon release.

<p>Recommendation 8:</p>	<p>Given the role of the Irish Prison Service in deciding what proposed initiatives are to be funded, it should place more emphasis on strategically identifying, in collaboration with prison staff, Governors and people in prison, initiatives that can be implemented across the prison-estate. Where applicable, the Irish Prison Service should also consult with ETBs and Further Education and Training (FET) to identify areas for collaboration, especially in relation to certification and sustainability of initiatives.</p>
<p>Recommendation 9:</p>	<p>The Irish Prison Service should remove the name of prisons on certification obtained by persons in custody. This will increase a prisoner's ability to earn a living after release in line with Rule 26.3 of the Revised European Prison Rules.</p>

5 PROVISION OF EDUCATION



- 5.1** This part of the report is written by Department of Education Inspectors in line with the 2020 Framework for the Inspection of Prisons - Rehabilitation and Development Focus Area. The Department of Education (DE) Inspectorate inspects the provision of education in prison establishments using the same assessment rating criteria applied to education provision in the wider community (See, para. 1.10). The DE Inspectorate evaluation examines Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, and Leadership and Management, and is underpinned by international human rights standards on education in prisons.⁶⁴

Introduction

- 5.2** A Thematic Inspection of Education and Training in three Dublin prisons took place during April, May and June 2022. The Office of Inspector of Prisons carried out this inspection in partnership with Inspectors from the Department of Education. The DE inspectors' focus was on the quality of education provided by the school and any associated factors that may contribute to or affect this provision.
- 5.3** Department of Education Inspectors report on the quality of teaching and learning and on the quality of management and leadership in prison schools. They affirm good practice and make recommendations, where appropriate, to aid the further development of educational provision.

How to Read the Education Section of the Thematic Inspection Report

- 5.4** During the Thematic Inspection, DE inspectors evaluated and reported under the following headings or areas of enquiry:
1. Quality of Teaching and Learning
 2. Quality of Leadership and Management

Inspectors describe the quality of each of these areas using the Inspectorate's quality continuum which is shown on appendix A of this report. The quality continuum provides examples of the language used by inspectors when evaluating and describing the quality of the school's provision in each area.

- 5.5** The Irish Prison Service and the respective Education and Training Board was given an opportunity to comment in writing on the findings and recommendations of the report, and their responses will be found in the appendix of this report.

⁶⁴ Council of Europe Rec No. R (89) 12 Education in Prison; UN Mandela Rules Rule 104, Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 26.

The Department of Education Inspectorate's Evidence Base and Inspection Activities

5.6 The list below outlines the range of evaluation activities that the DE inspectors engaged in during the evaluations in order to gather evidence and make their evaluative judgements.

- Lesson observations
- Co-curricular activity observations
- Review of resources and facilities
- Review of documentation and records
- Review of students' work and portfolios
- Meetings with members of school management
- Discussion with teachers
- Feedback to teachers
- Meetings with students
- Meetings with prison management
- Meeting with CDET B Organiser of Education and Director of Further Education

Overview

Introduction

5.7 The thematic inspection of Education and Training, was conducted by Department of Education (DE) inspectors in collaboration with inspectors from the Office of the Inspector of Prisons. The DE aspect of this thematic inspection comprised an inspection of education in four prison schools across three prisons; Wheatfield Prison, Mountjoy Main Prison, including the Progression Unit, and Arbour Hill Prison. The Department of Education Inspectorate recognises that delivering education in the prison environment presents a unique set of challenges and as such each inspection was conducted with full cognisance of the context of the individual schools.

Leadership and Management

5.8 The Irish Prison Service (IPS) and Education and Training Boards (ETB) work together to provide education in the twelve prisons in Ireland. This collaborative effort is governed by the joint IPS and ETB, Prison Education Strategy 2019-2022. Additionally, the Education and Training Boards (ETB) Act 2013 gives a remit to ETBs for the planning, provision and co-ordination of education and training in prisons. Teaching resources are provided to the prison schools under the trusteeship and management of ETBs. While it is good that there is a comprehensive strategy on Prison Education there is currently no IPS policy on the provision, delivery, resourcing, and organisation of education and training in prisons. **In order to provide a consistent approach to managing education provision across the prison estate, the IPS should develop such a policy in collaboration with all of the relevant stakeholders.**

- 5.9 The education and training programmes operate separately. The school under the remit of CDETB, provides education delivered by the teachers and the training programme is provided by the IPS and delivered in the main by Work Training Officers. There were some very good examples of collaboration noted during the inspection, for instance, the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) programme in Wheatfield Prison. However, there was significant scope for further collaboration and co-operation between the education and training programmes. **The schools included in this thematic inspection of education and their respective prison management teams, with the assistance of the CDETB, should work more closely together to further align the educational and training programmes with the needs of the students and requirements of prospective employers.**
- 5.10 The four schools visited have approximately the same teaching resources and accommodation despite significant differences in the size of the prison populations they serve. The capacity of the schools in Arbour Hill Prison and Mountjoy Prison's Progression Unit is adequate to provide sufficient school places for the size of the populations in these prisons. In the case of Wheatfield Prison, the school capacity is reasonably sufficient, if North Three School is included, as it is complemented by the work and training provision. However, there is very limited access to training opportunities in Mountjoy Prison, which leaves the school in the position of being the predominant provider of purposeful activity and the capacity of the school is not adequate to fulfil this remit for the size of the prison population. **The IPS should conduct an audit of provision for education, work, training and other activities and develop a system which ensures that the cumulative options available have sufficient capacity for the size of the population in each prison. This system once developed should be included in the IPS policy for education and training in prisons.**
- 5.11 There are highly effective processes and practices for supporting the work of the school in Arbour Hill Prison and the Mountjoy Prison's Progression Unit. However, the quality of support for the school within the prison context was fair in Mountjoy Main Prison School and in Wheatfield Prison School. Ensuring safety and security in the prison environment is paramount and it is accepted that at times the schools may suffer necessary full or partial closures. However, it was evident during the inspection that additional factors were impacting the operation of the schools in Mountjoy Main Prison and Wheatfield Prison. These factors included, enduring IPS Industrial Relations issues, and substance use amongst students. **The IPS and respective prison managements, in discharging their duty of care, should develop a strategic plan to resolve these issues and ensure that the rights, welfare, and needs of students are prioritised in decision making.**
- 5.12 The relationship between school management and prison management was either very good or good in the schools visited. The head teachers are included in Integrated Sentence Management (ISM) meetings and multi-disciplinary team meetings which is good practice. The expertise of school staff is respected within each of the prisons. However, in the prisons where there are significant issues in relation to student access to the school, teachers are faced with a more challenging work environment. The challenges are due to having to deal with the unpredictability of the opening of the school, the erosion of the start and finishing times, the inaccessibility of accommodation and resources, and difficulties in providing outreach support for the most vulnerable students.

While it is accepted and understood that safety and security are prioritised, a plan should be developed and put in place, to ensure that the teachers are facilitated to do their work without impediment, for as much of the school day as possible.

- 5.13** There has been very meaningful engagement between each of the four prison schools evaluated and the Organiser of Education in CDET in the Inaugural Quality Improvement Planning Process 2021-2022. The resulting Quality Improvement Plan 2021-2022 (QIP) describes the improvement needs of the schools very well. The process was genuinely reflective, evidence based, and evaluative. The QIP outlines a realistic phased approach to improvement. It is positive that the CDET has committed to allocating additional post-of-responsibilities for each school in order to enable them to establish formal administrative functions. This measure will support the schools in implementing the improvement actions outlined in the QIP. It marks the beginning of an ongoing review process and is highly valuable.

Teaching and Learning

- 5.14** The overall quality of teaching in all four schools visited was very good. The teachers demonstrated a very high level of pedagogical skill, and were flexible, creative and innovative in their teaching. They showed exceptionally high levels of commitment to their work in supporting students' wellbeing and learning. The learning programmes were designed around student needs and available teaching expertise, with teachers commendably teaching beyond their subject specialisms. The learning programmes include, literacy, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate subjects, Open University, QQI and a range of other accreditations. Valuable pre-release and career guidance supports are also provided. There was much evidence to show that teachers had availed of extensive continuing professional learning, designed courses, and independently upskilled, in order to facilitate the very broad a range of options for students. Well-established and effective process were in place in all four schools to assess students' individual needs and facilitate student choice in relation to accessing the subjects and programmes provided.
- 5.15** The quality of student outcomes varied from satisfactory to very good across the schools visited. Students in Arbour Hill School, and the Progression Unit in Mountjoy Prison achieve very good outcomes. Access to education in these two prisons is reliable and consistent; the schools only experience closures in very exceptional circumstances, and the start and end times of the school day are constant. Additionally, the prison environments are stable with fewer security issues and no notable substance use amongst students. Student outcomes in Mountjoy Main Prison School and to a lesser extent in Wheatfield Prison School, despite teachers' best efforts to support learning and achievement, are negatively impacted by difficulties in relation to substance use amongst students, and access to the school. Routine and regular access to lessons and consistent teaching are necessary in order to achieve good learning outcomes. In particular, students with literacy needs require regular contact with their teachers to have a reasonable chance of experiencing success in overcoming reading, writing, and comprehension difficulties.

