

Longitudinal Inspection

HMP & YOI Polmont

23-27 January 2017



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TERMS OF REFERENCE

As a result of the announcement by Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, on 11 February 2016 that approximately 110 women prisoners from HMP & YOI Cornton Vale (Cornton Vale) were to transfer to HMP & YOI Polmont (Polmont) in the summer of 2016, David Strang, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland, announced that he would undertake a series of inspections in Polmont and Cornton Vale.

The first inspection of Polmont took place in April 2016 over a three day period with the following objectives:

- to identify the progress made by Polmont against the recommendations made in the full inspection carried out in October 2012, and the follow-up inspection undertaken in March 2014;
- to establish a baseline of delivery against their published objectives and a number of the HMIPS' Standards for Inspecting and Monitoring Prisons in Scotland; and
- to seek an overview and understanding of the plans for the introduction of the women into Polmont.

During the autumn of 2016, after the transfer of the women to Polmont, the inspection team visited Cornton Vale to assess any impact of the regime available to the women that remained there.

This second inspection of Polmont was undertaken over a five day period in January 2017 and had two primary objectives:

1. to assess to what extent the regime available for the young men had remained comparable to that found in April 2016; and
2. to evaluate if the regime available to the women offered equivalent levels of support, challenge and variety, as that available in Cornton Vale.

The third inspection will be a full inspection of the now established regime, undertaken over a two week period utilising HMIPS' Standards for Inspecting and Monitoring Prisons in Scotland which will be programmed after April 2018.

INTRODUCTION BY HM CHIEF INSPECTOR OF PRISONS FOR SCOTLAND

This inspection of Polmont conducted in January 2017 was the second in a series of inspections over an extended period, as a result of the decision by Michael Matheson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, that approximately 110 women were to be transferred from Cornton Vale to Polmont in 2016. The first inspection was conducted in April 2016, to assess the conditions and treatment of the young men and to identify the progress that had been made since the previous HMIPS inspection in 2014. The women were transferred from Cornton Vale to Polmont in August 2016.

The purpose of this January 2017 inspection was to assess to what extent the regime available to the young men had remained comparable to that before the women's transfer, and to assess the impact of the women's transfer on the women's treatment and opportunities.

I am particularly grateful for the contribution of Professor Lesley McAra of the University of Edinburgh who accompanied the inspection team. Her observations of the comparison between this inspection and the April 2016 inspection have been incorporated into this report.

August 2016 Transfer

The management and staff in Polmont faced considerable challenges in managing the transfer of over 100 women from Cornton Vale to Blair House at Polmont whilst at the same time maintaining delivery of a full regime for the young men they continued to hold. Polmont management and staff should be commended for the successful transfer and integration of the women into the new arrangements. While there were inevitable teething problems with such a transfer, these were tackled quickly and appropriately.

It is worthy of note that the staff who had transferred from Cornton Vale universally felt that they had been made to feel welcome and had been able to contribute to the new arrangements.

Overall, we assessed that the arrival of the women at Polmont had not had a detrimental impact on the regime and opportunities for the young men. Similarly, the women were able to benefit from accommodation which was more modern than at Cornton Vale and which had in-cell sanitation facilities.

Improvements

It was noticeable that relationships played a key role in developing the ethos at Polmont. The inspection team found that there was a greater level of engagement by the staff into the direction and plans set out in the vision for Polmont. There was also an improved level of engagement by the young men in the impressive range of activities on offer, however they remain at a relatively low level. A newly established Activities Access Assurance Board was monitoring the levels of uptake.

The arrangements for healthcare had improved, with a number of positive developments being introduced following the arrival of the women from Cornton Vale. NHS Forth Valley had a good overview of the provision of healthcare across the three prisons in their catchment area. In particular good arrangements were in place for accessing the mental health nursing team and the psychiatrist for both the young men and the women. There were plans in place to introduce an Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) Service, which had the potential to improve the access times for assessment and treatment.

Family Contact Officers continued to provide a valued service to encourage families to maintain and develop their relationships with the young men and women in Polmont. Similarly, the Throughcare Support Officers (TSOs) had developed further their experience and practice in supporting people both before and after they had been liberated from Polmont. This engagement included extensive support for young men over the Christmas and New Year period, at a time when they were particularly vulnerable and little support was available from other agencies. There had been further investment in the training of Personal Officers and a greater desire to engage with the young men in developing Positive Future Plans (PFPs), however too many of these plans remain incomplete. The Community Safety Unit (CSU) continued to deliver a comprehensive set of activities, including the leadership programme.

Continuing Challenges

An enduring challenge for Polmont remained the roll out of the PFPs. Whilst there had been further training and awareness raising, it was disappointing to note that less than a third of the plans which were due had been completed. There was a need for the role of the Personal Officer to become better utilised at Polmont. Similarly, given the extensive opportunities for education, learning and work available at Polmont, the low attendance levels at these activities was disappointing. There was still scope for improving the level of engagement and participation of the young men in these opportunities. A consequence of this level of engagement was that too many young men spent long periods of time locked in their cells. Not all young men were able to participate in recreation each day and access to the open air was restricted in the regime timetable. Access to open air was further restricted at the weekend in certain areas, especially for those held on remand.

It was apparent that young men were required to return to the residential halls from activities if they had an appointment to attend, for instance in the health centre or with a social worker. This again reduced the engagement and participation of the young men in activities and learning. It appeared that the process of “enemy management” continued to dominate decision making and inhibit constructive engagement opportunities for the young men.

Whilst the women in Blair House appreciated the improvements in their living conditions they had experienced in the move to Polmont, there were some areas where they felt that arrangements did not meet their requirements. The timing for family visits in the evenings made it difficult for school aged children to attend. The women also stated that the toiletries available to them were limited and that the quality of food was disappointing.

Throughcare Support

Once again, this inspection has highlighted the personal challenges facing people leaving custody, often without the very basic requirements of everyday living: accommodation, healthcare support and finances. Of the 82 young men supported by the TSOs, 28 (34%) were liberated without an address to go to. In addition to the lack of shelter and security which this represents, it also has implications for their inability to access appropriate healthcare and medications. This is compounded by a potential wait of up to five weeks to gain access to benefits payments.

These are not issues which are in the gift of the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) to resolve alone. Greater efforts need to be made to provide joined-up support from mainstream service providers, to ensure that young men and women leaving Polmont are not set up to fail.

