

Sharing support across a network

Supported provider: North East Prison Group

Summary

The prisons in the North East have been receiving support to develop a whole organisation approach on an individual basis through previous English and Maths support programmes and at the same time have developed a supportive peer review and development group. Therefore, it seemed appropriate to apply for support as a group to help work together to develop whole organisation approaches to managing the transition to functional skills with a strategic focus.

Introduction

About the North East Prison Group

The improvement adviser allocated to the group had worked with all the prisons in the region previously so had a good understanding of the wide range of issues that make developing a whole organisation approach more complex than would be the case with many providers.

All the prisons were represented at the Peer Review and Development (PRD) group in January 2013 and this gave them the opportunity to outline what they felt were the individual needs of each prison. The prisons were at different stages of development due to changes in staffing and the nature of the different regimes.

Supported prisons

HMP Durham
HMP Frankland
HMP Holme House
HMP Kirklevington Grange
HMP Low Newton
HMP Northumberland
HMYOI Deerbolt

Improvement partner

Caryn Loftus
Summations Ltd

Several key areas of development were identified.

- Gaining establishment buy-in.
- Raising awareness with prison instructors.
- Creative approaches to teaching functional skills.
- Using the context of enterprise to develop functional skills.

It was agreed that each prison would receive half-day support for their individual needs and then a Peer Exchange Group (PEG) or joint CPD would be held for each of the two clusters that make up the North East Group. Two further PRD meeting would be used to feedback the impact of the half-day support and the actions that arose from the support. As the same improvement adviser was working with each prison she would be able to help share good practice between the prisons and also help make the best use of the resources developed through the current (and previous) English and maths support programme. As a result of the impact of the work up to March 2013, additional support was allocated by pooling days from the individual prisons' LSIS accounts.

What we wanted to achieve

Gaining establishment buy-in

In 2011- 2012, HMP Kirklevington worked hard, with support from LSIS, to gain the buy-in from the whole establishment for a whole organisation approach to developing English maths and maths. The staff from the prison outlined their approach to the other prisons at the southern cluster PEG and agreed to share the briefing paper they had prepared for their senior management team. They also explained the benefits of using the quality improvement tool of force field analysis¹, to identify drivers and barriers to introducing a whole organisation approach that they had used in a meeting with functional skills staff and prison officers. The half day support they received in 2012-2013 helped them design a training session for instructors and employability staff to look at supporting prisoners with their English and maths. In running the session they found that they already had the buy-in from the staff due to work previously undertaken.

Following on from this input each establishment then undertook their own force field analysis. HMP Holme House then used their half day support to develop an action plan based on the findings of their force field analysis (*see resource a*).

Implementation

Raising awareness with prison instructors

The session for prison instructors at HMYOI Deerbolt used material from the LSIS CPD module 5, re-named as 'Supporting English and maths in the workshops'. In addition to material from the CPD module the session included using diagrams (*see resource b*), developed by HMP Garth in a previous support programme, that represent the work in different workshops to explore the English and maths that are naturally occurring.

The instructors were asked to design a poster to represent their own work area and then consider how they could support prisoners to develop their English and maths. This approach proved to be useful but the instructors felt as they are already helping where they can, with the limited time they have available whilst running a work area, they would have benefited more from working with link functional skills specialists. It is planned that English and maths group sessions will be provided in the work areas in the near future.

Therefore a briefing paper looking at models of embedding was prepared to inform a meeting of the Education and Learning and Skills management teams, facilitated by the LSIS improvement adviser. Following this meeting a productive session was held to explore the practicalities of setting up a pilot for embedding English and maths in the kitchens and ICT areas.

Similar sessions have been run at HMP Northumberland following requests to develop team working between functional skills teachers employed by The Manchester College and instructors employed by the prison service in the Engineering Workshop and Gardens. Actions were identified at a first meeting to then be followed up at a second meeting to help keep momentum going. An English and maths skills levels chart, developed by HMP Kirklevington and updated for functional skills by the improvement adviser proved a useful resource for the instructors.