- 5.16** In each of the four schools visited, the students unanimously described the school as a vital service, which is essential for helping them to gain skills and qualifications, and to cope with their sentences. They expressed great appreciation for the care and support they receive from their teachers. They also expressed appreciation for the opportunities they are receiving to improve their lives through education. It was evident that the schools provide essential opportunities for students to socialise with each other and their teachers which is important for personal development and wellbeing. The relationships between students and their teachers in all of the schools were characterised by very high levels of mutual respect, kindness, and warmth. The students of Arbour Hill School and Mountjoy Prison's Progression Unit expressed high levels of satisfaction with the access they have to the schools. In Mountjoy Men's Prison and Wheatfield Prison Schools the students indicated they were dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend in the schools and expressed a need for greater access to the school in order to achieve better learning outcomes.
- 5.17** Access to Information Technology (IT) for learning was satisfactory overall. Students accessed IT through supervised sessions in the computer rooms. Students had further access to IT in some classrooms. Open University students had access to a laptop and memory stick to complete assignments, with communication with the OU managed by school staff. The limited access to research materials presented difficulties in relation to facilitating students carrying out the necessary research to complete projects and assignments. There were some very good examples of teachers using IT effectively as a learning tool. **However, there is scope to further develop the use of IT in the classroom. Additionally, it is recommended that further access to technology for learning be provided for students in their cells. IT is currently being used successfully as a learning tool in prisons in other jurisdictions, this experience could be researched by IPS and ETBs as a potential support to implementing this recommendation.**
- 5.18** The quality of education provision for people in Wheatfield Prison and Mountjoy Prison who are on protection regimes is fair. Resources have been developed by the teachers for the in-cell TV channel. The Prison Education Strategy 2019-2022 (3.8) states that '*the prison education service will provide education, materials and services to students on restricted regimes where possible*', however, it was evident that there was insufficient support for the delivery of the materials and services prepared by teachers. Additionally, there was almost no education provision for people who were in Mountjoy Prison's Medical Unit at the time of the inspection. **People on protection regimes and in the Medical Unit are amongst the most vulnerable and isolated in the prisons visited and it is imperative that their educational needs, in fulfilment of their rights to purposeful activity, are met as a matter of urgency.**

A. Wheatfield Prison

5.19 The school in Wheatfield prison is one of six prison schools under the management of City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb). The overall management of the schools is the responsibility of the Organiser of Education appointed by CDETb but the day-to-day running of the school falls to the Head Teacher who is supported by a Deputy Head Teacher.

Main Findings

- 5.20**
- The achievement outcomes in the programmes provided in Wheatfield Prison School are good overall but satisfactory for a significant minority of students.
 - A commendable level of effort is invested in supporting literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). However, outcomes are negatively impacted by inconsistent and irregular access to the instruction in these areas.
 - A significant minority of people in prison have an unacceptably low level of access to meaningful or stimulating educational activities for extended periods of time; the detrimental effect on learning, and well-being for these people is very significant.
 - The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good. The school is well run, and teachers are highly-skilled and demonstrated a very high level of dedication to supporting their students' learning and development.
 - Student access to the prison school is fair. Inconsistent and erratic attendance is having a detrimental effect on learning and achievement.
 - The quality of relationships between school management, teachers and students is excellent.

Main Recommendations

- 5.21**
- In order to ensure better student outcomes, in general learning and in literacy, further access to the school, to learning and research resources, and information technology for learning should be facilitated by prison management.
 - Urgent attention needs to be given to improving educational provision for people who cannot access the school due to being on protection regimes. Additionally, the North Three School which exists to serve these people should be opened as soon as possible.
 - The school's guidance provision is shared between three prison schools and is limited in terms of potential impact. As resources become available the school and CDETb should look at ways to increase the guidance provision for the students.

Teaching and Learning

Student Outcomes

- 5.22** The achievement outcomes in the programmes provided are good overall but satisfactory for a significant minority of students. Outcomes are adversely affected by external factors such as inconsistent student access to the school, inflexibility of Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate programme requirements, and insufficient access to research resources. Outcomes for students with identified literacy difficulties are negatively impacted by irregular and inconsistent access to the school and their teachers. This is a particular issue for a significant minority of the prison population who do not attend the school for a variety of reasons. **The establishment of an outreach programme to meet the need of hard-to-reach students who are experiencing literacy difficulties should be strongly considered.**
- 5.23** A very good range of educational options is available. The range of programmes includes the Junior Cycle, Leaving Certificate, QQI levels 2, 3, 4 and 5 and non-certified courses, such as, ESOL and literacy. There are Open University (OU) courses available also. The programmes are adapted as necessary, the students can change from one subject to another if they wish, and programmes are designed within the school to meet specific needs; this is evidence of the flexibility shown by the school to meeting students' needs.
- 5.24** A commendable level of effort is invested in supporting literacy. The school has a range of valuable literacy strategies in place delivered mainly on a one-to-one basis. Additionally, every teacher in the school sees themselves as a literacy teacher and takes responsibility for developing literacy through teaching their subjects. However, there is a significant impediment to the achievement of good literacy outcomes, in that teachers' access to students is inconsistent and irregular. **It is recommended that people in prison with significant literacy needs be prioritised for regular and consistent access to the support they require.**
- 5.25** People whose first language is not English are supported well. Nineteen nationalities are represented in the prison population and many of these attend the school. The school has an effective system in place to assess students' English speaking and writing skills and from this the teachers provide appropriate programmes. These programmes are delivered with sensitivity and care in an appropriate environment. There is a very strong commitment on the part of the ESOL teachers to support this group within the prison. It was evident that as a result of their language difficulties these students have trouble understanding the systems within the broader prison environment. **Signage and other communication channels around the prison present challenges; this is an area that should be explored between the school and prison staff.**
- 5.26** Provision for developing numeracy skills is satisfactory. It is understandable that literacy takes priority, particularly with students' access to the school being so inconsistent, however, it is important that numeracy is not overlooked. To complement the highly effective provision of Mathematics in the school there is significant scope to exploit the many rich opportunities for the development of numeracy skills across the curriculum. The students engage in activities such as, organising charity events, music, art, textiles, history, geography, and vocational training. These activities are full of numeracy potential. **It is recommended that the school use these opportunities to build in meaningful numeracy learning.**

Student Experiences

- 5.27** The quality of learning was very good overall. Students in the lessons observed presented with a wide range of needs, talents and abilities, and learning was very well differentiated for each individual. Highly effective practice was seen where teachers allowed students to be independent and provided support only when necessary. This approach encouraged students to think for themselves and engage meaningfully with the learning challenge. At times, students would have benefitted from being given additional time to attempt tasks for themselves without pre-emptive teacher input. **It is recommended that teachers consciously allow time for students to process learning and think through their ideas before providing assistance.**
- 5.28** There is no provision of extra-curricular activities in the evening currently. Before the Covid-19 restrictions there was a range of evening courses, classes and group meetings available in the school. This provision was essential for a number of reasons; it provided opportunities to access learning for those who work during the day; it offered a safe space for those who do not want to be on the landings in the evening time; and it allowed people in prison to access vital addiction support through Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings. **Consideration should be given to resuming the evening activities in order to allow students to have access to these important supports.**
- 5.29** There are a significant minority of people in Wheatfield prison who have an unacceptably low level of access to meaningful or stimulating activities for extended periods of time. A range of educational videos for students to view on the in-cell TV channel as well as activities to support learning has been developed by teachers. The video resources are not being delivered. There are difficulties in relation to the delivery and suitability of the hardcopy learning materials. While the support activities are well-designed, their content does not suit the needs of all students; being too simplistic for some and requiring teacher input for others. The detrimental effect on learning, and well-being for people who have no access to the school is potentially very significant. **This situation requires urgent attention and remedy.**
- 5.30** The student voice is strong in the school. Students choose their own course of study, are facilitated to change if necessary, and are afforded considerable autonomy in the lesson activities they engage in. It is also important that the students themselves see that they can contribute in a constructive way to the development of the school and their own development within the school. The CDET B Quality Improvement Plan 2021-22, outlines measures to address student voice in the schools under its remit. This development is very positive. Additionally, the Red Cross members of the student body play an extensive role in representing the voices of students.
- 5.31** There was very strong evidence to show that the school is essential to the wellbeing of students. Utmost respect was observed in the interactions between students and school staff. The atmosphere was warm and welcoming and there was a real sense of belonging in the school.

- 5.32** The evaluation took place during a highly effective “Wellbeing Week”. A range of events was organised covering areas such as, mental and physical health; healthy eating; exercise and sport; music and drama; as well as mindfulness and meditation. It is good that the students themselves participated in the planning for the week. People in the prison who would not usually go to the school were encouraged to attend the events. It was evident from the level of professionalism in the student performances, the joy and laughter in the school, and the high level and quality of student engagement that these events had a very positive impact on wellbeing.

Teacher Individual Practice

- 5.33** The teachers in Wheatfield School are highly-skilled practitioners who demonstrate a very high level of dedication to supporting their students’ learning and development. They teach a wide range of subjects, which often requires on-the-job upskilling, additional training, and curriculum development. They are very inventive in their use of resources and other teaching strategies; there were many excellent examples of teachers using everyday objects to create activities for students or to enhance explanations in lessons. They recognise the emotional aspect of learning. A particular strength of the teaching staff is the ability to engage reluctant students, to be attuned to individual student needs, and to allow these needs to guide learning.
- 5.34** Students who are due to be released are supported through an optional pre-release programme which provides information on educational and vocational opportunities in the community, and information on how to access support. This programme makes very good use of outside speakers, who represent the various services which are available. A parenting course is also provided to assist students in preparing for release. These essential services support students to rebuild their lives on release from prison. However, these courses are accessed mainly by students in the school, which leaves a considerable cohort of the prison population not availing of these pre-release educational supports.
- 5.35** The quality of the relationships between school management, teachers and students is excellent. Every member of school staff is highly committed and takes personal satisfaction from doing their very best for the students. Not only do they employ creativity, flexibility and generosity in their teaching, they also create a sense of connectedness and belonging in the school.

Teacher Collective Practice

- 5.36** Whole-school and subject planning is well established and effective. There are curricular plans which provide an appropriate outline of each subject taught in the school. Effective practice is evident in the minutes of staff planning meetings which describe an audit of school development needs and in-house provision of upskilling and CPL opportunities. Faculty meetings are routinely held and cover cross-curricular planning as well as individual subject planning which is very good practice. It is highly valuable to teaching and learning that the teachers have participated in extensive CPL covering a wide range of relevant learning areas.