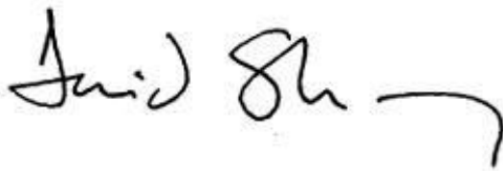
Fire Skills Training Programme

During the week of the inspection, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service delivered a fire skills training programme to six young men and a peer mentor as part of their youth engagement programme. This was an impressive and entirely positive experience for the young men who took part. Full details, and photographs, are included in Annex B of this report. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Polmont should be commended for their commitment to engaging proactively with the young men in this way, with such positive results.

Conclusion

The management and staff at Polmont have adapted well to the arrival of the women from Cornton Vale. It is encouraging to see the improvements which have taken place. There remain continuing challenges to be addressed, which I hope this report has helped to identify.

Progress in response to this report will continue to be monitored by the Independent Prison Monitors, supported by inspectors from HMIPS. A further full inspection of Polmont will be undertaken in due course.



David Strang
HM Chief Inspector of Prisons for Scotland

May 2017

DECENCY

The prison supplies the basic requirements of decent life to the prisoners. The prison provides to all prisoners the basic physical requirements for a decent life. All buildings, rooms, outdoor spaces and activity areas are of adequate size, well maintained, appropriately furnished, clean and hygienic. Each prisoner has a bed, bedding and suitable clothing, has good access to toilets and washing facilities, is provided with necessary toiletries and cleaning materials, and is properly fed. These needs are met in ways that promote each prisoner's sense of personal and cultural identity and self-respect.

The residential accommodation was found to be well-designed with good levels of natural light and plenty of space for activities. The two activities blocks had benefitted from considerable investment and provided a good environment for both work and learning.

Polmont was clean and tidy throughout. In each hall there were plenty of cleaning materials available for both the hall and individual cells and the young men and women informed us that when materials ran out, they were replenished without delay. The cleaning schedules were clear and robust, particularly in the serveries. In each hall the communal shower facilities were clean and the young men reported that there was not a problem with access. There were small amounts of graffiti in Iona Hall but there was an effective programme of redecoration in place to respond to this promptly.

Blair House and Munro House levels 1 and 2 had been refurbished with bright coloured paint, the use of colourful and inspiring graphics with upgraded seating in the communal areas which was an improvement, we would encourage the SPS to ensure that this refurbishment is extended to the entire establishment, particularly Iona Hall, which felt quite dated in comparison. It was encouraging to hear that the women and young men had contributed to the overall design, including being involved in colour selection. The women were positive about the single cell accommodation in Blair House which benefitted from en suite facilities. However, there were concerns raised about the lack of affordable toiletries for women on the canteen list with, for example, shampoo and conditioner for men available at a lower cost than the equivalent products for women. It was also reported by women that access to razors was only permitted in the morning for a short period of time. Whilst we understand that this was a safety concern, there was little flexibility in the regime that recognised the differing requirements of the female population.

The laundry appeared to work well in accordance with a regular schedule, with few complaints of clothes not being dry on return or going missing reported to us by prisoners. However, the women reported to us that washing powder was not available for them to wash their underwear in their cells and they felt uncomfortable sending all their clothing together to the main laundry facility. We understand that this was due to the powder potentially blocking the sink drains but it may be appropriate to source a liquid washing material so as to enable the women to maintain their sense of dignity in this way.

In the kitchen, there was a demanding schedule for food preparation and cooking, with a number of young men engaged in the work party. The kitchen was very clean and tidy. Following discussion with the catering manager it was clear that effort was made to engage with prisoners about their views on the food and what they might prefer to eat. Food focus groups had been set up to ensure that communication was open between the prisoners and the kitchen and, where possible, the kitchen endeavoured to provide what the prisoners had requested. The menu was varied though, the practice of giving a bag of four pieces of fruit to the prisoners once a week, as opposed to on a daily basis, was not always effective, with much going to waste or being shared out instead with the others in the hall. In keeping with the women's preferences, effort had been made to provide them with more salad portions. The kitchen had a good system for meeting dietary requirements for religious, medical or cultural reasons. The young men said that the food had improved since the arrival of the women. Food tasted on one occasion was hot and tasty, but many of the women and young men complained about the variety and quality of the meals. We did, however, observe that the trolleys carrying the food from the kitchen waited for over half-an-hour before the food was served which undoubtedly had an impact on the quality of certain meals. We would encourage Polmont to ensure, wherever possible, that food was served as timeously as possible to maintain the quality.

We were encouraged to note that the women in Blair House were able to dine outwith their cells. It was, however, unfortunate to observe that for young men social dining only took place in the Positive Futures Unit (PFU) in Monro Level 1, with most other young men continuing to eat in their cells. This was a lost opportunity to encourage more responsible socialising.

Overall, it was clear that the women who had transferred from Cornton Vale appreciated the improvements in their living accommodation, in particular that they had unrestricted access to toilet facilities.

PERSONAL SAFETY

The prison takes all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of all prisoners. All appropriate steps are taken to minimise the levels of harm to which prisoners are exposed. Appropriate steps are taken to protect prisoners from harm from others or themselves. Where violence or accidents do occur, the circumstances are thoroughly investigated and appropriate management action taken.

As at the time of the last inspection, there were a number of positive initiatives running within Polmont to ensure the personal safety of the young men and women in its care. The CSU continues to be an area of good practice, with SPS, the Third Sector and Police Scotland working together to deliver a number of initiatives to the young men. The Leadership Programme was now established on a rotating basis and available to all populations held within the establishment. Work carried out around domestic abuse had increased in the face of rising demand following the transfer of women from Cornton Vale. As at the last inspection the overall rate of incidences of violence had remained fairly static in proportion to the population. During this inspection, no examples were found of access to physical exercise being removed as a punishment in the Orderly Room.

While there had been some referrals made to the CSU as a result of bullying behaviours, the numbers remained small, around one per month. Whilst there continued to be good oversight of incidences of violence or risk through the Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group (TTCG), and other formal forums within the establishment, there had been no steps taken to convene a multi-disciplinary group with a specific remit to oversee, monitor and review the efficacy of the anti-bullying strategy. During the inspection, examples of bullying behaviour were found including one instance which then escalated into violence. It was clear that the number of referrals to the CSU did not reflect the rate of incidences around the establishment. The lack of an SPS-wide anti-bullying strategy is an area of concern as a consistent approach across the estate in this key area cannot be achieved.

