Literature Review to Support the SPS Education & Employability Strategy

Dr Briege Nugent

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Literature Review to Support the SPS Education & Employability Strategy: Executive Summary
Dr Briege Nugent
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Introduction and Overview
This summary presents the key messages, firstly drawing on a review of the wider evidence on education, mainly drawing from adult and higher education, before focusing on the research base of education in prison. The key principles deduced from this analysis are also presented.

Key Messages: Wider Research on Education
- Successful education delivery is dependent on the **relationships** between the teacher and the learner, and is underpinned by teachers having good support and ongoing professional development (Opdenakker, 2023).
- Digital or Hybrid Learning offers learners **flexibility** and **promotes inclusion** (Peterson et al. 2018). Successful hybrid learning depends on experienced and qualified teachers **finding the balance** between contact and non-contact, using technology with learners effectively (Budiarti et l. 2022; Jennings, 2015).
- The best teachers recognise **everyone has the ability to learn** and it is just finding the way in which they do so (Bain, 2004). There is a move away from more traditional forms of learning to instead promote **critical thinking** and **active learner engagement** (Lage et al. 2000). One of the ways to do this is through **social practice**, so people are learning through practices that are useful to them in their daily lives (Abbot, 2021). Another form of active learning is **peer learning**, and this is reliant on the teacher building students' **self-confidence** and creating a **safe** atmosphere.
- Self-directed learning is dependent on the student having **self-confidence**, skills, the maturity and motivation to take control, and if lacking in any of these it becomes highly problematic (Loeng, 2020). It can also mean working in groups as well as by oneself, such as for example, peer learning (Brookfield, 2009). Self-directed learning **requires support from a skilled teacher.**
- Defining people as 'hard to reach' can be **stigmatising** (Shaw et al. 2017). Overall, what emerges from the evidence available is the importance of **relationship**s, of people **feeling heard, listened to** and ideally offering **personalised plans**, which capitalise on peoples' **interests** and provide **choice** in how they engage, recognising that **building trust** can take time (Messiou and Ainscow, 2012; Qureshi, 2021) **Blended learning, removing barriers** to engagement, the teacher creating a positive learning environment so learners feel safe and inspired are all highlighted in the literature as ways of promoting inclusion (Shaw et al. 2017; Vryonides, 2016. Specific **'hooks'** to get people engaged who may otherwise not, and therefore a form of **stealth learning** can be through **sport** and the **arts** (Farr, 2021; Vicars, 2011).
- Above all else, trauma informed practice is about building **positive relationships** (Mullholland and O'Toole, 2021). This about the teacher having **compassion,** understanding, **listening** to and developing strategies with the learner, to help them to

regulate their emotions within a **safe space** (Bashant, 2020; Education Scotland, 2017). Again, what underpins this happening is teachers also having support.

- Evaluation of teaching and learning experiences has an important part to play in understanding the **quality** of education and ensuring that teachers and learners expectations are aligned (Naylor et al. 2021; Education Scotland, 2015). The research emphasises the **importance of listening** to learners and making their voices central to understanding what success really means (Naylor et al. 2021). There appears to be a shift therefore from purely **quantitative** outcomes to understanding the learners experience, what matters to them and how this affects their lives using **qualitative** approaches too (Education Scotland, 2016; Lifelink and Education Scotland 2015; Nayelor et al. 2021; Tam 2001).
- **'Neurodiversity' is a definition not widely understood**, often misapplied and can affect people in different ways (Aitken and Watson, 2022). **Screening** for and diagnosing NDDs is imperative and **technology** can be used effectively to do this (Kirkby and Gibbon, 2018). Staff also need to be **trained** and have adequate **resources** to be able to provide appropriate support (Aitken and Watson, 2022).

Key Messages: Research on education in prison
- The evidence shows the **complexity of needs** people in prison present, both obviously related to education, such as the high prevalence of **additional support needs** (Centre for Social Justice, 2021; Disabilities Trust, 2021), and **the less obvious need**s, such as those related to feelings of a **lack of self-worth** due to past **trauma** (Facer-Irwin, 2022; Howard et al. 2021). Being **learner-centred** would mean taking account of all needs as well as strengths. People within prison have wide ranging levels of **abilities**, as well as needs, and therefore the **full offer of education**, from learning basic skills to access to higher education should be available (House of Commons Committee, 2023; Coates, 2016).
- Overcrowding, transfers and movement in the prison population were highlighted as particular **barriers** to education in prison.
- There are specific challenges to delivering education in prison, namely the **specific needs** of people in prison, the impact of **overcrowding**, people being **transferred**, thus disrupting their education, and the **poor infrastructure** in prison which can make teaching difficult (House of Commons Committee, 2023; University and College Union, 2022). The **lack of digital resources** in prison is emphasised as a barrier to social inclusion (Behan, 2021), and as well as being able to access technology, the **need for digital educators** for those who lack confidence in this area is crucial (Teemu et al. 2021; Monteiro et al. 2015).
- Research in England and Wales highlights that the lack of clarity of **responsibility** for education, **bureaucracy,** and wider influences, that is the **social, political and cultural** backdrop all affects the delivery of education in prison (House of Committee, 2023).
- The research on education in prison echoes the wider literature on education in terms of what is viewed as underpinning effective practice. This emphasises above all else the importance of **caring, understanding and inspiring educators** that are skilled at **building relationships** and providing **person-centred learning** (Toiviainen et al. 2019). The education offer should be as wide as possible.
- Steps towards education can be around **personal and social development**, the **arts, peer to peer learning**, using different mediums, or what is referred to as **'stealth' or 'sneaky'**

learning, so that activities that appear fun are actually about learning (Behan, 2021; Robinson, 2020; Coates, 2016).