Leadership and Management

Managing the School within the Prison Context

- 5.37** The school is well run. The relationship between school management and prison management is good. The school is represented on review boards, and at multi-disciplinary meetings, and its role is highly valued within the prison. School management expressed appreciation for the support it receives from prison management. However, the school operates within a constantly changing prison environment. In addition to the disruption caused by Covid-19, system instability, such as, regular changes in prison senior management, were widely reported to impact the ability of the school to provide consistency for students. **While it is accepted that change is necessary at times, efforts should be made to better manage change and to stabilise the operational systems affecting the school.**
- 5.38** Student access to the prison school is fair. Attendance at school is inconsistent and erratic. There are current difficulties in relation to enabling the school to run at full capacity, the reason given for this included staff shortages due to Covid-19. In addition, even if students are accessing the school, the start and end-of-day times have become eroded which has the effect of shortening the school day. School forms part of the '*five hours per day, five days per week of out of cell time and authorised structured activity*' that is outlined in Prison Rule 27 (3). **Every effort should be made to ensure that the school can run at capacity and the students can access the full school day.**
- 5.39** Good educational resources are available in Wheatfield prison but the use of these resources is fair. There are two schools in Wheatfield Prison. In addition, some students avail of limited education provision from their cells. One of the schools is currently operational. The other school, North Three, which serves prisoners on protection is closed which leaves these students with no access to a physical school environment. Other learning and recreational resources such as the AstroTurf pitch are under-utilised. In addition to supporting wellbeing, the positive impact that engagement in exercise, educational and creative tasks, and other forms of purposeful activity has on maintaining order and security is significant. **The North Three section of the school should be reopened as soon as possible and better use should be made of the valuable resources that are available.**
- 5.40** There is very good practice in relation to encouraging people who are in Wheatfield prison to avail of education. The work of the Assistant Governor assigned to education and training and the Chief Work-Training Officer demonstrates a commitment to effective collaboration with school management. A number of valuable initiatives are in place to open the school up to more people. These include the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) coaching course that takes place in the school and outdoors; Gaisce; The President's Award; Physical Education (PE) in the school; the design and creation of a sensory garden; and the inclusion of digital literacy for those working in the print shop. Very good use is made of these opportunities which overlap training workshops and school provision, to allow people who have had previous adverse school experiences to access education in a non-threatening way. An open day was organised by the school to increase participation. All of this is good practice.

Leading Teaching and Learning

- 5.41** The senior management team of Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher who are supported by CDETB's Organiser of Education for the Dublin Prison Schools provide very high quality leadership to the school. They lead a highly effective collaborative planning process which is reflective, inclusive and creative in identifying and meeting the diverse needs of the school. The senior management team support the implementation of the CDETB's mission statement which is to provide '*education that is quality-assured, student-centred, and which facilitates life-long learning*' is lived out in all aspects of school life.
- 5.42** The challenges of delivering educational programmes that were designed for consistent and regular contact, in an uncertain environment, are significant. Teachers spend considerable time in their classrooms waiting for students to arrive, this can be difficult, particularly when the students are under pressure to meet course requirements or prepare for examinations. While the school has been creative and flexible in managing these conditions, the limitations placed on the school by its context lead to teachers expressing frustration. The students are also frustrated and can present to the school annoyed, dysregulated, and not ready for learning. **It is recommended that the school develops strategies to cope with the unpredictability of its context in order to get optimum value from the learning time available for students.**
- 5.43** Very good use is made of available data to inform education decisions taken within the prison school. Data on students' previous education is accessed through the Prisoner Education Management System (PEMS) system. The school also completes an initial assessment of students' needs on entry to the school. These data and assessments are used to create an Adult Basic Education (ABE) plan based on needs, interests, and learning and future goals of each student. Every effort is made to ensure that work completed in other prisons, is transferred so that learning is documented and there is a continuum of education for the learner.
- 5.44** There are good educational opportunities for students who attend the school in Wheatfield prison. Educational provision would be very good if access to the school and other educational options were improved. '*A broad and flexible programme of education*' which is in line with Prison Rule 110 (1) is available. This prison rule is central to the delivery of the school's curriculum. The school's provision supports people in prison to '*cope with their imprisonment, and achieve personal development*'. The curricular and co-curricular programmes such as a pre-release and parenting programmes assist them to '*prepare for life after their release from prison, and establish the appetite and capacity for lifelong learning*'.
- 5.45** Access to books and reading material is fair. The main library is currently closed and books are only available on request. It is evident from the library space that it has not functioned as a library in a considerable period of time. The impact of the continued limited access to library and books on education, learning and wellbeing is potentially significant. The Council of Europe recommendations state that students '*should have direct access to a well-stocked library at least once a week*'. **The prison authorities should ensure that they are fully compliant with this recommendation and with Rule 110(6) of the Prison Rules, 2007, by providing this level of access to the library as soon as is practicable.**

- 5.46** There is limited access to information technology (IT) for learning. While it is understood that there are necessary security restrictions, there are some courses that require students to conduct research and have access to a variety of research materials. Additionally, there are people who cannot access the school. Teachers are currently doing their best to provide additional materials, books and tuition which is commendable. **It is recommended that CDET, and the school, in collaboration with the Irish Prison Service look at ways to allow students to have more access to IT for learning.**
- 5.47** The Care and Rehabilitation Directorate of the Irish Prison Service provides the funding for school resources. There is evidence to indicate that it can take considerable time for requests for resources to be considered. It is good that a Personal Computer (PC) has been provided for each classroom. However, work needs to be done to make the physical school environment more conducive to supporting learning. **The school should seek to create print-rich classroom environments and should remove excess or past student work to ensure that displays are fresh and celebrate current achievement.**
- 5.48** The school's guidance provision is good but shared between three prison schools and is limited in terms of potential impact. There are advantages of this arrangement in that the guidance counsellor can provide continuity of education between settings and can advise and support students at crucial transition points. The guidance counsellor provides vital advice and support around education and work options available and helps students to make a plan for their future. The guidance plan is very good. However, there are significant challenges in relation to managing the service across three different locations. **As resources become available the school and CDET should look at ways to increase the guidance provision.**

Developing Leadership Capacity

- 5.49** The quality of school self-evaluation is very good. The management and staff of Wheatfield Prison School are currently engaging in the CDET quality improvement planning process under the leadership of the CDET's Organiser of Prison Education. They also fulfil the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Quality Assurance (QA) requirements. Both of these processes are supported by a well-established and systematic review and reporting process at school level. Examples of good school review practice can be found in; the prioritising of areas for the upcoming leadership and management posts and the use of the quality standards from The Department of Education's Quality Framework Looking at Our School 2016 in the review process.

B. Mountjoy Men's Prison

Progression Unit

5.50 The Progression Unit is a low security, reduced supervision, semi-open unit. There were 65 students present in the school on the first day of the evaluation and 57 on the second day.

Main Findings

- 5.51**
- The quality of student outcomes in the Progression Unit of Mountjoy Prison is very good and is supported by the very good support from the prison management, good attendance, access to appropriate facilities and resources, and commitment on the part of teachers and students alike.
 - The quality of teacher individual practice was good overall with a significant minority of lessons being very good. In a few lessons there was scope for a better balance between teacher and student input.
 - The school provides satisfactory access to a blended approach which incorporates information technology (IT) in teaching and learning.
 - Support for the school within the prison context is very good and the day-to-day management of the school is highly effective.
 - The school timetable requires attention; there are currently two lessons timetabled per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, they run for over an hour and a half which is a long time for some subjects.
 - The quality of school self-evaluation is very good.

Main Recommendations

- 5.52**
- Teachers should make greater use of teaching approaches that encourage active student participation and enable students to develop independent learning skills.
 - It is recommended that further ways to facilitate more open and reliable access to blended learning should be explored.
 - The school should review the timetable and consider alternative arrangements that better facilitate some subjects.

Teaching and Learning

Student Outcomes

5.53 The quality of student outcomes in the Progression Unit of Mountjoy Prison is very good. The students have completed a wide range of courses at various levels depending on their learning needs and abilities. The successful outcomes are supported by the stability of the learning environment in that there are few security issues, good attendance, access to appropriate facilities and resources, and commitment on the part of teachers and students alike.

- 5.54** The students are facilitated to complete courses and gain qualifications in areas that will benefit them in terms of employment when they leave. The Barista course, for example, is a welcome new initiative that not only provides the practical Barista skills but also the experience of working in the pressurised environment of a coffee shop. The learning in the Barista course is complemented by the Customer Service course in which students receive a QQI level 4 qualification. In a similar way the school offers a Manual Handling course which provides certification for students. In the past this course worked well with the Safe Pass course which was provided by Work Training Officers through the training programme, but the Safe Pass course is no longer available. **It is recommended that the Safe Pass course be reinstated as soon as possible.**
- 5.55** A wide range of accreditation opportunities are provided for students. In addition to QQI level 2 to level 5 students receive accreditation in Food Safety, and Cardiac First Response. Leaving Certificate English, Mathematics, French and Art have been provided in the past but there were no students completing Leaving Certificate subjects over the last two years due to Covid restrictions. It is good that Leaving Certificate History is currently being provided. **It is recommended now that Covid restrictions have eased that consideration be given to adding further subjects to the Leaving Certificate programme within the school.**
- 5.56** The school provides timetabled lessons for literacy and ESOL. Highly effective practice was noted where an individualised approach was taken; in these instances the teacher provided a number of suitable tasks to match student needs. In one case, the vocabulary of the kitchen was being taught to enable a student to work more effectively in the kitchen. It is also highly commendable that the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) resources are being used to support literacy. In a few lessons there was need for a better balance between student support and independent learning. **Teachers should further use approaches that encourage participation and enable students to develop independent learning skills.**
- 5.57** Mathematics is provided on the school's curriculum. In addition, there was evidence of teachers integrating numeracy in their lessons. In the Home Economics lesson observed, for example, the teacher used every opportunity to include numeracy. **Further opportunities to integrate numeracy should be facilitated in subjects that are numeracy rich. In addition, the work in relation to the Barista course and the coffee dock that is soon to be installed, could be used to create a business/numeracy module. Student surveys are routinely conducted and the analysis of these surveys would also be highly suitable for numeracy work and could be used for this purpose.**

Student Experiences

- 5.58** The quality of student participation and engagement in learning was very good. Students demonstrated an interest in learning and in their subjects. They were motivated to complete lesson activities and it was evident that they were enjoying the learning process. The students described the school as a very positive place to learn and were highly appreciative of the work their teachers do.

