



REPORT OF AN UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF **MAGHABERRY PRISON**

JUNE 2023

WHAT TYPE OF PRISON IS MAGHABERRY?

- ▶ Maghaberry is a complex men's prison that accommodated 1,050 prisoners at the time of the inspection. It holds adult males remanded to custody and sentenced prisoners.
- ▶ Almost 50% of prisoners were on remand.
- ▶ A quarter of those who were sentenced were serving life or indeterminate sentences and just under a quarter (23%) were serving sentences of 12 months or less.
- ▶ It holds prisoners who are separated from the general population.
- ▶ 132 prisoners were foreign nationals.

WHO CARRIED OUT THIS INSPECTION?

- ▶ This inspection involved Inspectors from Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP), the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) and the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).
- ▶ CJI, HMIP and RQIA are all part of the UK National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), a body which monitors the treatment of and conditions for detainees, including prisoners, to safeguard them against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

WHAT WAS THIS INSPECTION ABOUT AND WHAT DID IT LOOK AT?

- ▶ We looked at the condition of the prison and how prisoners were treated.
- ▶ We assessed the outcomes for prisoners against the four healthy prison tests of Safety, Respect, Purposeful activity, and Rehabilitation and release planning. Each test has expectations that prisons are assessed against.
- ▶ We surveyed prisoners and staff in September 2022.
- ▶ Inspectors spent four days at Maghaberry in October 2022 speaking with Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) Governors, Prison Officers and prisoners. We spoke to health care service providers from the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT) and education and skills providers from Belfast Metropolitan College (Belfast Met). We also spoke to the Independent Monitoring Board, chaplaincy, Probation Officers, representatives of voluntary organisations that provide services in the prison, and a staff association.
- ▶ We assessed data and documentation provided by the NIPS and its partner organisations.

WHAT DID INSPECTORS FIND?

- ▶ Maghaberry's performance against the healthy prison tests had declined since it was last inspected.
- ▶ Safety outcomes continued to be 'not sufficiently good' while the assessment of respect remained 'reasonably good'.
- ▶ Outcomes in the areas of purposeful activity and rehabilitation and release planning had been badly impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Purposeful activity was now assessed as 'poor' and rehabilitation and release planning was found to be 'not sufficiently good'. The latter had been rated as good at the time of the last inspection.
- ▶ As a priority the prison needed to take action on issues related to safer custody, safeguarding, the demand for drugs, access to education, skills and work activities and ensure prisoners were provided with effective support to address their offending behaviour and prepare for release.
- ▶ Inspectors also had concerns about some aspects of health care including access to psychologically informed treatments and how the social care needs of prisoners were being met.
- ▶ Four examples of notable good practice were identified including the use of technology to streamline processes, the work of the Donard Centre which supported vulnerable prisoners, the adaptation of the rewards and sanctions scheme for prisoners who required additional support and services for foreign national prisoners.

WHAT NEXT?

- ▶ Inspectors identified five priority concerns and seven key concerns for improvement.
- ▶ Priority concerns are those that are most important to improving outcomes for prisoners and require immediate attention.
- ▶ We expect the NIPS, the SEHSCT and Belfast Met to take effective action to address all the concerns as soon as possible.