- The research highlights the advantages of blended learning and that this depends on **strong instructor-learner interaction** (Chatalis, 2016).
- Learning can be **incentivised**, from offering longer recreation time in the USA (Dewey et al. 2020), to shortening prison sentences in Brazil (Behan, 2021).
- **Access to higher education, vocational training, connections with local employers** to identify shortages in the market, and ideally clear opportunities from prison to the community, and throughcare provision, are all shown to support people away from criminality (Housing of Commons Committee, 2023; HMIP, 2016; Coates, 2016).
- Becoming a learner in whatever form, whether it is through formal or informal routes can be a '**hook for change**' promoting **desistance**, helping people to shift their **identity** from being a prisoner to learner, teacher, and an '**effective contributor**' (SPS, 2021; MacKenzie, 2020; MacPherson, 2017; Giordano et al. 2002).
- It is also important to recognise that for people leaving prison, meeting basic needs can be challenging, and therefore may often require **throughcare** support (Scottish Government, 2022).

Principles

1. Everyone has the ability and right to learn.
2. Effective education is fundamentally about the relationships established between the teacher and learner.
3. Learners want to feel listened to, have choice and the learning experience is personalised, taking account of interests, needs and strengths.
4. Education is inclusive. Removing barriers to education is about addressing needs that are both visible, such as additional support needs, and invisible, such as feeling a lack of self-worth.
5. Being trauma-informed is about building positive relationships, and is reliant on the teacher and wider support being compassionate and creating a safe space.
6. Teachers and wider staff require appropriate training and adequate resources so they can support people to reach their potential.
7. In prison there should be a full offer of education, from teaching people basic skills to being successful in higher education.
8. Referring to people as 'hard to reach' is stigmatising. People can be supported to take steps towards education, such as through stealth learning or incentivising learning. Every positive interaction that takes place with someone in prison could help them recognise and build on their potential.
9. Prisons are part of communities. Connections with colleges, local employers and private industry are important. Access to appropriate further or higher education and vocational training designed with these partners would mean tangible opportunities are created in the community for people leaving prison.
10. Becoming a learner can be a hook for change promoting desistance.
11. Adult education enriches peoples' lives and helps to create inclusive communities.
12. Learning affects all aspect of life and should be person-centred.

1.   Introduction and Overview

Liaising with the Scottish Prison Service and Education Scotland, word searches were carried out using Edinburgh University's Discover Ed and Google Scholar databases to identify the literature available in this field. The resulting literature review is presented in three parts. The first eight secions present the evidence drawing mainly on higher and adult education. The focus then shifts to a review of the literature on education specifically in prisons. In the final secion the conclusion brings all of the key messages together, with principles presented. The aim of this review has been to help inform the development of the Scottish Prison Service's new education strategy.

2.   Mechanisms of successful education delivery in the UK and abroad

> **Key Messages: Successful education delivery**
>
> This is dependent on the **relationships** between the teacher and the learner, and is underpinned by teachers having good support and ongoing professional development.

The literature on 'sucessful education delivery' was found on primary and secondary level schools. This shows that essentially successful education delivery is about the relationships establied between learners and the teacher, and as will be shown throughout this literature this applies across all contexts, all ages, including, and arguably even more when learners are in custody. The literature highlighted the impact of the teacher on classroom learning, the importance of the connections established between the teacher/pupil and also between the pupils and learners (Opdenakker, 2023; 2020). The teacher plays a crucial role in influencing in supporting pupils to become autonomous, and it is this development of autonomy which is particularly emphasised as a product of an effective teaching environment (Opdenakker, 2023). Kyriakides and Panayiotou (2023) point to the importance of teacher professional development and that experience alone is not enough, and that school leadership and good policy to support these processes underpins this (Opdenakker, 2020). In short, effective teaching is about the development and motivation of the teachers, and the support they have, and this in turn affects the motivation and support felt by pupils and learners. There were interesting points also made about the impact of the classroom environment and how boys can be especially affected if there is not an effective learning environment in place (ibid). Moreover, that children from lower socio-economic areas, if all together in the classroom this can affect levels of motivation adversely (Hughes and Coplan, 2018 cited in Opdenakker, 2023).

3.   Digital Hybridisation or Blended Learning

Key Messages: Digital or Hybrid Learning

Digital or Hybrid Learning offers learners **flexibility** and **promotes inclusion**. Successful hybrid learning depends on experienced and qualified teachers **finding the balance** between contact and non contact, using technology with learners effectively.

The wider literature on digital hybridisation or blended learning focuses on its use in higher education and in partcular the change in March 2020 where institutions moved to delivering their courses online as a result of the pandemic, and latterly offering a hybrid model of teaching. The literature points to 'hybrid' meaning generally face to face teaching and digital teaching combined. Microsoft, drawing on their own data have said that hybrid working is here to stay (cited in Gulliksen et al. 2020), and is the 'New' New Normal (ibid). The literature emphasises that the student higher education population are more diverse than ever, in terms of socio-economic backgrounds, race, ethnicity and lifestyle choices (Partington, 2021). Offering a hybrid model of teaching offers more flexibility, inclusion and therefore is even viewed as a way of prompting citizenship (Petersen et al. 2018).[1] Drawing on research carried out by the Open University, they argue that through technology they have been able to break the 'richness/reach' trade-off, which means they have been able to provide rich learning experiences irrespective of location (Jennings, 2015). Moreover, it is important to recognise that although technology has become part of the 'blend', success depends on how it is used, rather than the technology itself (ibid). Instead, the 'heavy lifting' needs to be done by 'experienced and qualified people who can support, and where required, design rich and effective learning experiences' (Jennings, 2015: 7).