- 5.59** Eight students were following Open University courses at the time of the evaluation. It is good practice that the school has provided a teacher who has responsibility for managing communication with the OU. This work involves, submission of applications and assignments, and facilitating students to receive course materials. While it is positive that students can study with the OU and that laptops are provided for OU students, there are significant challenges in completing the courses. The students have very limited internet access which presents difficulties in relation in to accessing academic resource materials. Furthermore, there can be delays in students receiving materials and accessing support from college tutors. The students demonstrate exceptional resilience and determination in overcoming these challenges and completing OU courses.
- 5.60** The students have the autonomy to attend the school for personal, family or other reasons without working towards a formal qualification; this is an approach that values the enrichment benefits of education. The school takes a holistic approach and provides courses and classes to support students' mental health. In particular, students reported that the Art course, Pyrography course, and Craft lessons not only provide opportunities for certification but also help them cope with their sentences. It is very positive that students can produce gifts to send home to their loved ones.
- 5.61** A music lesson was observed during the evaluation and it was evident that music also plays a very important role in facilitating self-expression and supporting students' mental health. In addition, Home Economics provides students with the valuable skills to cook healthy meals for themselves and their families. It is very good that the students are presented with a book of recipes covering all of the dishes they have made throughout the course when they leave.
- 5.62** There are very good efforts to include the student voice in the school. In addition to having a choice about coming to school and the subjects to study, surveys have been conducted and the school has held focus group meetings to garner student views. The students themselves identified a need to advertise the school service to the wider Progression Unit population. They then came up with the idea to produce a school newspaper; it is very good practice that the name of the newspaper was decided in a democratic way following a competition. '*The Insider*' is printed in the school and provides a platform for students to share their experiences, and to promote the school and the courses that are available. Anyone can contribute articles and students can also submit art work and poetry. This is evidence of the very high level of commitment on the part of the teacher who facilitates this work.
- 5.63** Supporting student wellbeing is an important aspect of the school's work. The school recognises that the quality of relationships has a direct impact on students' wellbeing and the quality of engagement and learning. High quality relationships were evident in all classrooms visited, in discussions with students and teachers, and in observing interactions around the school. As a further support to students' wellbeing, meditation is provided; during the evaluation a meditation session was observed and it was evident that this provision was of great benefit to students' mental health and wellbeing.

Teacher Individual Practice

- 5.64** The quality of teacher individual practice was good overall with a significant minority of lessons being very good. Lessons were well planned with all of the necessary resources prepared in advance. The learning objectives were shared with students at the outset of lessons, and progress was assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the lessons. The main teaching methodology comprised a well differentiated individualised approach with many opportunities for student contribution and was highly effective. In a few lessons there was scope for better balance between teacher and student input. **The good practice of facilitating a collaborative approach to learning observed in most lessons should be extended to all.**
- 5.65** The school provides satisfactory access to blended learning. Students can chose from a menu of teacher produced short courses and the IT teacher facilitates access through a monitored system in the computer room. Students can also access the Open University's free Open Learn courses in subjects covering a very wide range of interests. This was observed during the evaluation to be effective. However, at times during the lesson student access was hampered by problems with the computer system that took time to resolve, for example, disconnections from the network and password issues. Additionally, the blended learning programme was designed for students' use in their cells and this is not happening. **It is recommended that further ways to facilitate more open and reliable access to blended learning should be explored.**

Teacher Collective Practice

- 5.66** All teachers engage in an effective annual curriculum planning and review process. This process involves a report to school management on the programmes provided, methodologies and assessment. There is a template provided which makes the process consistent and is evidence of good management. The reports are genuinely reflective and contain very good critical analysis. In keeping with highly effective practice teachers evaluate their own learning needs in order to enable them to offer as much expertise as possible to the school. The reports express teachers' view on how relationships influence motivation and learning. They also reflect on what is demotivating both for students and themselves in delivering the curriculum. Additionally, it is very good practice that these reflective reports feed into overall school planning.

Leadership and Management

Managing the School within the Prison Context

- 5.67** Support for the school within the prison context is very good. From an operational perspective the Progression Unit is a stable environment with few security issues and there are few school closures and then only in very exceptional circumstances. The school expressed appreciation for the support it gets from prison management in this regard. Attendance is very good as a consequence of this support, the students' interest in learning, and the high quality provision in the school.

- 5.68** Day-to-day management of the school is highly effective. The senior management team comprises a head teacher and assistant head teacher and their clearly defined roles support the very well-organised management of the school. It is highly commendable that the school and prison staff make every effort and are flexible in facilitating students who also work in the prison to attend. Additionally, the incentivised regime scheme, where people in prison must be actively engaged in activities, including education, encourages participation.

Leading Teaching and Learning

- 5.69** There is a documented well-managed approach to recruiting students and to identifying individual student needs. Everyone entering in the Progression Unit is referred to the school on admission by prison management. Referrals also come from Integrated Sentence management (ISM) officers or class officers, word-of-mouth, and posters on the landings. An initial assessment is carried out for each student and courses are assigned to students on the basis of their needs. Interviews are also held on an ongoing basis to assign students to new classes when they have completed courses. All of this is very good practice.
- 5.70** The timetable requires attention. The morning lesson is from 9.50am to 11.50am and in the afternoon the lesson typically starts shortly after 2pm and runs until near 4pm. This means that lessons can be up to two hours long. It is good that students can take a break during each lesson as it is hard to concentrate on certain subjects for such a long period of time. **It is recommended that the school review its timetable. For example, the morning and evening time could be broken up into a block of two or three different subjects. Subjects that require the full morning or afternoon, for example Home Economics or Art could still be accommodated in the proposed new timetable structure.**
- 5.71** The school provides valuable courses for students to prepare for release from prison. The work experience lesson observed supported students effectively to create a Curriculum Vitae, to reflect on prior learning and work experience, and to document any qualifications they have received. The pre-release lesson observed dealt with the emotional aspects of release and covered topics such as, managing expectations and difficult feelings, dealing with sadness, and relaxation techniques.

Developing Leadership Capacity

- 5.72** The quality of school self-evaluation is very good. The management and staff of Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit School are currently engaging in the CDETБ quality improvement planning process under the leadership of the CDETБ's Organiser of Prison Education. They also fulfil the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Quality Assurance (QA) requirements. Both of these processes are supported by a well-established and systematic review and reporting process at school level.

5.73 In keeping with very good practice school self-evaluation is complemented by student surveys. The results of the surveys carried out in the Progression Unit are very informative and insightful. The surveys compare being in the prison during Covid restrictions and under normal conditions, and highlight how difficult it was to manage prison life without the school. They also emphasise the importance of the encouragement and advice provided by their teachers and their teachers' willingness to help. They highlight the value of the learning programme provided and in particular, the value to their wellbeing of the pre-release course and the mindfulness and meditation classes. Additionally, they provide evidence that the teachers are open to amending their practice and that they act on student suggestions.

Main Campus/Medical Unit

5.74 Mountjoy is a closed, medium security prison for adult males. Resources for the provision of education in Mountjoy Prison School are managed by City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETB). CDETB ensures that fully-qualified and highly-skilled teachers are allocated to deliver the school's education programme.

Main Findings

- 5.75**
- The quality of teaching in Mountjoy Prison School is very good. The teachers are highly committed and are innovative and flexible in their work. They demonstrate great kindness, care, and respect in their dealings with students.
 - Despite teachers' best efforts, student outcomes are satisfactory overall and are adversely effected by substance use among students and insufficient student access to the school.
 - The school is limited in the number of students it can accommodate, this makes it very difficult for the school to provide adequate access for the almost all students and leaves a significant minority of students with very low levels of access to meaningful or stimulating activities for extended periods of time.
 - The school provides dedicated classes to address the students' literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) needs. However, successful outcomes are negatively impacted by the irregularity and infrequency of teacher contact with students.
 - A blended learning programme of learning activities and educational videos to view on the in-cell TV channel has been developed by teachers. However, this programme was not being facilitated at the time of the evaluation.
 - Operational support for the school within the prison context is fair. The day-to-day support for the school is inadequate and the school is so short in terms of accommodation that it cannot appropriately meet the needs of the student cohort.

Main Recommendations

- 5.76
- More frequent and reliable access to the school should be facilitated to improve learning outcomes for students. The day-to-day support required for the school to function well and increased accommodation to allow the students to have appropriate access to the school should be provided as a matter of urgency.
 - The outreach programme designed by the teachers to provide essential literacy support to those in most need of it, should be put in place as a matter of priority.
 - The viewing of blended learning videos on the in-cell TV channel and provision of teacher support with the associated learning materials should be facilitated. Consideration should be given to allowing the use of digital devices with blended learning pre-loaded for students to use in their cells.