There was a comprehensive set of measures designed to respond to incidences of violence and on-going work to strengthen violence reduction initiatives, including a multi-disciplinary workshop held in November 2016. However, responsibility for this lay under a different function from the CSU, who oversaw restorative work and the anti-bullying strategy. Unless this situation is carefully managed and overseen there is a potential that opportunities to proactively intervene at an early stage could be lost. We would encourage management to ensure that staff are fully aware of how the two functions interrelate and how they can contribute to increase the number of positive outcomes. As at the last inspection there was evidence of on-going restorative work taking place within the establishment which was positive.

In Blair House, women referred to a feeling of tension within the hall, with some attributing this to the lack of a distinctive long-term regime for those serving longer sentences and others referring to the amount of time spent in cell. However, there were significantly lower levels of 'keep separates' within the women's population and relatively low levels of violence. The number of young men being held within the protection regime had significantly reduced in recent months. As a result, staff

reported that they were able to carry out more Personal Officer work with the young men held in the protection area and reported that relatively low numbers of young men were currently being referred there on non-offence grounds.

The TTCG met on a regular basis and included in-depth discussion about emerging issues within the establishment. The Intelligence Management Unit were engaging proactively with the Equality and Diversity Group to refer any foreign national prisoners identified who may require language services or support. There were also examples of some innovative initiatives, such as work carried out in partnership with Medics Against Violence to raise awareness about the potential consequences of blunt force trauma following one such incidence of violence.

There had been some improvement in support for young men who were foreign nationals. Speaker telephones had been purchased to enable conversations with the support of interpreters, and an Orderly Room observed during the inspection was adjourned when it was established that the young man required the assistance of an interpreter. Another Orderly Room was being held elsewhere in the establishment during this time with an interpreter present. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) had recently been developed to clarify arrangements for interpreting and translating services, but was at too early a stage of introduction to assess whether it was fully embedded. There was an example of an incident involving a foreign national where language of a racial nature had been used, but this was not clearly identified or challenged with the young men involved at the time. However, a number of young men who were foreign nationals spoke positively about the support that they had received from staff and had settled well into the regime at Polmont.

A SOP had recently been developed for cases where it was decided to locate a young man under the age of 18 outwith accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds. At the time of inspection, there were no such arrangements in place and as it too was at an early stage of implementation it was not possible to assess the efficacy of this process.

There was work taking place within the Separation and Reintegration Unit (SRU) which, although in its early stages, had clear potential to become an area of best practice. Inclusion Officers were working alongside SRU Officers to develop gradual reintegration plans to support the return of young men into mainstream accommodation. During the inspection, a number of positive examples were observed including the use of the visiting facility within the SRU to promote constructive interaction between young men without compromising on safety. Staffing levels were assessed on a case-by-case basis enabling young men at appropriate stages to attend the activities area to engage in one-to-one work with different agencies, with support from an Inclusion Officer. Constructive interactions were observed between both SRU and Inclusion Officers with young men in the SRU, many of whom presented challenging behaviours and had complex needs.

This type of work can be difficult to capture and report, and as a result often goes unrecognised. However, it epitomises the vision for the establishment as a learning environment in which every interaction provides an opportunity for officers to support the personal growth and develop the resilience of those in their care.

The continued use of 'keep separate' lists, physical measures of control and time in cell identified in the last inspection limited the opportunities for officers to engage in person-centered work like this, and therefore to support individuals to develop their abilities to deal with conflict and adversity in a constructive manner whilst in custody.

HEALTH

All prisoners receive care and treatment which takes account of all relevant NHS standards, guidelines and evidence-based treatments. Healthcare professionals play an effective role in preventing harm associated with prison life and in promoting the health and wellbeing of all prisoners.

For this inspection Healthcare Improvement Scotland was asked to evaluate if the healthcare available to women in Polmont offered equivalent levels of support, challenge and variety, as that available in Cornton Vale; and that the young men in Polmont were continuing to receive the same access to healthcare as delivered prior to the arrival of the female population. The visit should not be viewed as a full inspection visit.

The report reflects what we found during the inspection. However, additional wording has been added to the conclusion section outlining reported improvements since the inspection.

Future and current workforce planning

We were informed that in preparation for the women moving over to Polmont, NHS Forth Valley had undertaken a review of clinical services in Polmont to ensure that service provision would continue to meet patient healthcare needs. This involved a skills analysis of their existing workforce.

From this review NHS Forth Valley recognised that key senior clinical staff were required to be deployed to Polmont. This was to support the existing workforce to provide healthcare to the new female population and additional clinic sessions were provided in psychiatry, addiction services, sexual health and Blood Borne Viruses (BBV).

Regime and environment

Following the transfer of women to Polmont a working group was established between SPS and the healthcare team to address some of the challenges around 'patient flow' which had been identified since the move. Clinics had not been running to full capacity and there were significant numbers of patients who did not attend pre-arranged clinic appointments. We were informed that one of the reasons for this was that clinic appointments had to be arranged and submitted to SPS 48 hours in advance, for 'keep separate' checks. These checks were undertaken to ensure that young men from rival factions did not attend the health centre together to minimise the risk of disruptive behaviour. This meant that clinics had to be arranged within a tight timeframe, therefore no appointments could be made outwith this timeframe and some clinic appointments were not filled as a result. Health centre managers told inspectors that if a young man was not able to attend clinics as a result of 'keep separate' checks, then a member of staff (for example the psychiatrist), where possible, would attend the hall to see them on the provision that a room would be available in the hall.

We were further informed that young men who had a clinic appointment could only be collected from their halls. This meant that they had to remain off work as they could not be collected from their work party. The health centre manager described wanting to normalise health centre appointments so that they replicated life outside prison. For example, patients would go to their work party, be collected for their appointments and then be returned to their work. We were informed that there was discussion underway between NHS and SPS to adopt this approach.

There were also concerns raised by healthcare staff that Naloxone kits were not allowed to be put into a patient's personal belongings ready for liberation once they had received Naloxone training. Polmont's policy was that prisoners would only receive their Naloxone kits on the day of liberation. The challenge with this was that if young men or women were liberated early, before healthcare staff could get down to put their Naloxone kit in with their possessions, they would leave the prison without their kits. This potentially increased the patient's risk of overdose. **This was a concern.** Again, we were told that the SPS and the NHS were in discussion to change this practice.

Health screening

The women spent their first night in custody at Cornton Vale, Scotland's national facility, where they were initially seen at reception for a health screen. The next day, they were transferred to Polmont or the two other receiving female prisons in Scotland.

For all females transferred to Polmont they would receive their assessment prior to transfer. This would be a comprehensive nursing assessment followed by a GP assessment in Cornton Vale.