Intensive English Program in schools in England using digital hybridisation

Budiarti et al. (2022) report on qualitative data of an Intensive English Program in schools in England. The results based on 113 students, found that hybrid learning supported students to practice conversation and their learning outcomes and scores, especially in their speaking. 71.7% students stated that hybrid learning increased effectiveness, efficiency and was attractive to them. 85 students (81.8%) reported that they prefer hybrid learning than full online learning or totally face to face learning. It is also by the very nature of its use, a good way of helping people to develop digital literacy (Sutisna and Vonti, 2020 cited in Budiarti et al. 2022). The main problems cited were people not always

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[1] Further notes: Angouri (2021) also recommends the move towards what is defined as 'micro credentials' or breaking education, such as a degree, into quality smaller units. This approach would take account of the diversity of students, that the norm is no longer that they are able to dedicate three to five years fully to study, and therefore this means they can revisit education at different points when they are able to complete their study. Angouri (2021) reflects that this approach is aligned with lifelong learning that was introduced in the 1950s under the growth of the knowledge economy and it is believed this will be integral to university education in the future. The European Commission (2020) is seeking to introduce a quality assurance framework around credentials, and this would take account of these new forms of credentials which Angouri (2021) argues are necessary for upskilling, promoting financially affordable education and independence of choice (cited in Angouri, 2021).

able to access the internet mainly because of the costs involved, and the lack of human contact can affect wellbeing (Budiarti et al. 2022).

Mixed results of digital hybridisation: Aalborg University in Denmark

Aalborg University in Denmark has a diverse student population and they surveyed 136 students to understand their views of hybrid learning (Gnaur et al. 2020). The results were mixed, with about a third saying it had not been easy, a third saying it had been easy and a third neither agreeing or disagreeing that it had been easy to move to being online. The authors suggest that students could help to co-design hybrid learning spaces. Some students felt isolated and studied less when the teaching was online, while others took more responsibility for their own learning and reflection, and this highlights the importance of individual motivations and how it impacts the approach.

Advantages and disadvantages of digital hybridisation: Brandenburg University of Technology in Germany

In an earlier paper Haliloovic et al. (2016) outline the benefits and challenges of hybrid learning at Brandenburg University of Technology in Germany. Based on student course evaluations they liked the flexibility provided by the video lectures, particularly those who were working and that the content was accessible to students even through their phones. The online diaries also gave students an opportunity to be self-reflexive. The disadvantages were what was defined as 'technical stress' for the teachers. It is noted that students had improved their overall grades, but that this could be down to a number of different factors and the authors did not conclude that this was because of hybrid learning, although this may have had an influence.

4.   Teaching and Learning

Key Messages: Teaching and Learning

The best teachers recognise **everyone has the ability to learn** and it is just finding the way in which they do so. There is a move away from more traditional forms of learning to instead promote **critical thinking** and **active learner engagement**. One of the ways to do this is through **social practice**, so people are learning through practices that are useful to them in their daily lives. Another form of active learning is **peer learning**, and this is reliant on the teacher building students' **self-confidence** and creating a **safe** atmosphere.

The research in schools and higher education points to a move away from more traditional forms of learning, instead to what is referred to as 'active learning' or 'flipping the classroom.' This essentially promotes what could be described as critical thinking, with

students prepared in advance with reading to discuss, question and learn (Lage et al. 2000). It can also be fun, for example by using board games to promote lateral thinking. This style of teaching can involve using multi-media, such as clips from Youtube to engage people differently. Learning can be more interactive, by having quizzes or low-level testing, which is also shown to be successful. This style of learning creates a motivating atmosphere and learning is through unexpected ways, or what Sharp (2012) refers to as stealth learning. Further stating that 'Every time a student is unengaged, a teaching moment is lost' (Sharp, 2012: 45). Mastery learning, whereby people do online tests and can only pass onto the next stage is also a way of doing this, although there was no evidence found of this acutually leading to success. Essentially, the idea is that the best teachers recognise everyone has the ability to learn, it is just finding the way in which they do so (Bain, 2004).

Roediger and Henry (2013) found that students in higher education learn best when they are able to practice their learning frequently. There is a lack of research to support the idea that people having different learning styles (Pashler et al. 2008). Harrod (2023) also cautions against defining and promoting 'best practice' as this has a tendency to narrow down what then is taken forward, and may mask the prime importance of the effect of relationships and the positive impact of individual teachers', not processes, in successful learning.

Scotland's Adult Learning Strategy 2022-2027 (Scottish Government, 2022) highlights that learning is lifelong, life-wide meaning it affects all aspects of life, should be leaner-centred, so it builds around the interests and motivations of the learner, addressing inequalities and removing barriers to education.

Social Practice Model in Rwanda

Social practices approach is learner-centred and means learners apply their learning using content relevant to their daily lives. When they learn reading, writing and calculation practices that are useful to them in their daily lives they are more likely to continue to utilize these practices. This approach that was adopted in Rwanda, with volunteers to increase literacy levels and was effective (Abbot, 2021).

Social Practice and Blended Learning: Peeble Project in England

The Peeble Project in England used social practice and blended learning to teach people in prison basic skills in literacy, numeracy, digital competence and financial skills. The face-to-face sessions took place around every five hours of e-learning training taking into consideration the context' constraints and in this way the education and knowledge gaps were avoided. The project helped learners build their own learning plan, create their own learning objectives and outcomes, and a sense of responsibility and control. The educators were described as having a 'crucial role to play' and in order to be inclusive the content was presented in a staged manner (Toia, 2016)

Reconceptualising Autism, Autism Centre for Education and Research in Birmingham

The Autism Centre for Education and Research in Birmingham developed a distinctive framework and pedagogy for autistic pupils and challenged the prevalent misconception that autism is a disorder, rather than a different way of being. In so doing, they have empowered teachers to perceive autistic pupils as having distinct learning needs, rather than being 'faulty', 'problematic' and in need of 'fixing'. The programme consists of: a set of autism standards (for educational settings to assess autism practice in education); an autism competency framework (guidance on the knowledge, skills and competencies needed by practitioners); and autism training for educators. They have trained 275,000 staff. The impact of this training has been a reduction in school exclusions. (British Educational Research Association, 2023)

Citizen Literacy

Small non-profit organisation based in Scotland, who create an adult literacy programme of digital and printed learning resources and tutor training materials. Designed so that others can adopt it, use it at scale or at micro levels, adapt it and deliver it in their own varied contexts.[2]

Peer-learning was not found in the initial searches of literature but is a model which has been adopted in higher education and refers to when students learn from one another, and is another form of active engagement as will be further discussed (Keerthirathne, 2020). The litearature in this area affirms the importance of the facilitator or teacher in peer learning, to create a safe atmosphere where honesty and respect has been established, and that they are able to help the learners to build self-confidence (ibid). Importantly, peer teachers are supporting someone else to learn, affirming their own learning and they can gain qualifications. As will be discussed in section 12, in terms of the desistance literature, it can promote a shift towards a positive identity.