Teaching and Learning

Student Outcomes

- 5.77 There is highly effective teaching in Mountjoy Prison School and the teachers are very committed to their work. However, despite best efforts on the part of the school, the quality of student outcomes is satisfactory, overall. There are good levels of engagement with certified courses, and the participation in non-accredited courses is also good. However, for a significant minority of students, outcomes are adversely effected by the extent of the substance use evident in their demeanour, which negatively impacts their ability to participate fully in learning. Additionally, access to the school is inadequate for almost all students and this impacts curricular choices, the level at which subjects are pursued, time in school, and consequently student outcomes.
- 5.78 A wide range of accreditation opportunities is provided for students. The school provides level 2 to level 5 Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) courses, Leaving Certificate subjects and Open University courses, and other certifications such as Cardiac First Response, Food Safety and Hygiene, and the International Therapy Examination Council (ITEC) personal trainer qualification. **It is good that the school has stated as a planning goal to include more level 5 courses. However, more consistent access to the school for students is needed to make significant inroads into the achievement of this goal.**
- 5.79 The school takes a holistic approach to education which centres on the personal development of students. Provision is informed by the key principles of adult education, and caters for the needs and interests of the students. Teacher capacity and availability of subject specialisms are factors in determining the curriculum. For example, Mathematics is not on the curriculum due to unavailability of a mathematics teacher. However, there is a good choice available for students. There is a very good balance between accredited and non-accredited provision. Students are given valuable opportunities to engage with learning for its own sake, through the Creative Arts, participation in PE activities and/or learning to cook a nutritious meal for themselves and their families.

- 5.80** A significant minority of students present with poor or very poor literacy, numeracy, and/or English languages skills. The school provides dedicated classes to address the students' literacy and ESOL needs. However, while there is some success in these areas, outcomes are limited by the irregularity and infrequency of teacher contact with students. School management and staff identified a need to provide an outreach service for the people in the prison with the greatest literacy needs and least access to education. The teachers designed a programme for these learners and were prepared to use the time period before students arrive to the school to deliver the programme on the landings. However, this initiative was not facilitated. **It is recommended that the programme designed by the teachers to provide essential literacy support to those in most need of it, be provided as a matter of priority.**
- 5.81** Very good practice was evident where an integrated approach was taken to literacy and numeracy. For example, literacy and numeracy were embedded in the craft QQI programme and were observed to be reinforced throughout the craft lesson; this comprised highly effective questioning around patterns and shapes, reading, writing, and spelling. One of the main advantages of this approach was that engagement in the craft relaxed the students and improved their willingness to engage with literacy and numeracy.
- 5.82** The quality of student projects and music performances was very good. Throughout the evaluation it was evident that students are provided with many opportunities to reach their potential in The Arts. Completed art projects provided good evidence of the development of a wide range of skills and creativity among students. An example of this could be seen in the creation of a large scale collage expressing student views, ideas and feelings about the war in Ukraine. A further example of positive engagement with the Arts could be seen in the music lesson; the performances not only demonstrated excellent learning and very high levels of talent but also the positive impact on mental health of engaging with Music.
- 5.83** PE is a highly effective area of learning in the school. The courses available range from circuit training to yoga and take a holistic approach. In line with very good practice there are opportunities for accreditation through the PE curriculum in the school. Students complete QQI level 3 in Biology which leads to the level 4 in Health-Related Fitness. They can also complete modules in QQI level 2, 3 or 4 in Health and Fitness. Students can choose to avail of those opportunities for accreditation or, equally, can pursue the programmes for personal development. The ITEC personal trainer qualification is of particular value as it offers employment opportunities for students once they leave. Students can add to the ITEC qualification by completing TRX, exercise to music, and other modules.

Student Experiences

- 5.84** The quality of student participation and engagement in learning was very good in the lessons observed. The students demonstrated an enthusiasm for learning, a keenness to get to school and a commitment to their teachers. The students were lively in class discussions and freely expressed their views on the relevant topics being studied. They cooperated well with their teachers in all lessons observed.

- 5.85** The school accommodation is too small for the demand for places, and there are groups who cannot mix for operational reasons, these issues leave a significant minority of people with very low levels of access to meaningful or stimulating activities for extended periods of time. A blended learning programme which comprises a range of educational videos to view on the in-cell TV channel as well as activities to support learning have been developed by teachers. The videos produced by the teachers were not being shown at the time of the evaluation. The teachers deliver learning materials directly to people in their cells but there is no teaching taking place for these students. **It is recommended that the blended learning videos and teacher support with the associated learning materials be facilitated. Additionally, consideration should be given to allowing the use of digital devices with blended learning resources pre-loaded for students to use in their cells.**
- 5.86** At the time of the inspection visit there was very limited access to education for people in the Medical Unit of the prison. There are two classrooms in the Medical Unit which were not being used. The detrimental effect on learning, and well-being for these people is potentially very significant. **This situation requires urgent attention and remedy.**
- 5.87** It was evident that the school is an essential service that the students value greatly. Given the varied and significant challenges faced by the students, the role of the school in supporting them to rebuild their lives cannot be overstated. Teachers and students alike described the school as a sanctuary where students can come to learn, interact with each other and their teachers, and avail of opportunities for personal development. Throughout the evaluation it was evident that there is great warmth and care in the relationships between the students and their teachers.

Teacher Individual Practice

- 5.88** The quality of teacher individual practice was very good in the lessons observed. Lessons were well planned, and as they progressed were adapted and amended as necessary to suit student needs. Teachers demonstrated a very high level of skill in managing lesson activities, maintaining engagement and interest, and ensuring that individual learning needs were met. The breadth of the curriculum provides evidence of teachers' willingness to upskill and design programmes around student needs. It was also evident that teachers are creative and flexible and will go beyond the bounds of their subject specialism to ensure that students are offered as wide as possible a choice of subjects and courses of study.
- 5.89** The teachers demonstrated great sensitivity in managing conversations around challenging topics such as discrimination. They allowed views to be expressed and facilitated differences of opinion to be aired but still maintained focus on the learning objectives. There were examples of highly effective participatory learning environments. There was scope in a few lessons for greater teacher awareness of students' cultural background and/or understanding of the extent to which the learners' concept of the world lags behind societal developments. **Therefore, while there were some examples of good practice observed, these good practices should be extended to all discussions of this nature.**

- 5.90** Teachers showed great care and patience as they supported students to engage with the lesson tasks. They provided very structured learning tasks supported by a range of resources, including the very good practice of providing primary sources in History. However, in a few lessons a scaffolded approach was required to enable more meaningful engagement with the learning and increased levels of student input. **It is recommended that this approach be adopted further.**
- 5.91** In most classrooms visited, learning was very well differentiated. There were students who had been in the class groups for some time and others who were just starting out; the teachers provided a variety of learning tasks and modified their teaching to manage the needs of individual students very well. In a few instances, individual students dominated the lesson and a more differentiated approach was needed to enable all learners to participate fully. **The good differentiation practices that were noted in most lessons should be extended to all lessons.**
- 5.92** The quality of assessment in the lessons observed was very good. Teachers demonstrated a keen awareness of student individual needs through highly effective monitoring and assessment of progress. Feedback was provided on an ongoing basis and was appropriately developmental. It was very good to note teachers using assessment to challenge students to improve their work and strive to achieve at the highest level possible. The QQI programmes are subject to external moderation and were being prepared for review at the time of the evaluation. The school takes a systematic and organised approach to managing this process.
- 5.93** There was very good use of teacher questioning to support critical thinking. Teachers used prompts to encourage differing perspectives and probing questions to challenge thinking and develop critical analysis. Questioning was also used to very good effect in assisting students to understand concepts. In Art, for instance, there was excellent discussion around the properties of oil paint, white spirit and water which allowed students to understand how these three elements interact.

Teacher Collective Practice

- 5.94** Whole-school and curriculum planning is effective and collaborative. There are curricular plans for each subject which outline course content, methodologies, and assessment. It is highly valuable to teaching and learning that the teachers have participated in extensive Continual Professional Learning (CPL) covering a wide range of relevant learning areas. The schools is well supported by the CDET B Curriculum Development Unit in the provision of CPL for teachers.
- 5.95** There has been very good engagement in a review of the post of responsibilities which has facilitated school management in introducing effective leadership practices to support the school's work. This process comprised an analysis of what is working well and areas that require attention within the school. The minutes of the review meetings show that the process was genuinely reflective. In addition, the process was guided by the standards of effective practice outlined in the Department of Education's Quality Framework: *Looking at Our School 2016*. The review reflects the efforts school management and teachers are making to progress change and development, and also the difficulties of delivering the service within the prison context.

- 5.96** The minutes of planning meetings indicate that teachers are highly committed to supporting their students and are creative in planning to meet their needs. For example, the school devised a plan to support students who had been in the school a long time, had completed all of the available courses, and required further challenge. This plan involved using the library space, which has a large central area, to provide blended learning on a number of computers. Unfortunately, there have been operational difficulties in opening the library space to the school. **This excellent idea should be revisited and every effort should be made to overcome difficulties and to ensure that this provision can be made available for students.**

Leadership and Management

Managing the School within the Prison Context

- 5.97** Operational support for the school within the prison context is fair. Mountjoy Prison is described as a prison focusing on education and mental health. The school is the primary provision for rehabilitation and prevention of reoffending. As such, the school is fundamental to the development of people in the prison, to supporting them to cope with their sentences, and rebuild their lives on release. The investment in education in Mountjoy Prison School both in terms of resources and effort is considerable. It is understandable, in exceptional circumstances that prison officer resources may need to be redirected for operational reasons. However, the day-to-day support for the school is not adequate. There are a significant number of full and partial school closures, and the start and end times of the school day have been eroded to the extent that teacher time is underutilised. It is also not acceptable that the school is so short in terms of accommodation that it cannot appropriately meet the needs of the student cohort, when alternatives exist in the prison complex and are not being used. **The day-to-day support required for the school to function well and increased accommodation to allow the students to have appropriate access to the school should be provided as a matter of urgency.**
- 5.98** The prison school accommodation is not adequate to service demand for places. The school is divided over two levels. The upstairs section has a multi-purpose office space. There are four general purpose classrooms; a computer room with six stations; and an art room. The classrooms are well maintained with some storage space, and have good educational resources including a large screen computer monitor. The art room has a sink and some storage space, but limited space for students to work. Access to the rooms is through a very narrow corridor. At times during the evaluation there were students waiting for interviews, moving from room-to-room, and some classrooms were very full. Students were cramped into a small space, and at times expressed frustration, for example, at being brought to the school late; these are factors that can potentially contribute to an unpredictable and unstable school environment.

