

Hannah Wigham

From: Jackie Colbran [DPA]
Sent: 14 November 2016 13:13
To: Singh Bhui, Hindpal (HMI Prisons)
Subject: RE: IMB comments on HMIP debrief for Brook House IRC

Dear Hindpal

Many thanks for listening.

Jackie Colbran
Chair IMB Brook House IRC

-----Original Message-----

From: Singh Bhui, Hindpal (HMI Prisons)
[mailto:[DPA]]
Sent: 14 November 2016 12:46
To: 'Jackie Colbran' [DPA]
Subject: RE: IMB comments on HMIP debrief for Brook House IRC

Dear Jackie,

Many thanks for this and for taking the time to send the board's thoughts. I've forwarded to our Ofsted inspector to mull over and have been thinking over the overall scores. I agree that the teacher was doing a great job and that the centre was well run and achieving good things in difficult circumstances. However, in our scoring system, a '4' indicates that we had 'no significant concerns' for detainee outcomes. While the general picture was of a centre working well, and with some excellent staff, there were important issues in every area that we felt prevented 4s, e.g:

- Safety: length of detention was high (3 months average, 24 held over a year) and security procedures were over-zealous for an IRC, e.g. detainees locked up at 9, visits restrictions, some strip searching without adequate justification, and early days procedures were still not reaching all detainees.
- Respect: ventilation and environment were relatively poor and a major issue for detainees, and there were some issues in healthcare.
- Activities: notwithstanding the great teacher, activities facilities were just adequate for the population but about to be further challenged by the new beds, and about half of detainees said they had too little to do.
- Preparation for release/removal: while welfare had improved, some aspects of visits and pre release arrangements were weak

I hope that helps to some degree to explain the reasoning. Our approach is to look at the detainee outcome more than at the performance of managers, even though we try to acknowledge that. This means we take into account things that may also be beyond the control of centre managers, e.g. Home Office procedures/policies, contractual restrictions, etc.. The thinking behind this is that it allows for a whole system response which may be needed to effect positive change, even though we completely understand why some might see this as unfair on centre staff. It's the only way we feel we can make sure that the priority that should be given to the detainee experience doesn't get lost.

Best wishes,

Hindpal

Hindpal Singh Bhui
Inspection Team Leader,
HM Inspectorate of Prisons
Victory House, 6th Floor, 30-34 Kingsway, London WC2B 6EX

DPA

-----Original Message-----

From: Jackie Colbran [redacted] DPA
Sent: 14 November 2016 11:48
To: Singh Bhui, Hindpal (HMI Prisons)
Subject: IMB comments on HMIP debrief for Brook House IRC

Dear Hindpal

Thank you for letting us have sight of the written version of the debrief on the Brook House inspection. Gareth and I have been able to give a good account to our members of our observations of the inspection process; its fairness, thoroughness and friendliness. Over the weekend I have spoken to the board and we are agreed that I should make two points to you.

First the IMB finds Brook House to be a well-run establishment, aiming to improve and with a remarkable attitude of care to the detainees from the staff. It is a shame, therefore that, this was not seen to rise above the "reasonably good" in any of the categories - as recognition for effort and a spur to the rest of the estate. I am sure your team must have given serious consideration to the matter but I felt it worth sharing this thought with you.

The section on Learning and Skills has aroused strong feelings across the Board. The 100% that detainees gave education in the survey speaks worlds. Most of them are very short term residents who will have no time to gain a qualification. For various reasons, such as their uncertainties and vulnerabilities, many are not at a point when formal education would be helpful. Far more important to them is being given a space to feel good about themselves, to exercise their minds by thinking about something of interest. Flexibility is what gets them into the classroom. The fact that they may be called away to see a solicitor or other visitor or have an appointment to see a nurse or the Home Office or maybe simply have short attention spans is inevitable. It is a credit to Sebastian that he can structure his classes so flexibly and keep everyone interested. He teaches ESOL, but he also teaches lots of other things by the way and the detainees love him. In our opinion an IRE's education provision needs to be judged on different criteria and Sebastian's model raised an example of good practice.

One of our board members spent her working life as a teacher and was subject to many inspections over the years. I asked for her comments on what she thinks of Sebastian's teaching methods:

"In my opinion, the approach developed by Sebastian Ganga-Valle is exceptional, in that he concentrates on developing a warm personal relationship with his students in order to use a loosely structured, but nonetheless structured, approach to their learning.

Detainees feel not only safe but valued and relaxed while they are in the Education room. The mixture of ages, abilities and languages present is, I feel, well catered for by the use of worksheets, reference books, small-group teaching, the use of video and film presentations, and talks and discussions which highlight themes such as the environment, conflict, Black history, anger management, Health and Safety.