Once transferred to, further nursing assessment would be undertaken if appropriate.

Mental health

The women and the young men had good access to the psychiatrist and the mental health nursing team within Polmont. Once referred they were seen, assessed and commenced on to appropriate treatment quickly. There were no waiting times for assessments and robust processes and pathways were in place to ensure that patients were reviewed and discussed. Standardised assessment documentation was in place and patients had personalised care plans. The mental health nurses received regular line management support and supervision. **This was practice worthy of sharing.**

Additional mental health support available to patients included access to a cognitive behavioural therapist, mindfulness practitioner and an art psychologist. There was also a good range of Third Sector agency support available to prisoners such as Open Secret, which provided confidential support to individuals whose lives had been impacted by childhood abuse or trauma. For the young men, there was also Barnardo's, which provided advice and one-to-one support for prisoners to help make positive choices.

Funding had been secured for a 0.8 whole time equivalent psychology post to support the three prisons located in the NHS Forth Valley area. Although this was a relatively small resource, the post will support and provide specialist clinical supervision to the mental health teams across the three prisons.

Future developments also included plans to integrate the addiction team and mental health teams. Regular joint meetings had been established to discuss patients who had both addictions and mental health issues and case management was being shared for patients who had addiction and mental health needs. This collaborative approach to discuss and respond to prisoners' health needs was **practice worthy of sharing**.

We were told about an initiative that has been progressively developed over the last few years called 'my life with others'. This work was being led by the establishment's Head of Psychology, working in close collaboration with other agencies working in the establishment. The initiative has been developed over a four year period and now includes a range of trauma services such as bereavement counselling, domestic abuse support, Open Secret, art therapy and a broad range of mental health supports including mindfulness. Additionally it included therapeutic learning approaches generally such as performance arts and horticulture. The overall aim being the co-ordination of these initiatives would support the prisoner to achieve positive outcomes for health and have a positive impact on reoffending.

Addictions

The healthcare team had undertaken a review of the existing addictions caseload of patients in Polmont and the women who were being transferred from Cornton Vale. The review highlighted significant differences between the 'substance related' health needs of women and young men in Polmont. Women appeared to have a more complex range of needs, relating to long-term substance use, whilst the young men required a 'health improvement' approach, including harm reduction.

To support the diverse group of addiction patients, the senior addictions specialist nurse from Cornton Vale was deployed to work between the two establishments providing clinical expertise, support and training to the addictions team in Polmont.

The number of Enhanced Addictions Caseworkers had been increased and a weekly addiction referral group has been established to ensure that current patients and new referrals were discussed.

We were also told that as a result of bringing staff over from Cornton Vale there was now a wider scope and range of assessments and treatment options for the young men. For example, young men assessed as having an addiction issue were now screened at reception and a urine sample taken to screen for potential substance misuse issues. Further to this, all young men also had the opportunity to receive BBV/ Sexual Health screening. In addition, all nurses who had completed the appropriate training had access to a Patient Group Direction for supply of take home Naloxone kits for those deemed to be at risk of overdose on release.

Primary Care

The healthcare team had developed a nurse-led first-contact and triage model. This meant that patients would be seen initially by a nurse and offered appropriate treatment and support as clinically indicated. In this nurse-led triage model, referral to the GP was arranged where clinically indicated. This enabled GP resource to be targeted more efficiently.

New service developments

An ANP service was about to be introduced at Polmont. We were told that introducing this new service will mean that patients will be seen more rapidly. As the ANP would be working across the three establishments, there would be opportunities to share best practice and provide continuity of treatment and prescribing between prisons in the NHS Forth Valley area.

We were also told of future plans to implement a GP-led pain management clinic and a specialist substance misuse clinic for patients.

The healthcare team was also in the early planning stages of providing social prescribing. Social prescribing was a way of linking patients in primary care with sources of support within the community or in this case the prison. It provided GPs with a non-medical referral option that could operate alongside existing treatments to improve health and well-being.

Waiting times

From information provided by the healthcare team, waiting times at Polmont for clinical services such as the dentist, GP and addiction services had not changed for the young men following the transfer of the women. Polmont and Cornton Vale had equivalent waiting times for clinical services for women.

Patients' feedback

Young men that we met spoke positively of healthcare provision within Polmont and they described being able to access healthcare services quickly. They, and the women we spoke with did, however, voice concerns at not being able to directly access the GP. Some felt unhappy about having to see a nurse first for issues that they felt required a GP appointment. We were told that as part of the prisoner's induction the nurse triage process was explained however, as this was a change in practice it may take time to embed this as the norm.

Conclusion

Overall the inspection team concluded that there was an equality of accessing healthcare services for both the women and young men in Polmont.

Waiting times for accessing healthcare services were minimal and had not changed as a result of the increase in the number of prisoners.

There had been a shift from moving from a traditional primary care GP model of care towards a nurse-led service. This positive approach will enable the GP's skills to be targeted more effectively.

We found that there were many new initiatives in the early stage of development such as the use of social prescribing and the innovative approach of 'my life with others' and the role of the ANP service. We look forward to hearing about and witnessing how these initiatives have progressed at the next full inspection.

NHS Forth Valley has informed us of initiatives introduced following the inspection to address issues raised in the inspection report. This includes the following:

- Healthcare staff now meet regularly with the SPS to monitor patient attendance at pre-arranged clinic appointments. The SPS has also developed an SOP with NHS Forth Valley to ensure SPS staff attending the health centre are aware of their responsibilities. Attendance for clinic appointments has improved since the inspection.
- NHS Forth Valley has implemented a process whereby patients on a work party are collected for their health appointments and then returned to the work party.
- SPS has written and implemented a safe system of work procedure to ensure that NHS staff can provide Naloxone kits to patients up to 6 weeks prior to liberation.

HUMANE USE OF AUTHORITY

The prison performs the duties both to protect the public by detaining prisoners in custody and to respect the individual circumstances of each prisoner by maintaining order effectively, with courtesy and humanity.

The prison ensures that the thorough implementation of security and supervisory duties is balanced by courteous and humane treatment of prisoners and visitors to the prison. The level of security and supervision is not excessive.

A number of admissions and returns were observed during the inspection. They were dealt with in a professional and courteous manner. It was pleasing to note that in particular staff made good use of the body scanner only deploying the need for strip searches when absolutely necessary. The atmosphere in reception for anyone entering Polmont, especially for the first time, was relaxed and professional.