- 5.99** The quality of the school accommodation and facilities is satisfactory overall but weak in some areas. In the downstairs section of the school there is a small music room which is divided into a recording studio, a performance space and teaching space; an auditorium which is divided into a PE hall and a craft room with a stage which is unusable; and a kitchen which is suitable for teaching. The craft teacher uses bottles of water and a basin in lieu of a sink, which, in a learning environment, is difficult to manage. The music lessons and PE lessons can be noisy and there is no sound proofing; this can be disruptive to learning in adjacent classrooms. **It is recommended that the prison management provides access to further available learning spaces as a means of extending the school accommodation and provision. Furthermore, facilities in the existing spaces need to be upgraded and improved.**
- 5.100** Access to the library is fair. There is a large, bright library with a very good range of fiction, non-fiction and reference books within the school space. The library service, however, is not under the remit of the prison officers with responsibility for the operation of the school and is rarely accessible for student use. This arrangement leaves a very valuable and much needed learning space and resources inaccessible to the school. To compensate for this there are book shelves around the school and in classrooms for students' use. Access to reading material is far more limited for those not attending the school. The Council of Europe recommendations on education provision state that '*students should have direct access to a well-stocked library at least once a week*'. **The prison authorities should ensure that they are fully compliant with this recommendation and with Rule 110(6) of the Prison Rules, 2007, by providing an appropriate level of access to the library and books.**
- 5.101** The school reported a good relationship and appreciation for the support it receives from senior management in the prison. The school is represented at multi-disciplinary team meetings and Integrated Sentence Management (ISM) meetings which is valuable in informing decisions in relation to overall provision. The school also inputs into decision making through attendance at meetings with the Irish Prison Service (IPS) Care and Rehabilitation Directorate and through working with the IPS Education Co-ordinator. It is good practice that the expertise of the school is valued.

Leading Teaching and Learning

- 5.102** The school makes considerable effort to advertise its services and attract students. The teachers put up posters, use word of mouth, and conduct outreach visits to the main prison landings. Attendance at the school is one of the criteria to achieve enhanced status for prisoners which is in line with the Council of Europe recommendations on education. The demand for school places is very high. Notwithstanding the requirements to segregate certain groups, the limitations of the school accommodation further reduces access for students. In order to accommodate as many students as possible the school day and week have to be divided and shared. This arrangement means access for the different groups ranges between five mornings a week to as little as two afternoons a week, not counting the impact of full or partial school closures. **The school urgently needs access to additional accommodation to improve access to education.**

- 5.103** There is effective practice in relation to deciding the courses students take. The deputy head teacher conducts an entry interview with each student to gather baseline data on prior learning outcomes and experiences. In addition, data on students' previous education is accessed through the Prisoner Education Management System (PEMS) system. The interview and PEMS data are used to create an Adult Basic Education (ABE) plan which outlines needs, interests, and learning and future goals for each student. Collaboration around the transfer of student files, records, and work between the school in the main prison and the Progression Unit is good.
- 5.104** Very good communication and consultation can be seen in the start and end-of-year meetings of teachers with school management and resulting reports. These enable teachers to identify what is working well in relation to teaching and learning, possible areas for development of the curriculum, continuing professional learning needs, and current challenges. This process is open, honest and reflective. The reports show school management's and teachers' excellent level of commitment, dedication and interest, in exploring any possible action to support the learning needs of students.

Developing Leadership Capacity

- 5.105** The quality of school self-evaluation is very good. The management and staff of Mountjoy Prison School are currently engaging in the CDETБ quality improvement planning process under the highly effective leadership of the CDETБ's Organiser of Prison Education. They also fulfil the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Quality Assurance (QA) requirements. Both of these processes are supported by a well-established and systematic review and reporting process at school level.

C. Arbour Hill Prison

5.106 Arbour Hill Prison is a closed, medium security prison for adult males. The population profile largely comprises people serving long sentences, the majority of whom are older. There were 131 people in Arbour Hill prison at the time of the inspection with 99 of them availing of the school service.

Main Findings

- 5.107**
- Students achieve very good outcomes at all levels of the school's learning programme.
 - There are very good outcomes for students with identified difficulties in literacy.
 - The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was very good and the relationship between the students and their teachers was excellent.
 - The quality of teacher individual, collective and collaborative planning is very good.
 - Support for managing the school within the prison context is excellent; there is a very high level of cooperation, consultation, and communication between the management of the school and the prison authorities.
 - There is highly effective leadership for learning in the school, including, very good processes for identifying learning needs and designing a programme for each student.
 - There is highly effective practice in relation to enabling students to have a say in the school and its provision.

Teaching and Learning

Student Outcomes

5.108 Students are highly successful in Arbour Hill Prison School and achieve very good outcomes at all levels of the school's learning programme. There is a very good balance between accredited and non-accredited courses of study. QQI level 1 to 5, Leaving Certificate, Open University (OU) courses, and the Associated Board of The Royal School of Music (ABRSM) grade examinations are offered. Additionally, many students study subjects for personal reasons and do not wish to enter for examinations.

5.109 The projects in Art, glass work, Pyrography, and pottery were of a very high standard and students had developed high levels of skill in these areas. The quality of students' written projects, and music and drama performances was also very good. The students expressed appreciation of the therapeutic benefits of engaging with the Arts in terms of their mental health and in helping them to cope with their sentences.

5.110 In the classrooms visited, the students demonstrated very good knowledge, skills and understanding in class discussions and oral contributions. The lessons were designed to progress the stated learning outcomes and/or developmental outcomes for each subject and course. The class activities were facilitated students in attaining the learning outcomes of each programme. Where students were pursuing non-accredited courses, for example in the

cookery lesson observed, the activities were highly suitable for the achievement of broader, more holistic student outcomes.

- 5.111** There are very good outcomes for students with identified difficulty in literacy. Students' literacy abilities and needs range from very high literacy skills to not being able to read or write. There are a number of different highly effective strategies used in the school to support those who are struggling with literacy.

Student Experiences

- 5.112** Very high quality student experiences were evident throughout the evaluation. In all lessons observed, students engaged purposefully in meaningful learning activities and were facilitated to grow as learners through respectful interactions and experiences that were challenging and supportive. They demonstrated the skills to reflect on their progress as learners and develop a sense of ownership of and responsibility for their learning through completing very high quality and complex learning tasks. Highly effective learning was noted in lessons where students worked collaboratively, engaged in peer-assessment, and completed tasks independently. Through many of the subjects offered and in their interactions with their teachers, students received the necessary support to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for lifelong learning.
- 5.113** There was very good practice in the drama lesson where the teacher used the character in the play that was being written to allow students to access and act out emotions. This approach worked well because there was distance between the student and the emotion through the use of the character. In a different lesson there was personal information discussed and scenarios would have been useful in allowing students to access the learning through the perspective of the characters in the scenario. **It is recommended that the good practice in drama be extended to other sensitive class discussions or tasks.**
- 5.114** Through engagement with the school, students are given valuable opportunities to give back to the school, and to contribute to the wider community. They have created many art works for display around the school and prison buildings. They engage in charity projects to raise money for worthy causes; the pottery fairy doors and ceramic tiles sold for charity are examples of very successful fundraising work. There is a history of students contributing to the learning of others; five years ago two students of the school worked with members of staff to produce an interactive literacy support computer package that is still being used in Arbour Hill School today. This computer software was also adopted by City of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) for mainstream schools. This aspect of the school's work is very important.
- 5.115** It was evident that the school is at the heart of life in the prison. Excellent relationships between the students and their teachers were noted. In all lessons observed, students were enjoying the learning process, were motivated to learn, and had an expectation that they would achieve as learners. They were unanimous in their praise of the work of the school, the teachers and head teacher. They were highly appreciative of the school as a place to learn, to be social, and to belong.

Teacher Individual Practice

- 5.116** The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was very good. Teachers' used individualised approaches to meet students' identified needs. The range of student abilities in each classroom visited was wide. For example, in the Music theory lesson observed there were four students; one who was at an early stage of learning guitar having completed ABRSM grade 2, one intermediate student, and one highly accomplished musician who had been playing for many years. Additionally, there was one student completing sound engineering at QQI level 5. The wide range of abilities represented by this example was replicated across most classrooms visited and the management of differentiated lessons activities throughout the school was highly effective.
- 5.117** There is a very good cross-curricular approach to teaching and learning. The History project on the History of Arbour Hill, specifically in 1916, provides a very good example of cross curricular work. As part of the Leaving Certificate research study the students researched aspects of the History of Arbour Hill Prison, this information was also used to inform and Art project on decorated tiles with associated images from primary sources from the time. In keeping with good practice this project will be displayed in the library. There is also a longer term project which saw the creation of a scale model of the prison; a new model, of the Garrison Chapel adjoining the prison, is currently being developed.
- 5.118** The quality of teacher individual lesson planning and preparation was very good. There was a wide range of activities planned to engage students, and progress learning in each of the lessons observed. Resources, including digital resources, were used in a highly effective way to support learning. A good example was observed in a language lesson where vocabulary was taught in a variety of ways; the teacher introduced the new words, the students wrote a short script using the vocabulary, the students spoke the words, there was a game displayed on the screen for revision, and also an aural exercise. Similarly, in the literacy lesson observed, students worked on a variety of tasks on the computer which were supported by work in their workbooks. These are examples of very good blended learning approaches.

