

Publicising the Role

Introducing people to Learner Representation



Posters – HMYOI Cookham Wood

At HMYOI Cookham Wood the Youth Council, run by Kinetic, a not-for-profit social enterprise, is advertised with a poster which says “Meet with the Governor and work together to make Cookham Wood a better place for young people”.

Newsletters – HMP Holloway

At HMP Holloway, the learner forum, run by Jose Aguilar / A4E, the prisoners use graphic design and ICT skills to design their own newsletter to publicise the forum called ‘Holla’ which they distribute on the wings and in the classes. Most of the design and content is generated by the women on the learner forum. The Newsletter is divided in multiple sections: Editorial; Report from the Learner Forum; Interviews with teachers: Meet the teacher; Education issues and information; Feedback from students; and a page dedicated to Entertainment (Puzzles/Crosswords with a learning theme). The newsletter has given the learner forum reps a sense of belonging, a voice, a stake in the institution and a means to promote what they do to other prisoners in a fun and engaging way.

Word of mouth – HMYOI Aylesbury

At HMYOI Aylesbury, the Prison Council, run by User Voice, word of mouth is key. The prison council is based on an election model and therefore workers from User Voice, who are ex-prisoners themselves, spend lots of time on the wings and around the prison talking informally with the young people to publicise the Prison Council, explain what it is and collect names of those interested in being involved. Word of mouth is a particularly important way of engaging prisoners with learning difficulties and learning disabilities, or those who have low levels of literacy.

Inside Time Newspaper and Prison Radio

To enable prisoners to have a voice about education issues with policy makers, Prisoners Education Trust has set up a Learner Voice Panel. Prisoners can write to PET at a Freepost address to share their thoughts, views and suggestions about learning in prison. These are used to underpin the policy consultation responses and policy work of PET and the Prisoner Learning Alliance. The Learner Voice Panel has been advertised in Inside Time, the free national monthly prison newspaper and also on National Prison Radio. HMP Holloway learners' forum worked together with their radio production course learners to produce a short radio documentary about learner voice, which was aired on National prison Radio to promote it to other prisoners.

T-shirts – HMP Elmsley

At HMP Elmley they have a learner forum and one idea the forum had was to establish a team of Learning Champions to be advocates for learning and learning – related issues. The Learning Champions wear a distinctive green t-shirt with their slogan 'Help me, help you, help others' on it as well as 'Learning Champion' on the back. This promotes the learner voice activities and encourages prisoners to approach them to discuss learning.

At HMP Elmley The Manchester College staff run a learner voice forum. One idea the forum had was to establish a team of Learning Champions to be advocates for learning and learning – related issues. The Learning Champions wear a distinctive green t-shirt with 'Learning Champion' in yellow on the back. There is also a mentoring course whose graduates wear a pale green T-shirt with their slogan 'Help me, help you, help others'. Many of the Learner Voice reps and Learning Champions do a mentoring course to develop the skills needed for their roles. Having distinctive t-shirts promotes the learner activities and encourages prisoners to approach them to discuss learning on the House Blocks.