Liberations of two young men were witnessed during the inspection. One of the individuals was transported from the prison by one of the TSOs due to the difficulties he would have encountered trying to get home on his own. **This was positive.**

The system in place for the collation and governance of 'use of force' forms was of a high standard. Thirteen forms were checked all of which were found to be in order. It was pleasing to note that a very high percentage of occasions where force had been used were quickly de-escalated.

Whilst there was no central area for substance misuse testing there were a number of trained staff. Records reviewed demonstrated that tests were being carried out on a regular basis.

The Risk Management Team meeting was attended at which there were two progression cases discussed. The meeting was conducted in a professional and personable manner. Full discussions and a review of the paperwork presented took place and then each young man was invited into the meeting for a discussion around their future. The active involvement of the young men in this process is to be commended especially as their contribution to the process was openly encouraged.

Systems and procedures for those held outwith normal circulation were well-managed principally by the SRU management team. As previously reported case conferences and multi-disciplinary case meetings were a regular feature. It was also pleasing to note that the SRU management team and staff appeared to be taking more of an on-going interest in those held outwith circulation. This took the form of management plans and realistic proposals for reintegration which were carried out in an inclusive manner. This gave the impression plans were done with the young men rather than to them.

A number of Orderly Rooms were observed during the course of the inspection and were found to be well-conducted and rather than being managed in a punitive fashion they appeared to focus on a supportive outcome whilst at the same time retaining a disciplinary element.

'Talk to Me' the new SPS strategy for managing those deemed at risk which replaced Act2Care was well-integrated in Polmont, with all but 23 operational staff having been trained in its application. At the time of the inspection there had been 34 individuals who were the subject of this process since its introduction on 5 December 2016. The Unit Manager responsible for this had a good governance structure in place, which included quarterly meetings which both Samaritans and Listeners attended. There was also an on-going dialogue with SPS headquarters regarding the implementation of the strategy.

Initial interviews were observed in reception which were carried out to a high standard with the staff putting individuals at ease throughout. A check was carried out of the 'Talk to Me' paperwork in use at the time and this was found to be in order. Safer cells were found to be clean with all the appropriate clothing and bedding present.

The property store consisted of racks which contained each individual's belongings. This appeared to be well-ordered and regular checks were carried out. Valuable property was stored in metal filing cabinets within a separate locked room in reception. Although all reception staff could access the room, the keys to the filing cabinet were located within a safe which the manager controlled access to. Spare clothing was sufficiently available to allow the reception staff to help out liberations or individuals who required suitable clothing for attending court.

RESPECT

A climate of mutual respect exists between staff and prisoners. Prisoners are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and their future. Their rights to statutory protections and complaints processes are respected.

Throughout the prison, staff and prisoners have a mutual understanding and respect for each other and their responsibilities. They engage with each other positively and constructively. Prisoners are kept well informed about matters which affect them and are treated humanely and with understanding. If they have problems or feel threatened they are offered effective support. Prisoners are encouraged to participate in decision making about their own lives. The prison co-operates positively with agencies which exercise statutory powers of complaints, investigation or supervision.

In line with the findings in our last report, inspectors reported witnessing predominantly positive interactions between staff and the women and young men with a clear sense emerging that the staff cared for those they were responsible for and were motivated to help and support them as they journeyed towards liberation.

Since the last inspection, Polmont had undergone a significant change with the arrival of over 100 women, necessitating major location changes for the young men as Blair House was required for the women. Polmont management and staff should be commended for achieving this significant transition with no notable disruption to the functioning of the establishment. In addition, approximately 25 new staff were integrated into the establishment, the staff involved commenting that they felt welcomed and supported in this new environment. What was also pleasing to note was that despite all of these events minimal impact on the manner in which staff undertook their daily interactions with the women and young men was evident, and how effectively and quickly staff had settled into their new roles and responsibilities.

It was particularly encouraging to note that all the inspectors, who had been on the last inspection, commented that they felt the staff were noticeably more engaged in delivering the Governor's vision than was evident previously. This was encouraging when viewed against the scale of change required in order to accommodate the arrival of the women.

Whilst it was encouraging to see the continued progress in building positive and productive relationships, it remained a concern that the young men in particular were still not as aware, as we would have expected, of what they should expect from staff by way of support, challenge and encouragement. There were many examples where staff had clearly gone above and beyond their duty to support individuals in their care. However, the level of unprompted response from the young men regarding what they might expect by way of support prior to liberation or encouragement to engage with the regime, was much lower than would be expected given the level of investment in staff training and development in Polmont in recent years. Progress had undoubtedly been made during a challenging period of change within Polmont, however, now that the women were settled in we would hope to see the pace of progress increase in the future.

Almost every individual spoken with by inspectors, irrespective of gender, reported that they believed that they still spent too much time in their cells and felt powerless to influence this aspect of their lives. Whilst there have been clear actions undertaken by management to address the comments made in our last report in relation to time out of cell, it was evident that staff were not necessarily operating in line with the intent of the revised regime plan. It was noted that in one particular area the weekend regime, as delivered on the ground and as confirmed by the staff who worked there, meant that some of the young men were only accessing recreation time on one weekend day and access to the open air was early in the morning with few of the young men participating. This meant that they could be locked in their cells for in excess of 22 hours in a 24 hour period. This situation should not continue.

Of particular positive note was the manner in which the Orderly Room operated within Blair House where the women were located. Rather than being a process based on the potential to punish transgressions it was used as an opportunity for a one-to-one interaction, which was clearly focussed on understanding what lay behind the actions or behaviours that led to being placed on report. It was impressive to note that during one particular hearing, where the prisoner became very upset, the officer assisting with the process felt able to contribute her first-hand knowledge of the individual. This interjection provided an alternative perspective to the adjudicator allowing them to come to an appropriate decision as well as arranging for additional support for the individual concerned.

A recurring theme during the last inspection that prevailed during this one too was in relation to enemy management ('keep separate' lists). We were informed that there were more 'live' enemy notifications than individuals held within Polmont. Whilst it is essential individuals are kept safe whilst in prison, and recognising that enemy management plays a significant part in this, enemy management did appear to have a disproportionate impact on the regime and the individuals themselves. Polmont once led the way in managing interpersonal conflict, where staff were provided with restorative practice and counselling skills enabling them to de-escalate many interpersonal issues at the point of conflict. Whilst the advent of the CSU is to be applauded, care must be taken to ensure that it does not undermine the work of staff in the halls. Inspectors spoke to staff who felt that their role had been diminished and that any identified interpersonal conflict had to be referred to the CSU and that they were unable to act themselves. Work must be done to limit the impact of enemy management issues as this was the single biggest factor that limited the maximisation of the facilities and services. Examples being that dental appointments cannot be backfilled at short notice because of the need for 48 hours advanced notice to ensure the enemy issue was addressed, and gaps in education go unfilled for the same reason, which is a waste of valuable resources and opportunities.