Teacher Collective Practice

- 5.119** There is very good practice in relation to maintaining high levels of teachers' expertise through ongoing participation in continuing professional learning (CPL). The majority of students have been in the school a long time and have completed most of the courses offered. Teachers have participated in a wide range of courses, and show great flexibility in facilitating as much variety in the learning programme as possible. The CDET B Curriculum Development Unit supports the school to enhance their curriculum and to be creative and agile in meeting student needs.
- 5.120** The quality of teacher collective and collaborative planning is very good. The teachers organise and deliver CPL to share practice amongst themselves during their lunch breaks. Practice in relation the use of technology for learning, creating resources, professional learning from attendance at Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) CPL, and demonstrations of effective teaching methodologies have been recently shared through these lunchtime CPL events. There have

also been valuable inputs from outside agencies such as The Dyslexia Association of Ireland to support teaching and learning.

Leadership and Management

Managing the School within the Prison Context

- 5.121** Support for managing the school within the prison context is excellent; there is a very high level of cooperation, consultation, and communication between the management of the school and the prison authorities. The majority of people in Arbour Hill Prison attend the school. It is a highly valued service within the prison and amongst the students. The necessary operational resources are provided on a consistent and routine basis. The school starts and ends at the same time each day; this routine is very beneficial to students' learning, to helping students to cope with their sentences, and to supporting wellbeing. The low-risk and relatively open nature of the prison greatly assists prison management in facilitating the school in such a reliable manner.
- 5.122** Very high quality accommodation is provided for the school. The classrooms are open and bright and there is plenty of space. Educational posters to support literacy are displayed on classroom walls. There is a stair lift to facilitate access to the school for students with mobility issues. The entrance to the school is decorated with displays of student art and crafts, the projects reflect the work of the current cohort and help to create a welcoming space. The rooms are fitted with teacher personal computers and screens. Students had access to a PC in some classrooms also.
- 5.123** Students are very well supported in their preparation for release. Once informed of a person's release date, the guidance counsellor organises and provides a range of optional supports including; one-to-one guidance advice sessions, and group guidance classes. In addition to the support provided by the guidance counsellor, the CDET pre-release course is also offered. The pre-release course includes sessions from a number of outside speakers. Preparation for life outside prison can be challenging for some people and certain aspects of the course are more difficult than others. **In order to further ensure that students are consciously supported the school should review the order of the topics on the pre-release programme to facilitate support following the more difficult inputs, such as the Garda input.**
- 5.124** The school has very well-established and highly functioning links with outside agencies and services in supporting people once they leave the prison. An example of good practice in this regard was provided of a fork-lift licence being organised by Irish Association for Social Inclusion Opportunities (IASIO) for a person within a week of release to facilitate immediate access to the workforce. The school guidance counsellor assists students to connect to the Further Education and Training Hub so that they can learn about looking for jobs and courses online. Another example of good practice can be seen in the school's referral of a student to the Dyslexia Association of Ireland for an assessment.

Leading Teaching and Learning

- 5.125** There is highly effective leadership for learning in the school. The head teacher is relatively new to the role having been appointed in September 2021. It is very good practice that in preparation for this role the head teacher set out the vision for the school through identifying thirteen priority actions for school development. Many of these development actions have been carried out and the positive results can be seen throughout the school. For instance, there is now a wider range of assessment options available for students. **It is recommended that a similar process be completed in consultation with the whole school community, in order to develop a shared vision for the school going forward.**
- 5.126** There is highly effective practice in relation to enabling students to have a say in the school and its provision. The students can choose the courses they study and the level they take, and they can decide themselves if they wish to gain accreditation or not. At the end of every course completed each teacher conducts a reflective survey which facilitates students to voice their opinions on what worked well for them in the lessons and what could be improved. The key points from the student surveys are displayed on posters around the school. The school is committed to acting on student recommendations. In discussion with the inspectors and through the survey, the students reported a very high level of satisfaction with the school. It is highly commendable that the school has created roles for students to provide opportunities for them to take responsibility for aspects of school life.
- 5.127** There are very good processes for identifying learning needs and designing a programme for each student. Very good use is made of academic records from other settings to ensure that there is continuity in educational provision. Best practice in this regard was seen where students were able to bring projects and art work with them when they transferred from other prisons, although this was not always possible for operational reasons. The school is creative in designing programmes and adding subjects to ensure that there is something new to offer people who have been in the school for many years and have completed a large number of courses. This is all very good practice.
- 5.128** The timetable is student-centred and flexible; the duration of practical lessons can be for the full morning or afternoon, other subjects that suit a shorter time period are also facilitated by splitting the time between two or three subjects. Pre-covid it was routine practice for the school to be opened from 9am to 9.30am five days per week to facilitate peer-to-peer literacy support. This support complemented the school's interventions, enabled students to have discreet frequent and regular contact with their learning in literacy, and contributed to highly successful student outcomes. There are plans to resume this provision now that Covid restrictions have been lifted. This will be a very welcome development.
- 5.129** The teachers are highly committed to ensuring that the students have optimum access to the school. To this end they stagger the summer holidays so that the only month the school is closed is August. This is evidence of exceptional flexibility and personal dedication to ensuring that the students have access to meaningful activities for as much of the year as possible.

Developing Leadership Capacity

- 5.130** The quality of school self-evaluation is very good. The management and staff of Arbour Hill Prison School are currently engaging in the CDETБ quality improvement planning process under the highly effective leadership of the CDETБ's Organiser of Prison Education. They also fulfil the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Quality Assurance requirements. Both of these processes are supported by a well-established and systematic review and reporting process at school level.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation ID	Recommendation
Irish Prison Service Headquarters	
IPS HQ Recommendation 1:	A centralised and integrated data recording system should be put in place to accurately identify, track and report on engagement with purposeful activity. This data should be shared with the Inspectorate of Prisons and made publically available on a regular basis.
IPS HQ Recommendation 2:	The Irish Prison Service, in particular the Director General and Prison Governors, should review the ongoing imposition of Rules 32A and 36A (Prison Rules 2020 Amendment), with a view to removing related restrictions as soon as possible (see paragraph 2.3).
IPS HQ Recommendation 3:	The Irish Prison Service should develop an individual risk-assessed approach to determining maximum attendance numbers in work training activities.
IPS HQ Recommendation 4:	The Irish Prison Service should ensure that all prison officer posts are maximised to ensure access to and engagement with purposeful activity for all persons in custody. Prison officer posts and associated tasks should be flexible and designed to allow Governors to respond to changes in staffing structures.
IPS HQ Recommendation 5:	The Irish Prison Service should review and update its Prisoner Gratuities and Private Cash Policy to ensure it aligns with Rule 28.4 and Rule 105.4 of the revised European Prison Rules.
IPS HQ Recommendation 6:	The Irish Prison Service should ensure that the prisons have reliable access to fully qualified trainers to deliver a work training programme, which is aligned to the needs of people in custody and responsive to prevailing employment opportunities, and has a means of replacing a trainer when they move on. This measure will support the Irish Prison Service to provide suitable opportunities for people in custody to be trained to a certifiable standard commensurate with recognised qualifications framework and to facilitate opportunities for certification. Additionally, Work Training Officers supporting the work-training programmes should be provided with initial training and frequent and regular in-service education and training to support them in this role. Attendance in this training should be compulsory.
IPS HQ Recommendation 7:	The Irish Prison Service should ensure that all prisoners have access to externally accredited qualifications in all work training areas. Certification offered to prisoners should be labour-market tested and should be recognised by employers to improve employment prospects upon release.
IPS HQ Recommendation 8:	Given the role of the Irish Prison Service in deciding what proposed initiatives are to be funded, it should place more emphasis on strategically identifying, in collaboration with prison staff, Governors and people in prison, initiatives that can be implemented across the prison-estate. Where applicable, the Irish Prison Service should also consult with ETBs and Further Education and Training (FET) to identify areas for collaboration, especially in relation to certification and sustainability of initiatives.

Recommendation ID	Recommendation
Irish Prison Service Headquarters	
IPS HQ Recommendation 9:	The Irish Prison Service should remove the name of prisons on certification obtained by persons in custody. This will increase a prisoner's ability to earn a living after release in line with Rule 26.3 of the Revised European Prison Rules.
IPS HQ Recommendation 10:	In order to provide a consistent approach to managing education provision across the prison estate, the IPS should develop a policy on education and training in collaboration with all of the relevant stakeholders.
IPS HQ Recommendation 11:	The IPS should conduct an audit of provision for education, work, training and other activities and develop a system which ensures that the cumulative options available have sufficient capacity for the size of the population in each prison. This system once developed should be included in the IPS policy for education and training in prisons.
IPS HQ Recommendation 12:	It was evident during the inspection that additional factors were impacting the operation of the schools in Mountjoy Main Prison and Wheatfield Prison. These factors included enduring IPS Industrial Relations issues and substance use amongst students. IPS Headquarters and respective prison managements, in discharging their duty of care, should develop a strategic plan to resolve these issues and ensure that the rights, welfare, and needs of students are prioritised in decision making.
IPS HQ Recommendation 13:	In the prisons where there are significant issues in relation to student access to the school, teachers are faced with a more challenging work environment. The challenges are due to having to deal with the unpredictability of the opening of the school, the erosion of the start and finishing times, the inaccessibility of accommodation and resources, and difficulties in providing outreach support for the most vulnerable students. While it is accepted and understood that safety and security are prioritised, a plan should be developed and put in place, to ensure that the teachers are facilitated to do their work without impediment, for as much of the school day as possible.
IPS HQ Recommendation 14:	It is recommended that further access to technology for learning should be provided for students in their cells. IT is currently being used successfully as a learning tool in prisons in other jurisdictions, this experience could be researched by IPS and ETBs as a potential support to implementing this recommendation.
IPS HQ Recommendation 15:	The schools included in this thematic inspection of education and their respective prison management teams, with the assistance of the CDETB, should work more closely together to further align the educational and training programmes with the needs of the students and requirements of prospective employers.