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[2] https://citizenliteracy.com

5.   Self-Directed Learning

Key Messages: Self-Directed Learning

Self-directed learning is dependent on the student having **self-confidence**, skills, the maturity and motivation to take control, and if lacking in any of these it can be highly problematic (Loeng, 2020). It can also mean working in groups as well as by oneself, such as for example, peer learning. Self-directed learning **requires support from a skilled teacher.**

In the literature self-directed learning was discussed in terms of higher education. Self-irected Learning as defined by Sumuer (2018), pertains to the extent of students' possession of the requisite attitudes, abilities, and personality traits essential for effective self-directed learning (cited in Ajani, 2023). In the same way as the literature on 'flipping the classroom', this is about the teacher supporting students to take control and feel a sense of ownership and autonomy (Robinson and Persky, 2020). As Robinson and Persky (2020: 296) conclude:

"Developing self-directed learners takes time and requires faculty members to shift from being the "sage on the stage" to either a "guide on the side" or, ideally, an authentic co-learner…Self-direction may also require the learner to have a certain level of maturity and motivation, which may be why self-directed learning comes from the adult education literature."

As well as the skills of the teacher, blended learning emerges as an effective way of bolstering motivation and active engagement (Ajani et al. 2023; Hua et al. 2024). Another tool, is to get people to engage in more interactive leaning, such as providing peer support or getting them to teach each other about what they have learned (Biemillar and Meichenbaum (2017). This is not about working in isolation, but rather developing learning networks and consulting with peers (Brookfield, 2009). As already discussed, this can also be a part of stealth learning, for example, through games (Sharp, 2012).

One of the most important aspects of self-directed learning is self-confidence and positive attitudes to learning (Loeng, 2020), and this emphasises that this is also about the whole person and how they engage in education. For those therefore, who do not have confidence, self-directed learning can be highly problematic.

6.   Engaging the 'Hard to Reach'

Key Messages: Engaging the 'Hard to Reach'

Defining people as 'hard to reach' can be **stigmatising** and instead 'accessible when approached' is suggested. Overall, what emerges from the evidence available is the importance of **relationships**, of people **feeling heard, listened** to and ideally offering **personalised plans**, which capitalise on peoples' **interests** and provide **choice** in how they engage, recognising that **building trust** can take time. **Blended learning**, **removing barriers** to engagement, the teacher creating a positive learning environment so learners feel safe and inspired are all highlighted in the literature as ways of promoting inclusion. Specific **'hooks'** to get people engaged who may otherwise not, and therefore a form of **stealth learning** can be through **sport** and the **arts**.

The research in this area was drawn from high schools and further education. There is a lack of clarity around the definition of what exactly is meant by 'hard to reach' (Shaw et al. 2017). It has mostly been found used in relation to people from ethnic minority backgrounds, or those from lower socio-economic classes (ibid). The definition in itself can be stigmatising and also arguably puts the onus on those most disenfranchised, failing to take account of the structural disadvantages faced (ibid). As well as facing structural challenges, people who are 'hard to reach', often have a low sense of belonging (Qureshi, 2021). Brooks-Wilson and Snell (2012), contend that rather than using the term 'hard to reach', we need to start using the term 'accessible when approached' (cited in Shaw et al. 2017). Definitions aside, the literature draws out a number of effective ways in which people who are referred to as 'hard to reach' can be engaged.

Most of the research focused on a form of collaboration with students or pupils to help them to engage. Specifically, Qureshi (2021) reports on the importance of universities building trust with students and hearing from them directly what the challenges are and helping them to overcome barriers.

Collaboration and hearing from students: Eight secondary schools in five countries (Messiou and Ainscow, 2021; 2020).

Messiou and Ainscow (2021; 2020) trialled an 'inclusive inquiry' in eight secondary schools in five countries. The young people considered hardest to reach were invited to become researchers, gathering information from other students and evaluating, working with three teachers at the school to inform the planning of classroom activities. The research found that those who benefitted most were the newly formed 'researchers', who became autonomous learners and shifted their own perspectives of learning. The wider student population also felt listened to and teachers were able to see the benefit of including the views of students in the way they did their work. In short, this process emphasised the importance of dialogue and relationships. Those schools where senior

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> management support was clear, the success of the initiative was highest, and this highlights the importance of context and of senior level support.

Shaw et al. (2017) literature review sets out a number of specific successful strategies to engage those who are 'hard to reach' and these are presented below.

Engagement: Blended Learning

Blended learning combines the interactivity of instructor-led training, the flexibility of self-paced learning, and online tools for building a learning community (Azizan, 2010: 464; Vryonides. 2016). The benefits of blended learning include enhancing social interaction, communication and collaboration; offering flexibility and efficiency; extending the reach of education and its mobility and optimizing development cost and time. It **offers people in prison a sense of control on their learning and on their lives, bringing wider benefits to their self- image and confidence (Vyronides, 2016: 70). Teachers and pupils together can consider how often they should meet (ibid).** It can be particularly useful to women who have caring duties, offering the flexibility needed (Radovic-Markovic (2010). The challenges can also be unengaged students, no accreditation and lack of peer and tutorial support (De Freitas, Morgan and Gibson, 2015 cited in Shaw et al. 2017). It can also be time consuming for the educator (Vyronides, 2016). Online learning requires investment (Radovic-Markovic, 2010). Further research also shows that having online courses alone is not enough (Chechlińska, 2022).