The development of the learning environment ethos that ran through all engagements and activities in Polmont is innovative and admirable and is an approach that HMIPS wholeheartedly supports. For this approach to be seen as truly embedded and relevant to those held within Polmont it is vital that it translates through to the lived experience of those held there. It was clear that progress had been made since our last inspection across a wide spectrum of the activities within Polmont. However it was less clear how this approach had positively impacted upon

the lived experience of those held there. There were small and early signs of changes to the experience of those held there, for instance social dining and open association opportunities for the young men in the PFU and the women in Blair House. However for many others it was less obvious what had changed or what changes were being planned.

HMIPS recognises that Polmont is a complex establishment with two completely separate prisoner groups but we would encourage management to maintain the incremental improvements, witnessed since the last inspection, to ensure that these improvements are experienced by more of the young men held there.

EDUCATION AND LEARNING

All prisoners are encouraged to use their time in prison constructively. Positive family and community relationships are maintained. Prisoners are consulted in planning the activities offered.

The prison assists prisoners to use their time purposefully and constructively. Prisoners' sentences are managed appropriately to prepare them for returning to their community. The prison provides a broad range of activities, opportunities and services based on the profile of needs of the prisoner population. Prisoners are supported to maintain positive relationships with family and friends in the community. Prisoners have the opportunity to participate in education, training, recreational, sporting, religious and cultural activities.

Fife College is contracted to deliver education provision at Polmont. The Learning Centre was well furnished, bright and an attractive place to study. There was a broad range of programmes on offer in the Learning Centre with 132 timetabled sessions delivered weekly. Classes included Information Communication Technology, driving test theory, expressive arts, core skills, communications, creative writing, technical theatre, mathematics and art. This provision was delivered to the three designated prisoner groupings: women, young men, and young men on protection. Education staff were responsive to prisoner interests and views and adjusted educational programme content to reflect prisoner preference. In line with Curriculum for Excellence approaches, programmes often included a range of health and well-being, citizenship and personal development activities.

In advance of the transfer of over 100 women from Cornton Vale, education staff received limited advance information on the prior educational attainment and needs of those transferring. This did not support effective planning of educational provision. Additional resources to enable increased levels of activity delivered by the Learning Centre were supported through recruitment of a learning assistant and a small increase in teaching hours. Education provision was delivered in the Learning Centre, during vocational work parties and through one-to-one and small group sessions delivered in residential halls. This took account of the nature of the Polmont population and supported learning more effectively.

Relationships between the Polmont populations and education staff were supportive and effective. The young men and women who attended education programmes made good progress and improved and developed their skills, knowledge and understanding.

On average, approximately 60% of young men were timetabled for educational experiences delivered at the Learning Centre, through tailored support provided by Learning Centre staff for literacy or numeracy needs within vocational work parties, or sessions delivered in residential halls. Approximately 70% of the women were timetabled for educational experiences. However, attendance levels for educational programmes delivered at the Learning Centre were low. On average, on most days, between 30-50% of young men and women did not attend their timetabled sessions. These low attendance rates were caused by a number of factors including some

being directed to join work parties or choosing to remain in their cells. As a result, insufficient numbers benefited from Learning Centre delivered educational experiences. Management should look to address this situation as a matter of urgency.

Reluctant young men, who often have had negative prior learning experiences, were supported to engage in education activities in their residential halls. These innovative approaches and effective use of project-based activities worked well and ensured that these hard-to-reach individuals engaged and made progress in improving their knowledge, awareness and understanding. **This was positive.**

Vocational training

The range of provision delivered through workshops was of a good standard overall and supported skill development well. For young men, vocational training options focused on construction industries and included plumbing, painting and decorating, joinery and brickwork. In addition, there were introductory courses in engineering and forklift truck driving. There was a bicycle recycling work party and a dog rescue and training programme. Work party options included cleaning, laundry, catering, waste management, and in the summer months horticulture. Since the arrival of the women vocational training options for the young men had remained comparable to provision available in April 2016.

In comparison to the young men, women chose from a more limited range of vocational provision. This included painting and decorating, hairdressing, media, arts and crafts, and forklift truck driving. From speaking to staff and women this was a wider range than was previously available to them at Cornton Vale. However, managers recognised the need to broaden female vocational training options further and had drawn up plans to do so in the near future. To provide more vocational choice for the women population, a new hair and beauty salon was due to be constructed and operating during April 2017.

Work party attendance patterns varied but were good overall. On average, between 25-50% of women regularly attended vocational training programmes. Approximately 33% of young men participated in vocational provision.

During vocational training experiences, young men and women engaged purposefully in their activities and benefited from positive relationships with SPS tutors. During targeted vocational work party activities, Learning Centre tutors supported improvement of literacy and numeracy skills. The tutors attended scheduled workshop programmes and helped contextualise aspects of provision. They worked collaboratively with SPS instructors and this approach worked well overall, and supported the young men and women to make connections between academic and vocational themes.

Attendance rates by women during gymnasium activities were low being at approximately 20% compared to the young men being at approximately 40%. SPS staff recognised this needs improving and intended to utilise specialist advice from an external contractor whose services were used previously at Cornton Vale.

PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY

All prisoners are encouraged to use their time in prison constructively. Positive family and community relationships are maintained. Prisoners are consulted in planning the activities offered.

The prison assists prisoners to use their time purposefully and constructively. Prisoners' sentences are managed appropriately to prepare them for returning to their community. The prison provides a broad range of activities, opportunities and services based on the profile of needs of the prisoner population. Prisoners are supported to maintain positive relationships with family and friends in the community. Prisoners have the opportunity to participate in recreational, sporting, religious and cultural activities.

There could be no doubting the range and quality of purposeful activity on offer at Polmont, of note were the joiners workshop where initiatives had successfully combined education with genuine vocational training skills. Also in the painters workshop a number of women were observed to be engaged and enjoying the new skills they were developing. This was testament to the scene set by the party officer which was both encouraging and helpful whilst maintaining appropriate boundaries. On a more diverse note Polmont also offered access to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme for those suitable for inclusion.

The remit however for this inspection was to examine the uptake and engagement of purposeful activity not the quality of what was on offer. Encouragingly on the morning of the first day of the inspection the Governor covered off new initiatives designed to increase attendance at purposeful activity.