At one of the peer exchange group meetings, representatives from the different prisons were introduced to a session plan template. This template was developed during a meeting at HMP Durham to include speaking and listening, problem solving and team working activities plus assessment for learning using an idea from the 5-minute lesson plan resource² uploaded onto

¹ Owen, J. (2002) *Making Quality Sense*, LSDA

² R.McGill 2012 - [@TeacherToolkit](#)

the [Times Educational Supplement website](#). This session plan will be useful for the out-of-scope instructors to help with planning sessions.

What we did

Creative approaches to teaching functional skills

Following feedback from inspection, several of the prisons identified that they would like a CPD session for their staff exploring creative approaches to functional English and maths. As HMP Northumberland has recently been created from HMP Acklington and HMP Castington, it was an ideal opportunity to provide joint training for staff to help share good practice and help move from two teams to one team. The morning session focussed on English and the afternoon on maths, using ideas and materials from:

- CPD Module 11 - Developing creative and holistic approaches to teaching English at Entry Level; and with additional ideas from
- Guides to Teaching Functional [English](#) and [Maths](#);
- Guide to the, [Speaking and Listening for Offenders](#); and
- Guide to [Thinking through Mathematics](#).

A member of the maths team is mentoring staff at other prisons in the use of individual learning plans (ILPs). As she shared innovative ideas for teaching at Entry Level during the CPD session perhaps her role could be expanded to also share her ideas for teaching and learning.

Outcomes and Impact

What we achieved

The additional allocation of days meant the session was also delivered at HMP Frankland, HMP Low Newton, HMYOI Deerbolt and HMP Holme House following hearing about the module at the PEG. HMP Low Newton, HMYOI Deerbolt and HMP Holme House have received support through the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programme for their maths teachers so therefore wanted a session for their English teachers. At the end of each event the teachers were encouraged to identify at least one new approach that they would try and then report back at team meetings on how successful the approach had been. They were also encouraged to identify how they can share resources that they develop to build up a bank to save time and energy. At HMP Low Newton the English teachers asked for support in developing a pack for women who need to revise for their functional English re-sits outside of the education classes. The improvement adviser was able to identify a range of useful resources already developed by LSIS and several of the awarding bodies e.g. the series of [How To sheets](#) developed as part of the Key Skills Support Programme.

Context of enterprise to develop maths and English skills

HMP Durham requested support with exploring how the context of developing enterprise skills, which is an important focus within many prisons, could be used as part of the delivery of English and maths skills. An activity was planned, for a team meeting, to look at what learners need to prepare them for future courses or for moving out into the community. Their team meetings have also been used to provide training related to the common errors that occur in functional skills exams. Two members of staff are markers for OCR Functional Skills, one for English and one for maths. Their input has led to improved results in English so far.

HMP Durham has also started to explore the use of the OCR Progression Awards as stepping stones to functional skills. Following a meeting to discuss the Progression Awards, the

improvement adviser was asked to produce a document to support the staff in their delivery. The work started at HMP Durham looking at the context of enterprise has led to the development of a briefing paper to inform a meeting of HMP Durham, Frankland and Northumberland who are looking at developing Enterprise Studios to deliver functional skills and personal and social development (PSD) through an enterprise approach.

Materials developed as part of the support package

All the materials developed as part of the support package have been shared across all the prisons in the North East.

"I have been able to organise high quality training and development activities over an extended period of time which have provided CPD for colleagues across key partners, and resulted in a range of improvements, from engagement of senior managers to improved achievements and narrowing achievement gaps for prisoner learners and support for social enterprise initiatives."

Sheena Maberly, Southern Cluster Head of Learning, Skills & Employment

"Peer discussion on positive and negative forces relating to functional skills - extremely useful and spurs me on to do more at Holme House relating to functional skills."

Chloe Graham Learning, Skills and Employment Manager, HMP Holme House

"The programme has given us direction to identify resources and materials to assist in the delivery of functional skills. We have also identified a need to work together, to build on our successes and realise our failings, to ensure we remain focused on delivering high quality productive learning."

Dave Doney, Senior Team Lead, Functional Skills, The Manchester College, HMP Frankland

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