Removing Barriers to engagement: Building trust, being flexible, addressing practical challenges and providing localised information on opportunities

Although a much older text Shaw et al. (2017) draw on the work of Kerka (1986). It is argued that to overcome negative attitudes and poor-self-concept, education needs to 'provide educational opportunities with low levels of risk or threat, reinforcement of self-concept, more positive personal experiences early in the educational career' (Kerka, 1986:2 cite in Shaw et al. 2017). To overcome situational and institutional, it is suggested they offer 'alternative scheduling, extended hours for counselling, student services, transporting, child care and distance teaching' (ibid). Finally, Kerka believes that 'effective communication of accurate, timely and appropriate information about educational opportunities must be targeted to the particular needs, expectations and concerns of the intended audience' (ibid). For the strategy this is important and this information ideally could be localised.

Creating a Positive Learning Environment

Creating a positive learning environment means that it should be 'safe, inspiring (didactically) challenging, new, positive, motivating, good, exploring, constructive, adequate,effective, convenient...' (Baert, Rick and Valckenborg, 2003: 89 cited in Shaw et

al. 2017) and can be linked 'to the absence of the learner's inhibitions to learning and learning barriers' (ibid). Essentially, this is down to the skills of the teacher.

Using Technology

Mobile technology supported 'hard to reach' students from the multi-ethnic Southampton community and also those who speak English-as-a-second language (ESL) to engage (Wishart and Green, 2010 cited in Shaw et al. 2017). Technology can also help autistic people 'find their voice' (Stuart, 2012).

Arts-focused Education

Arts-focused education can 'engage members of lower socio-economic, small minority ethnic and otherwise 'hard to reach groups' in ways that more conventional educational organisations and state agencies had often found extremely difficult' (Vicars, 2011).

Social Learning Practice and Civic Engagement

Kagan and Dugan (2011 cited in Shaw et al. 2017) evaluated 'Writing Lives' in Manchester, which involved marginalised individuals within the local ethnic minority communities, holding workshops so people and students would talk about their experiences. Subsequently, some of these 'hard to reach' group members decided to enrol for university courses, which shows civic projects can be a successful method to engage people from 'hard to reach' groups.

Getting people motivated: Choice and control, being person-centred
McCombs (2002: 1 cited in Shaw et al. 2017) believes that 'hard to reach' students are those who have lost their 'boundless love of learning, natural curiosity and motivation to learn'. She explains that those students that become "turned off" from school, do so for a number of reasons. In her article, she deconstructs how students become unmotivated and how teachers and educational institutions can alter their practices to re-motivate them. The overarching principle for engaging the 'hard to reach' for McCombs is to allow students more control and choice over their studies, which include greater displays of active planning and monitoring of learning, and higher levels or student awareness of their own learning progress and outcomes. "Overwhelming" support in favour of learner-centred practices that honour individual learner perspectives and needs for 'competence, control and belonging' (cited in McCombs: 2002: 10).

There are some alternative schools that have also shown positive results, and could be described as having a 'hook' or passion to encourage young people who have been

disengaged to become engaged again. These could also be regarded as a form of stealth learning (Sharp, 2012).

Alternative School at Spartans Football Club

The Alternative School at Spartans, the football club, focuses on building trusting relationships with their students, offering one to one support so learning is at the pace the young person wants at their specific pace (Farr, 2021).

School of Hard Knocks, Rugby

The SOHK Schools Programme consists of a unique combination of rugby-based sessions, specialist mentoring and indoor group discussion. They report very positive results, with 90% of school participants feeling more confident in their abilities, 91% more engaged at school and 89% more hopeful for the future.[3]

Heavy Sound in East Lothian, Music, Sport and whole family support

Heavy Sound, based in East Lothian, uses music and activities as 'hook' for young people, and works with a small group and their families to help the young person achieve through offering an alternative curriculum and holistic support.[4] The organisation was set up by someone with lived experience of being in the care system and peer support is also an important aspect of their work.

Moving on Action for Children for young men, Youth-work, person-centred and working with local businesses

A longitudinal evaluation of support provided by Action for Children's Moving On Project to young men leaving Polmont, highlights the benefits of adopting a youth-work and solution-focused approach (Nugent, 2015). Youth work can be summarised as being person-centred and holistic in its approach, emphasising building relationships and the worker having belief in the young people to change for good. The young people had multiple complex needs, such as backgrounds of trauma, abuse, substance use, anger issues, homelessness, and mental health issues such as having panic attacks. The service and workers continued to offer support when young men stopped engaging, and were persistent in reaching out, they created and supported individualised plans, offered a range of activities, courses and linked in with local employers to source opportunities, to keep motivation as high as possible. For example, they have a good relationship with Arnold Clark and the hospitality sector. The hub became a safe space for young people to

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[3] Information taken from: https://www.schoolofhardknocks.org.uk/schools-programme
[4] https://www.heavysound.org/services/youth-services/additional-curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/

> drop into and play table tennis, get warm drinks, food and cultivate a sense of belonging. For those young men who had once fought together, they were now desisting from offending together, rather than this having to be a lonely existence (Shinkel and Nugent, 2016). The service offered a balance of work and fun. Through the support of the service the young men experienced a cognitive transformation, reporting improved health, wellbeing, stable housing, relationships and some were in work through opportunities sourced through the service.

Overall, what emerges from the evidence available is the importance of relationships, of people feeling heard, listened to and ideally offering personalised plans, which capitalise on peoples' interests and provide choice in how they engage, recognising that building trust can take time.

7. Trauma informed practice within a learning context

> **Key Message: Trauma informed practice**
>
> Above all else, trauma informed practice is about building **positive relationships**. This about the teacher having **compassion,** understanding, **listening** to and developing **strategies** with the learner, to help them to **regulate their emotions** within a **safe space**.