Key members of the management team were consulted as were staff on the ground both in the residential areas and in areas providing purposeful activity. Everyone spoken to agreed that attendance and engagement levels with purposeful activity could be better. Management discussed the purposeful activity action plan and the Purposeful Activity Assurance Board chaired by the Governor which met on alternative Fridays. Also discussed was the role of a First Line Manager (FLM) and two staff specifically designed to look at those who had disengaged from purposeful activity. This particular initiative was in its infancy though it was felt that progress was being made.

Management reported that they expected the numbers of young men engaged in purposeful activity would be around a third of the Polmont population. When pressed on an area where disengagement was at its worst Iona 3 was given as an example. Iona 3 was visited where an open and honest discussion took place with staff around engagement levels in purposeful activity. Of the 58 young men located in that area on that afternoon 34 (58%) were out involved in purposeful activity with 24 (42%) on the flat. Five were expecting a visit and one was on the flat pass. This was a higher number than expected and encouraging given the expectations from the earlier discussion. To examine further the uptake numbers in this area the staff gave the numbers from the preceding week, these were:

Iona 3 purposeful activity engagement levels - week commencing 16 January 2017					
Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Flat numbers	62	62	62	63	62
AM engaged	26 (42%)	27 (43%)	34 (55%)	22 (35%)	33 (53%)
PM engaged	25 (40%)	16 (26%)	23 (37%)	44 (70%)	30 (48%)

A discussion then followed to try to gain some understanding around the issues of uptake and engagement which will be covered later. The staff identified a young man who had disengaged for quite some time and he was therefore someone worth speaking to. When spoken with, he was in the process of cleaning his cell which was spotless. He was more than happy to talk to the inspector. He reported that he had suffered a couple of personal issues in the last few months, he also conceded that he was ready to move on and was in fact attending the gym. He was however not attending work or education. Disappointingly, when pressed, he stated he had not been approached by the staff and encouraged to get involved in purposeful activity but stated he was ready now to engage especially if his access to the gymnasium depended on it.

We had hoped that this young man would be part of the client list for the FLM and staff looking at those who had disengaged however he was not one of the 38 names on the list. The FLM explained the reasons as to why that was but in principle it demonstrated that this system was not yet fully bedded in. This was only one case however it was a fair test in an area identified by management to examine problems in uptake and engagement.

The will and desire of all those spoken to at Polmont to increase uptake and engagement in purposeful activity was not open to question. Everyone involved expressed a positive and encouraging approach but they felt there were a number of factors which were preventing them from realising the improvements which they all desired. Some of the debilitating factors which were identified were as follows.

- The first priority for Polmont for 2017 was to maximise access to learning for all on site, including those on remand and those who were less able to engage. Despite this there was a belief among key players in the purposeful activity area that attendance at work was seen as a priority over education. This was further borne out by the fact that key service delivery staff had to negotiate with work party officers for the release of young men. This had created a confusing picture on the ground in relation to making the strategy a reality in terms of engagement.
- This was further exacerbated by the reported difficulties in getting individuals to appointments at the health centre. There was a belief amongst management that this problem was almost eradicated however the picture on the ground was very different. Staff across Polmont reported that young men would not be collected from work for the health centre. The practice was that they remained in the hall and were collected from there to attend the health centre. This may be adding to the lack of engagement across the prison.
- It would appear that governance around purposeful activity was strong, however there was lack of scrutiny on the basic systems and processes to ensure these

were adhered to and as a consequence uptake was not as effective as it could be.

TRANSITIONS

Prisoners are prepared for their successful return to the community. The prison is active in supporting prisoners for returning successfully to their community at the conclusion of their sentence. The prison works with agencies in the community to ensure that resettlement plans are prepared, including specific plans for employment, training, education, healthcare, housing and financial management.

The work undertaken by the TSOs was impressive and their dedication and persistence was admirable. However, the level of unprompted recognition on the part of the young men and women of pre-release planning and preparation was worryingly low. There was an impressively wide range of high quality activities and interventions on offer within Polmont, yet the rate of engagement, whilst better than witnessed at the time of our last inspection, still remains at a lower than expected level. Based on the information provided by the establishment there had been small incremental improvement in levels of engagement since the last inspection, which was encouraging. We commend management for this improvement and their acknowledgement that this improvement must be maintained on an on-going basis.

Since our last inspection, we are delighted to report that the number of TSOs operating out of Polmont had increased from three to five allowing them now to manage an increased caseload of 60 individuals. The TSOs were a dedicated and committed group of staff who worked tirelessly for the individuals they engaged with. The information that they were gathering in relation to how the system worked for newly liberated individuals was invaluable, but what they were finding was gravely concerning. If the individual did not have an address to go to upon liberation the systems appeared to conspire against them. The lack of an address was not just an issue relating to shelter and personal safety it also had major ramifications for the individual's ability to access appropriate health care services and on-going medication. A young man or woman being liberated would leave Polmont with five days of medications, however, if they were liberated without an address they would not be able to register with a GP. Even if they were provided with an address on the day of liberation it could still take up to 10 days to get registered with a GP, potentially longer if they were not returning to their 'home' area. In any of these cases it was likely that an individual with an on-going medical need would run out of their medication before they were registered with a GP. Of the 82 cases that the TSOs in Polmont had handled 28, or 34%, were liberated with no address. No woman or young man should leave custody without a place to stay, an address that they can call home, or at least initially, an address that will allow them access to the services and support that they need and are entitled to receive. To be uncertain about the on-going provision of vital medication or medical support is unacceptable. The responsible agencies know that this situation exists, yet they appear not to have done anything to resolve it.

The work undertaken by the TSOs was still very much in its infancy, however, the early indications were highly positive with only 15 (18%) of the 82 individuals they had worked with having returned to custody. It was clear that those that were supported on their journey from custody to community had a higher likelihood of success than those who had to fend for themselves. The challenges faced by

individuals leaving custody must not be under-estimated and the agencies involved in that process must ensure that their approach was one of support and encouragement.

The TSOs had established a network of contacts in the community which they utilised to help them to appropriately support the individuals they were working with in the community. Whilst this is to be highly commended it is concerning to note that one of their key relationships were with food banks. An individual leaving custody may have to wait up to five weeks to gain access to their benefits, whilst having to survive on their liberation grant of as little as £58.03 for that period. It is unrealistic to expect someone to survive for five weeks on £58.03. We should not be setting people up to fail.