Recommendation ID	Recommendation
Wheatfield Prison	
Wheatfield Prison Recommendation 1:	The Governor of Wheatfield Prison should take all necessary action to guarantee that all prisoners, in particular young adults and prisoners on protection, are provided with a minimum of five hours of purposeful activity for five days per week, in line with Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020. Wheatfield Prison should work towards the CPT's recommended <u>minimum</u> eight hours out-of-cell time for prisoners engaged in purposeful activities.
Wheatfield Prison Recommendation 2:	As recommended by the OIP in 2021, and in line with Rule 110 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Wheatfield Prison should immediately re-open the library in the main prison and ensure access to all prisoners in that area of the prison on a consistent basis.
Wheatfield Prison Recommendation 3:	The Governor in consultation with management in Wheatfield Prison should systematically and strategically identify opportunities for work training certification to be offered to people in custody, with a particular focus on people who do not already have a certification and/or vocational experience (such as young adults).
Mountjoy Men's Prison - Progression Unit	
Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendation 1:	In line with Rule 111 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Mountjoy Prison should ensure that all prisoners in the Progression Unit have access to a structured programme of training.
Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendation 2:	A formal selection process that systematically and strategically identifies opportunities for work training certification should be adopted by the Governor of the Prison. This should ensure rotational engagement with work training for those prisoners who would like to engage, and should be targeted to all prisoners regardless of sentence length. This process should be clearly communicated to prisoners.
Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendation 3:	In line with Rule 110 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Mountjoy Prison Governor should ensure that all prisoners in the Progression Unit are able to access library services on a consistent basis.
Mountjoy Prison Progression Unit Recommendation 4:	The Mountjoy Prison Governor should expand work training activity and ensure the option of accredited certification is available for people in custody in the Progression Unit, with a particular focus on people who do not already have a certification and/or vocational experience.

Recommendation ID	Recommendation
Mountjoy Men's Prison - Main Prison	
Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 1:	The Governor of Mountjoy Prison should adopt measures as a matter of urgency to increase access to purposeful activity, including work training for prisoners on protection and prisoners in the Medical Unit.
Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 2:	The Governor of Mountjoy Prison should take all necessary action to guarantee that all prisoners, in particular prisoners on protection, are accommodated with an absolute minimum of five hours of purposeful activity for five days per week, in line with Rule 27(3) of the Prison Rules 2007-2020. Mountjoy Prison should work towards the CPT's recommended <u>minimum</u> eight hours out-of-cell time for prisoners engaged in purposeful activities.
Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 3:	As recommended by the OIP in 2021, and in line with Rule 110 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Mountjoy Prison should ensure the library is consistently open, and that prisoners who do not attend school are facilitated to access library services on a consistent basis.
Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 4:	The Governor of Mountjoy Prison should ensure facilitation of certification for prisoners in all work training activities, with particular focus on protection prisoners and prisoners in the Medical Unit who have little to no opportunity to access and achieve vocational certification.
Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 5:	A formal selection process that systematically and strategically identifies opportunities for work training certification should be adopted by the Governor of Mountjoy Prison. This should ensure equality of opportunity for prisoners with rotational engagement for those prisoners who would like to engage with work training, and should be targeted to all prisoners regardless of protection status.
Mountjoy Main Prison Recommendation 6:	In line with Rule 111 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Mountjoy Prison should ensure that prisoners have access to a programme of training. Given the intention to remove work training, aside from essential work, from the prison, Mountjoy Prison should proactively identify and implement opportunities for sustainable work training initiatives to be brought into the prison through external community engagement and through collaboration with the school.
Recommendation ID	Recommendation
Arbour Hill Prison	
Arbour Hill Prison Recommendation 1: (AHEDWT1)	The Governor of Arbour Hill Prison should ensure, in collaboration with the school, that the option of accredited work-training certification is available for people in custody. Focus should be on meeting the needs and requirements of people who may be elderly, or who have already received certification and thus may require intermediate and advanced training.
Arbour Hill Prison Recommendation 2: (AHEDWT2)	In line with Rule 111 of the Prison Rules 2007-2020, the Governor of Arbour Hill Prison should ensure that prisoners have access to a programme of work training. Arbour Hill Prison should proactively identify and implement opportunities for work training initiatives to be brought into the prison through external community engagement and through collaboration with the school.

7 APPENDIX

Inspectorate Functions, Principles & Assessment Frameworks

Inspection Function of the Office of the Inspector of Prison

The Office of the Inspector of Prisons was established pursuant to Section 30 of the Prisons Act 2007 (“the Act”) in January 2007. The Inspector of Prisons (Chief Inspector) is appointed by the Minister for Justice to perform the functions conferred on her by Part 5 of the Act, which includes the regular inspection of prisons in Ireland.

Mark Kelly, the current Chief Inspector, was appointed on 15 August 2022 under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act. The Inspector of Prisons is independent in the performance of their functions.

The Inspector of Prisons does not have statutory authority to publish inspection reports, investigation reports or annual reports. In accordance with Section 31 or 32 of the Act as applicable, as soon as practicable after receiving a report from the Inspector of Prisons, the Minister for Justice must, subject to the following caveats, lay it before both Houses of the Oireachtas and publish the report.

The Minister may omit any matter from any report laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas if she is of the opinion that:

1. Its disclosure may be prejudicial to the security of the prison or of the State, or
2. After consultation with the Secretary General of the Department of Justice to the Government, that its disclosure
 - a. would be contrary to the public interest, or
 - b. may infringe the constitutional rights of any person.

Where any matters are so omitted, a statement to that effect must be attached to the report concerned on it being laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas, and on its publication.

Function of the Department of Education Inspectorate

The functions of the Department of Education Inspectorate are set out in Section 13 of the Education Act 1998. The Memorandum of Understanding agreed to by the Office of the Inspector of Prisons and the Department of Education is underpinned, in part, by the provisions of Section 13 (3) (b) of the Education Act 1998.

Principles, Indicative Measures & Inspection Frameworks

In March 2022, the Office of the Inspector of Prisons (OIP) and the Department of Education Inspectorate (DE Inspectorate) agreed a Memorandum of Understanding to partner in the assessment of education and training in prisons. Inspections carried out by the two Inspectorates are done in accordance with the 2020 Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland Rehabilitation & Development Focus Area.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ OIP. (2020) A Framework for the Inspection of Prisons in Ireland.

OIP and DE Inspectorate Guiding Principles

- i. A focus on education and training experiences for learners, supports in place for post-release education and training, and outcomes in these areas.
- ii. A commitment to human rights focused assessments and evaluations in the relevant areas and compliance with law, international human rights standards and best practice.
- iii. A commitment to engage with the relevant partners operating in the prison on the promotion of improvement in education, training and progression for learners.
- iv. Respectful engagement which acknowledges effective work, progress and achievement and, which promotes professional dialogue.
- v. Accountability, so that both bodies evaluate in accordance with the published *Framework for the Inspections of Prisons in Ireland* and report objectively and fairly on the quality of provision using high quality, accurate data.
- vi. Full adherence by both inspectorates to the *Data Processor Agreement* established as part of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Assessment Ratings

Office of the Inspector of Prisons Inspection Ratings: Rehabilitation & Development - Work Training

Level	Description
Very Good	<p>There is demonstrated evidence that outcomes are being achieved in the areas under this rubric.</p> <p>All prisoners can access appropriate work training facilities.</p> <p>Such facilities and opportunities are of a good standard and relevant staff are appropriately trained and motivated.</p>
Good	<p>There is evidence of adverse outcomes in a small number of areas but for the majority there are no significant concerns.</p> <p>In general work training facilities are available to prisoners and standards of such provision is adequate.</p>
Fair	<p>There is evidence that outcomes are being adversely affected in many of the areas highlighted. These include concerns relating to access to work training opportunities.</p> <p>If action is not taken to address identified issues they are likely to become more serious areas of concern.</p>
Poor	<p>Urgent action is required to deal with widespread evidence of poor outcomes across a range of indicators.</p> <p>Basic mandatory legislative standards (in particular Prison Rule 111 – Vocational Training) are not being met.</p>

Department of Education Assessment Ratings: Provision of Education

Level	Description
Very Good	Very good applies where the quality of the areas evaluated is of a very high standard. The very few areas for improvement that exist do not significantly impact on the overall quality of provision. For some centres in this category the quality of what is evaluated is outstanding and provides an example for other centres of exceptionally high standards of provision
Good	Good applies where the strengths in the areas evaluated clearly outweigh the areas in need of improvement. The areas requiring improvement impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The centre needs to build on its strengths and take action to address the areas identified as requiring improvement in order to achieve a very good standard.
Satisfactory	Satisfactory applies where the quality of provision is adequate. The strengths in what is being evaluated just outweigh the shortcomings. While the shortcomings do not have a significant negative impact they constrain the quality of the learning experiences and should be addressed in order to achieve a better standard
Fair	Fair applies where, although there are some strengths in the areas evaluated, deficiencies or shortcomings that outweigh those strengths also exist. The centre will have to address certain deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better deficiencies without delay in order to ensure that provision is satisfactory or better.
Weak	Weak applies where there are serious deficiencies in the areas evaluated. Immediate and coordinated whole-centre action is required to address the areas of concern. In some cases, the intervention of other agencies may be required to support improvements.