The literature on trauma informed practices within a learning environment refers mainly to school education but its findings are likely to be relevant to all ages. It emphasises the importance of positive relationships above all else (Bashant, 2020; Mullholland and O'Toole, 2021). Mullholland and O'Toole (2021) describe how children who have had a distressing childhood are in stress response, and this affects their brain development as well as their body. They have what is referred to as a 'narrow window of tolerance' and find it hard to regulate their emotions (ibid). To deal with this, it is advised that teachers support children to regulate by making them feel soothed and safe; by relating or validating their feelings; and lastly offer reassurance negotiating a more positive way forward (Perry 2019 cited in Mullholland and O'Toole, 2021). They posit that through this, the window of tolerance can be expanded to enable individuals to not only manage, but thrive in everyday life.

Teachers taking a trauma informed approach have understanding, compassion, and implement personalised planning, so those teaching understand triggers and develop strategies to support people to regulate their emotions (Mulholland and O'Toole, 2021; Bashant, 2020; Eduation Scotland 2017). The research also stresses the importance of the learning environment being safe, with those learning clear on what will happen, what is expected and that their voices are considered, shaping the experiences (Mullholland and O'Toole, 2021). Effective practice is underpinned by ongoing professional development and support (Mullholland and O'Toole, 2021).

Education Scotland (2017) set out six principles of nurture as:
1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

Echoing the wider literature this highlights the need for ongoing professional development on nurturing approaches and staff reflection; a clear implementation plan of nurturing approaches that has involved dialogue with children and young people; person centred learning and support; families are supported; the importance of language; that staff are supported to look after their wellbeing;

Promoting Trauma-informed Practice

Education Scotland (2021) have a website with resources for professionals to use to adopt to promote trauma informed practice. This can be viewed at:
https://education.gov.scot/resources/nurture-and-trauma-informed-approaches-a-summary-of-supports-and-resources/

This provides links to the training that is currently available and resources for professional. For example, Stirling Council has produced an online resource call 'Nurturing Approaches' which includes short videos, lesson plans and professional learning resources to promote trauma informed practice. This can be viewed at:
https://sites.google.com/stirlingschools.net/nurturing-approaches

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8.   Measuring Impact

Key Messages: Measuring Impact

Evaluation of teaching and learning experiences has an important part to play in understanding the **quality** of education and ensuring that teachers and learners expectations are aligned. The research emphasises the **importance of listening** to learners and making their voices central to understanding what success really means. There appears to be a shift therefore from purely **quantitative** outcomes to understanding the learners experience, what matters to them and how this affects their lives using **qualitative** approaches too.

There appears to be dearth of literature on measuring impact and improving performance measures in education. The literature notes that the concept of quality is highly contested and has multiple meanings depending on the different actors involved in the process (Tam,

2001). The Coates Review (2016) of prisons in England and Wales notes that the data collected in prisons around education is not of a quality that provides conclusive evidence, and is mainly through attendance. The simple 'production model' which is about inputs and outputs fails to take account of the wider experience; the 'value added' approach which is about understanding what students have gained is equally unable to do this and finally the 'total quality experience approach' attempts to capture the entire learning experience (Tam, 2001). With both the production and value-added approach there is also a presumption that the student will be stable throughout, which is almost impossible (Tam, 2001).

When the expectations of those being taught and those teaching are not aligned this can lead to disappointment for both, and overall, there is a push towards dialogue between learners and teachers to take place to decide what the priorities are and co-produce what is to be measured (Naylor et al. 2021; Tam, 2001). In one study of university students and lecturers, it was interesting to note that students valued above all else the relationships they had developed with their teachers and overall quality of the course, whereas for the lecturers measuring success was on attendance, assessment standards and enthusiasm. Eccles and Wigfield (2002 cited in Naylor et al. 2021) identify three main types of value: attainment, intrinsic, and utility value. Attainment value is determined by the impact attainment will have on self-concept or personal worth, intrinsic value is related to subjective interest and enjoyment and utility value is determined by alignment between study and long-term goals, which typically would include career goals, but may also involve such goals as maintaining a good work-life balance, managing work commitments or maintaining strong personal relationships with valued others.

In the study by Naylor et al. (2021) it was noted that for the students in higher education who often came from a disadvantaged background, the identity of 'student' was not a priority because of other competing responsibilities in their lives. The realities for students was not aligned with what their teachers expected, and highlights again the benefits of dialogue, so that learners and teachers better understand each other and can align their expectations (ibid). Comley (2021) also advocates for feedback to be gathered in a more fun way, such as using what is described as Personal Meaning Mapping (PMM), which is similar to brainstorming, so instead of students having to use language already chosen for them to articulate their feedback, this really allows them to say what they want. Overall, what is very clear from the literature available is the need for the student voice to be central to understand what success or impact really means.

In terms of how to actually measure impact, Education Scotland (2016) have provided a guide for community learning and development, to lead to improvement. This has six key questions, namely:

1. What key outcomes have we achieved?
2. What impact have we had in meeting the needs of our stakeholders?
3. How good is our delivery of key processes?
4. How good is our operational management?
5. How good is our strategic leadership?
6. What is our capacity for improvement?

It sets out to promote self-evaluation and confidence in staff to take this forward. In terms of developing ways to measure impact it has some very clear ideas and examples of quality indicators, challenge questions and illustraions of what 'very good' could look like. The guide also advises that evaluation involves as wide a range of people as possible. For example, taking the overall performance against aims, outcomes and targets, evidence of outcomes it is advised can be through indicating the improvements in participants lives, such as skills developed, benefits relevant to needs, improved health and wellbeing, measuring outcomes against targets. In terms of what 'very good' evaluation would look like one of the points made is that the analysis of need and therefore impact is robust. For the performance indicator on the impact on learners, some of the suggestions are to get qualitative data on the extent to which learning pathways are having a positive impact on learners' lives; quantitative data on participation rates and progression over time; accreditation achieved, examples of learners applying their learning in other contexts. For the quality indicator on the quality of the learning offered, hearing from learners directly about their experience is emphasised.