As has been stated in previous reports the SPS alone cannot ensure that an individual being liberated has the maximum possible opportunity to successfully reintegrate into their community. For those individuals sentenced to less than four years their date of liberation is known immediately after they are sentenced. It is therefore not a surprise that they are returning to their communities on that date. It should be possible to ensure that housing is arranged prior to liberation; benefits applied for in advance so that they commence upon liberation; and a GP identified so that continuity of care can be maintained.

To maximise the chances of someone making the transition from custody to the community all the organisations involved must work more closely together to ensure that on the date of liberation the identified supports are in place. This requires a co-ordinated and collaborative approach by the SPS, the NHS, Local Authorities, the Benefit Agencies, the Department of Work and Pensions, and Third Sector organisations. Currently, that was not the experience for too many of those liberated from Scottish prisons, despite the best efforts of the SPS.

The TSOs highlighted that Fife Council sought liberation dates well in advance, for prisoners that came from their area. This approach assisted greatly in dealing with any presenting issues well in advance of them materialising and Fife Council should be commended for this approach. Other local authorities should adopt a similar approach as it clearly assists prisoners transitioning from custody back to their communities.

There is a situation for many of the young men who leave Polmont in relation to work and housing. Whilst this was noted in the previous report, it remains the case and it is therefore appropriate to raise again. In certain circumstances the system conspires against those leaving custody who wish to enter employment. If a young man leaves Polmont and secures a place to live he will almost certainly have to forego employment because once in work the amount of housing benefit he received will at best be cut, at worst be removed completely. There appears to be no recognition within the system that transitional arrangements would be required, especially given that many employers pay monthly in arrears yet the impact of the removal or reduction of the benefit is immediate.

It was disappointing to note that so few individuals nearing release knew what they had, or what was contained within their community integration plan, or what a PFP

was. The PFP is the key document, developed within Polmont, for individuals not subject to statutory supervision upon release, in the main those sentenced to less than four years. Based on the information provided by Polmont just over 30% of the PFPs that were due had been completed. Many staff stated to inspectors that whilst they understood the importance of this process they did not have the space and time to dedicate to the task with many staff indicating that the young men get bored of the process as it was quite long and involved.

A focus group was held with young men located in the PFU. Whilst a small number of the young men knew what a PFP was, worryingly many did not. These individuals talked in very positive terms in relation to their Personal Officers and the relationship they had with the wider staff group, yet the content of their PFP did not appear to be a main or core feature of these interactions. If the PFP is the individual prisoner's roadmap to a successful reintegration, it should be front and centre of the work undertaken with them, especially in the period immediately prior to release and those from within the PFU.

It was encouraging to note that since our previous inspection management have undertaken a review of the PFP documentation and process, the revised version of which was being piloted across the establishment during inspection. Whilst early findings were encouraging it is too early to comment more fully on this updated version.

As was found previously, Polmont engaged with a wide range of community-based organisations, many of which work within the establishment. This situation remained broadly unaltered, which was a major achievement given the amount of change that had been required to facilitate the arrival of the women in the autumn of 2016. In particular, the work undertaken within the employability unit was impressive. The purpose of this unit being to ensure that the young men they engage with were as work ready as possible as well as linking some of them into potential employers. Some were provided with access to the Construction Skills Certification Scheme Card, which was required by anyone wishing to work on construction sites. In addition to the more standard activities such as mock interviews and CV preparation the unit regularly invited the Business Gateway in to speak to the young men. This activity was specifically structured to give the young men advice and guidance on how to go about establishing their business. This was a very popular activity.

Prison population profile on 23 January 2017

Status	Number of prisoners
Untried Male Adults	3
Untried Female Adults	11
Untried Male Young Offenders	97
Untried Female Young Offenders	4
Sentenced Male Adults	53
Sentenced Female Adults	59
Sentenced Male Young Offenders	240
Sentence Female Young Offenders	3
Recalled Life Prisoners	0
Convicted Prisoners Awaiting Sentencing	43
Prisoners Awaiting Deportation	0
Under 16s	0
Civil Prisoners	0
Home Detention Curfew	19

Sentence	Number of prisoners
At court	24
Untried/ Remand	158
0 – 1 month	1
1 – 2 months	0
2 – 3 months	0
3 – 4 months	3
4 – 5 months	15
5 – 6 months	7
6 months to less than 12 months	63
12 months to less than 2 years	97
2 years to less than 4 years	82
4 years to less than 10 years	64
10 years and over (not life)	4
Life	14
Order for Lifelong Restriction	0

Age	Number of prisoners
Minimum age:	16
Under 21 years	374
21 years to 29 years	80
30 years to 39 years	35
40 years to 49 years	17
50 years to 59 years	1
60 years to 69 years	1
70 years plus	0
Maximum age:	62
At court	24

Total number of prisoners	532
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Data provided by SPS

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

A Fantastic Initiative at HMP & YOI Polmont



During the week of the inspection, HMIPS were able to observe a fire skills training programme delivered by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service as part of their youth engagement programme, the second time they have done this at Polmont. On the Friday, we were able to observe the final exercise which brought together all the training the young people had undergone throughout the week. The results were impressive. They deployed fire reels and hoses, extracted an injured driver from a car wreck, searched for a victim in a darkened room and delivered cardiopulmonary resuscitation to the unconscious person they removed from the building.



The verdict from the professional fire fighters, who led the course, for six young people and a peer mentor was that their application, concentration and desire to learn were exemplary.

The experience of the course itself was very positive for the young people too who commented that:

“it has opened my eyes to some of the dangers fire-fighters experience daily. I really enjoyed the course as it was both physically and mentally demanding”

and

“I really enjoyed doing the search and rescue with Mark because as we couldn’t see a thing, we both had to communicate and work together.”

The wider benefits of the course were also appreciated by some of the young people who said:

“the course has made me more confident of my abilities”; and

“being part of a team was a great experience, it also showed me that putting trust in others can get better results.”

We would like to commend Polmont and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service for their commitment to engaging proactively with the young people in this way and such activities should be a mainstream element of the regime within Polmont.



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Acronyms

Act2Care	SPS suicide prevention strategy (now replaced by 'Talk to Me')
ANP	Advanced Nurse Practitioners
BBV	Blood Borne Viruses
CSU	Community Safety Unit
FLM	First Line Manager
HMIPS	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons for Scotland
HMP & YOI	Her Majesty's Prison & Young Offenders Institution
PFP	Positive Future Plan
PFU	Positive Futures Unit
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPS	Scottish Prison Service
SRU	Separation and Reintegration Unit
TSO	Throughcare Support Officer
TTCG	Tactical Tasking Co-ordination Group



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