

**UPDATE ON
EDUCATIONAL PROVISION
DUNGAVEL IMMIGRATION
REMOVAL CENTRE
SOUTH LANARKSHIRE**

HM INSPECTORATE OF EDUCATION
AUGUST 2003



TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE REPORT OF
HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES),
AUGUST 2003

1. Introduction

At the invitation of the Chief Inspector of Prisons for England and Wales, HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) contributed to an inspection of Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre in October 2002. HMIE revisited Dungavel in July 2003. This report provides an update on the earlier assessment of educational provision contained within the report of HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, published on 15 August 2003.

The original visit found that the Centre was taking effective steps to ensure a balanced range of educational activities for adults. However, despite the committed approach taken by staff at that time, the educational provision for children of school age was found to be unsatisfactory.

2. Context

The operators of Dungavel were contracted to provide a programme of voluntary activities of 20 hours per detainee per week. This included primary and secondary education for children; music; literature and drama activities; food matters; health promotion; and physical education. The operators were significantly exceeding the commitment to provide 20 hours of activities per detainee per week. They had a service level agreement with South Lanarkshire Council to assess the needs of children with special educational needs. In addition, the Council provided advice and support to Centre staff.

In the period between 1 May 2002 and 15 July 2003, the average length of stay for children in Dungavel had been 28 days. Thirty-six children had been detained for longer than six weeks.

Length of Stay	Number of Children
up to 1 week	51
1-2 weeks	43
2-3 weeks	24
3-4 weeks	11
4-5 weeks	6
5-6 weeks	2
6-7 weeks	14
7-8 weeks	4
8-9 weeks	6
9-10 weeks	0
10-14 weeks	6
14-18 weeks	2
50 weeks	4
Total	173

At the time of the visit in July 2003 there were 107 detainees, 15 of whom were children. Two were under the age of five. Five of the children had been detained for longer than six weeks.

There were major barriers to providing effective educational provision. Staff had limited warning of when detainees would arrive, numbers of detainees fluctuated on a daily basis, and the range of ages, backgrounds, languages, cultures, and stress levels of children could alter daily. There were uncertainties about the likely length of stay of individual children. In addition, despite good efforts by staff, information about children's prior learning experiences, including reports from previous schools, was too often not available.

While the environment within Dungavel was modern and of a good standard, the positive development of children was compromised by the secure nature of the facility and the uncertainty surrounding the length of stay.

3. Developments since HMIE visit in October 2002

Since October 2002 the operator had made good progress in implementing improvements.

- An education manager, a qualified teacher and a classroom assistant had been appointed. The operators had further developed very helpful and productive links with education staff from South Lanarkshire Council which were providing significant benefits to the quality and range of provision.
- The centre had made improvements to the classroom accommodation for children of school age, and had built a high quality outdoor play area for young children.
- There were improved resources for a number of aspects of the curriculum, including information and communication technology.
- Staff had established positive links with a number of other bodies and had arranged for the involvement of outside contributors, such as the community police, in the education programme. Recent developments included the introduction of externally-accredited and internal certification of adult learning.
- Female detainees enjoyed increased access to sports facilities, and young adults aged 16-18 now had access to the adult learning programme.
- The Centre had taken steps to monitor the uptake of activities.

These developments had considerably improved the overall quality of the educational activities provided at the Centre and the operators are to be commended for the extent to which they had addressed specific concerns raised in the October 2002 inspection.

4. Evaluation of activities for children of pre-school age

The Centre had significantly improved the standard of care and education for children of pre-school age. Up to six children could be accommodated at one time within the modern and attractive creche. There was a separate room where very young children could sleep if necessary. There had been some improvement in the curricular programmes for pre-school children. The committed and caring nursery nurses interacted well with the children in their care. Staff had good arrangements in place to respond flexibly to meet the needs of the children, against the backcloth of fluctuations in the numbers and backgrounds of children attending. Children had access to a good range of appropriate resources. Staff encouraged parents to come into the playroom and join in activities. The recent construction of a high quality outdoor play area had considerably improved the facilities available for young children. The Centre should now consider how more effective use might be made of this provision.