Learning Link Scotland and Education Scotland (2015) have created guidance on measuring impact in adult learning highlighting the importance this has on understanding the quality of education, whether the work is having the desired impact on individuals, groups or the organisaiton, and to promote improvement. This differentiates between soft and hard outcomes and the importance of developing key indicators. Different models of evaluation are presented, such as the LEAP model which emphasises that the plan is according to need, and the evaluation should be outcome focused, and also planned around assets. [5]

Many organisations working with young people use the policy 'Getting it Right for Every Child' as their basis, and what is commonly termed as the SHANAARI outcomes, standing for feeling Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included.

SMART outcomes to broader objectives can also be applied. SMART means, being Specific, having Measurable outcomes, that are Achievable, Realistic and Time-limited (Skrbic, 2014). This highlights the importance of who is responsible to ensure the actions are also undertaken.

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[5] This is the reference given for this model: http://www.planandevaluate.com

9.   Neurodiverse Support Pathways within a learning context

Key Messages: Neurodiverse Support Pathways within a learning context

'Neurodiversity' is a definition not widely understood, often misapplied and can affect people in different ways. **Screening** for and diagnosing NDDs is imperative and **technology** can be used effectively to do this. Staff also need to be **trained** and have adequate **resources** to be able to provide appropriate support.

'Neurodiversity' as a definition is widely misunderstood and misapplied, as actually we are all neurodiverse, because we all process information differently (Aitken and Watson, 2022). In the UK, Neurodevelopmental Disorders (NDDs) and the related term Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDDs) are a group of common conditions that include Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD, also known as Dyspraxia), Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), Dyscalculia, Dyslexia, Intellectual Disability (ID) and Tic Disorders (Kirkby et al. 2020). There is also growing interest in Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) (ibid).

It is important to recognise that even when someone has a disorder defined, it can affect people in different ways. For example, some dyslexic people may have a 'poor short-term memory' and find it difficult to concentrate whereas others may find it challenging to navigate to new places, 'find the right words to express themselves' or to retrieve the correct answer from their memory (Centre for Social Justice, 2021).

It is reported that 10-15% of the population in Scotland have a neurodevelopmental condition (Scottish Government, 2023a). Up to 70% of people with neurodevelopmental conditions seek mental health support and they make up a significant number of people in the criminal justice system (ibid). People with learning difficulties also can be often dealing with mental health issues. It is reported that adults with ADHD are five time more likely to develop a mood disorder, four times more likely to develop an anxiety disorder, and three times more likely to develop a substance misuse disorder than the general population (Kirkby and Gibbon, 2018). The research highlights that the number of people diagnosed are actually likely to be vastly under-estimated, with a lot of people mis and missing a diagnosis (Kirby et al. 2020).

The National Autism Implementation Team (NAIT) pathway programme which is focused on mental health in Scotland found overwhelming evidence that having a diagnosis for someone really makes a difference, and was described as 'like opening a door' (Scottish Government, 2023). Most people felt and were aware of being different but didn't know why until they were diagnosed, and on the other hand, those who have lived life without the diagnosis but felt different said this had a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing (ibid). As well as the individual positive impact getting a diagnosis means to those affected, which in itself is a good argument for screening, Dunne (2023) points to the potential individuals have to contribute to the economy as workers and with divergent thinking to potentially override artificial intelligence. Dunne states:

"Creativity, lateral (or nonlinear) thinking, reverse engineering to solve problems, complex visual-spatial skills, systems thinking, intuitive insights, hyperfocus, and multisensory pattern recognition — distinct areas in which neurodivergent candidates might excel — all stand to become increasingly important as artificial intelligence embeds itself into our daily lives."

However, as Aitken and Watson (2022) argue, the focus on celebrating talents, although at first glance may seem like a good idea, this perpetuates a myth that all neurodivergent people will have such gifts. Instead, inclusion is a benefit to all and a right. By promoting inclusion, neurodivergent people would also not need to mask their innate behaviour (Watson and Aitken, 2002; Dunne 2023).

The challenges to diagnosis

There is inconsistent and variable use of terms to describe conditions and a lack of resources for screening individuals in prison (Kirkby and Gibbon, 2018). This argument also applies to within the community, whereby in 2021, only 1 in 14 Scottish health boards provided both autism and ADHD assessment for adults and services were in high demand, outstripping capacity (ibid). Services work in silos, for example dyslexia sits in education, ADHD in mental health and ID could be separated to Learning Disability, and so the whole profile is rarely explored (Kirkby, 2020). Data sharing is frequently inadequate (ibid). Taking dyslexia as a focus, what constitutes dyslexia and methods to diagnose individuals with dyslexia have remained a contentious topic (Daniel, 2023). Assessments for dyslexia can cost between £500-£700 (Daniel, 2023). As well as confusion therefore among professionals, wider understanding and staff in prison for example rarely know about neurodiversity (Kirkby, 2020). A report by ITV News and ADHD UK revealed that children are waiting up to three years for an ADHD referral and adults up to ten years (Hay, 2023).

The current systems, in the community and in prison, were created by neurotypical people for neurotypical people, and are not inclusive (Watson and Aitken, 2022). People with learning disabilities are not homogenous and what is referred to as the 'looping effect' happens, whereby we create boxes and fit people in, and for those who are 'subthreshold' and don't quite 'fit' we simply ignore them completely (Kirby and Gibbon, 2018). Instead, learning difficulties and disability conditions should be viewed as being on a continuum, not in neat boxes and often co-occurring (KIrky and Gibbon, 2018; Coates

Females are at particular risk of under and misdiagnosis, with the evidence on ADHD and ASD showing women usually have less obvious symptoms and internalise behaviour (Kirkby, 2020). They often mimic others without understanding them, a form of masking (ibid). As well as women, people from ethnic minorities, socio-economically deprived pupils, pupils with severe absence and excluded pupils are noted as being likely to be under diagnosed for dyslexia (Centre for Social Justice, 2021).