5. Evaluation of activities for school-age children

The recent improvements meant that the range and quality of educational activities provided by the Centre were acceptable for school-age children who were detained for very short periods of time - up to two weeks. However, some periods of detention were longer than this. As children experienced longer periods of detention, it became increasingly important for them to have well-planned educational programmes matched to their identified individual needs. The educational needs of children detained for prolonged periods of time were not being met, certainly those whose stay extended beyond six weeks.

The educational activities were not compulsory, but staff actively encouraged participation and almost all children attended. The Centre had adopted a model for the education of school-age children in which those of different ages and abilities worked together for some of the time and were grouped by age or abilities at other times. The lack of information about prior attainments, and the spread of ages, levels of attainment and needs meant that it was not possible to ensure that all children would make satisfactory progress in their learning under the current arrangements.

The curriculum provided for the detained children focussed on English language and mathematics. Extra support was provided for children for whom English was an additional language. The timetable also provided opportunities for children in aspects of the expressive arts, history, science and health education. Good use was being made of opportunities to bring in visitors to extend classroom activities. Children had some opportunities to use computers to assist their learning. More could be accomplished if they had supervised access to the Internet. Younger children needed more opportunity to learn through play. The Education Co-ordinator had promising plans to extend the use of the grounds within the Centre to provide further opportunities for learning activities in science.

The formal curriculum was narrower than children in Scottish primary and secondary schools would experience and there was insufficient access to specialist teaching. The detained children's experiences were further narrowed by the lack of contact with the outside world and very limited social interaction.

The enthusiastic and hard-working teacher, with the support of the Education Co-ordinator, was responding positively to the many challenges. She prepared her lessons carefully, taught energetically and had established good relationships with the children in the class. Most pupils responded well. Some produced work of a high standard, but others were experiencing difficulties in aspects of their learning. In spite of their very good efforts, existing staff were not able to ensure successful progression across the curriculum for all children, particularly those who had been detained for prolonged periods.

The Centre paid good attention to recognising and valuing children's ethnic backgrounds. The Culture and Religious Manager helped to ensure that the important distinguishing features of the various faiths and cultures were promoted and maintained.

6. Evaluation of activities for adults

The Education Co-ordinator had carried out an effective review of the programme of activities on offer to adult detainees. Dungavel had achieved accreditation from City and Guilds to offer the Start IT course, accreditation to offer the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), was an accredited Open College Network centre, and was accredited for SQA qualifications verified by South Lanarkshire College. A few detainees had achieved certificates as a result. The Centre had purchased a range of high quality new resources, increased the number of personal computers, and was improving the library facilities. Staff were enthusiastic and committed, spending considerable time adapting materials to take account of the range of backgrounds of detainees. Staffing in English language teaching was insufficient to cope with high numbers of learners who were at an early stage in learning English. The Centre should consider how best to increase staffing resources in this area. Overall, however, provision was acceptable.

Detainees had access to high quality sports facilities, and staff were careful to ensure that activities were culturally sensitive. Staff had increased access to these facilities for female detainees since the original visit.

7. Other aspects

On the day of the visit the weather was particularly hot, which resulted in the rooms used for education becoming hot and stuffy: ventilation required to be improved.

More learning activities should be conducted outdoors where practicable.

8. Conclusion and recommendations

The Centre had made considerable progress in improving the quality of educational provision. The recent improvements meant that the range and quality of educational activities provided by the Centre were acceptable for children who were detained for very short periods of time - up to two weeks. However, even with these recent improvements, the Centre did not offer satisfactory educational provision for children detained for prolonged periods, certainly those who were detained for more than six weeks. In addition, the detained children's personal, social and learning experiences were impoverished by their lack of contact with the outside world and very restricted social interaction.

- The needs of each child should be carefully assessed, so that direct account can be taken of prior attainment and social and developmental needs.
- Arrangements for providing education should be improved to ensure that all children participate in educational activities which will allow their identified needs to be met, and that they are given the necessary support.
- The curriculum should be developed further to enable pupils to make suitable progress in a broad range of areas of learning appropriate to their needs.

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