The success of screening using technology and the call for a holistic approach

Screening using technology is very effective and for example the Do-IT Profiler which is described as taking a bio-psychosocial approach has been successfully trialled in 16 prisons in the UK (Kirkby and Gibbon, 2018). In a study carried out over ten months in HM & YOI Polmont and based on 188 participants, just over half of the young men were found to have severe functional difficulties in one or more area, such as attention, communication, coordination, literacy or numeracy; a further quarter had some functional difficulties. Among the 54 young men who reported severe attention and concentration difficulties, just over one quarter had a previous diagnosis of ADHD or ADD. Of 50 young men who reported severe literacy and numeracy difficulties, just over one quarter had a previous diagnosis of Dyslexia. However, only 6 per cent of those who reported severe social and communication difficulties had a previous diagnosis of ASD or Asperger's Syndrome and only 2 per cent of those who reported severe coordination and organisation difficulties had a previous diagnosis of DCD or Dyspraxia (Kirkby et al. 2020). Of those with the least functional difficulties, one in ten had experienced at least one head injury with a loss of consciousness. Only 8% of the young men reported having the same combination of severe functional difficulties showing how complex and individualised this area is. The lack of diagnosis could be down to a lack of neglect, lack of engagement, the postcode lottery in terms of provision, or not meeting thresholds for diagnosis (ibid). As well as simple screening a person-centred approach, to consider the person holistically is advocated for (Kirkby et al. 2020). The report calls for all young people who are cared for and have been excluded from school to be screened, and an integrated approach between community and forensic services to be delivered, with greater in-reach from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services into criminal justice (ibid).

The importance of staff being trained

Identification of needs is one thing but staff need to be trained to be able to provide appropriate support, and informed about neurodiversity so they understand behaviour (Aitken and Watson, 2022; Kirkby and Gibbon, 2018). The Salveston Mindroom Centre (2020) have developed a short booklet providing definitions of different types of neurodiversity and simply ways in which neurodivergent individuals can be supported. For example, for someone with ADHD breaking large assignments into smaller blocks of work, varying tasks and keeping them short helps; for someone with autism creating a predictable environment, explaining harder tasks by for example using lists, cards or pictures can be effective. Kirkby (2020) also stresses the need for a person-centred approach and gives the example of someone with an ASD getting violent because they have been transferred to another prison. However, taking a different approach would recognise how fearful they may be of change and instead officers could discuss with them the change and for example, show them pictures of their new cell, reducing their levels of stress.

The importance of appropriate resources

Staff also need resources to create an environment that can be responsive (Kirkby and Gibbon, 2018). As it stands, resources in schools to support neurodivergent individuals are

optional extras (ibid). Aitken and Watson (2022) provide good insights into how a classroom could be more inclusive, so that all benefit, stating:

> *"A simple example of this is for every classroom to have a cupboard of accessories freely available to help cater to varying needs: wobble cushions for hyperkinetic children to sit on and wiggle; noise-cancelling headphones for sound-sensitivity; stim toys to help induce focus; egg-timers to help structure independent learning time… Classrooms should be fitted with dimmer switches as standard, and visual timetables should be posted up for the whole class, rather than being doled out to individuals with identified needs. Flexible seating arrangements – the option to stand or sit on a beanbag or yoga ball – are another example of the application of universal design."*

Further examples by Johnson and Rutherford (2019) are cited:
- Schools that have provided tablets and laptops to the whole school benefit those children who struggle to spell and write, without singling them out.
- Relaxing or scrapping school uniform policies supports pupils with sensory issues who cannot tolerate wearing the uniform.
- Lots of schools no longer sound a bell between classes, which generates a calmer atmosphere for all.

The importance of advocacy, feeling seen and heard
Neurodivergent teachers and pupils should be at the centre of inclusion processes. Having good relationships with staff, and young people feeling they have ownership over their learning environment, with schools flexible to their needs, celebrating diversity is key to a positive experience (Friskney, 2021).

The Salveson Mindroom Centre advocate for a neurodiversity affirmative framework, so that schools or places of learning would shift their approach towards neurodiversity and accommodations being seen as the norm, to stop asking students to fit in and instead to thrive on their own terms (Aitken and Watson, 2022). Dunne (2023) defines a neurodiversity paradigm as a strengths based approach to understanding, including and valuing neurodivergent individuals.

Digital Independent Specialist College (DISC) based in Manchester

Fewer than one in four autistic young people access education and training beyond school (Ainsworth, 2023). A clear pathway found was the Digital Independent Specialist College (DISC) based in Manchester that offers supported learning at a pre-internship and internship level for 16 to 24 year-olds who have Education, Health and Care Plans (Ainsworth, 2023).[6] It is recommended that people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) have support to navigate the application process to higher education, to have all options opened up, not just to be directed for example into hospitality and for connections between higher education institutions and the local labour market to be

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[6] https://disc.ac.uk

improved (ibid). Furthermore, as it stands, the overreliance on an interview as the main recruitment practice is not inclusive (ibid).

Autism & Neurodiversity North Scotland (A-ND)

The organisation provide ongoing support to 156 individuals and their families throughout Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Moray and North Scotland.[7] One of the services they provide is Learning Pathways + for school children who have been excluded to help them resume education or working one to one to support the individual in their education.

University of Sheffield' Disability Champions'

The University of Sheffield employs disabled students to be 'Disability Champions' who are paid to speak about support available to current and prospective students (Farbri et al. undated). They also provide transition support for new autistic students through an e-mentoring scheme and one-day transition events so students can address any queries or concerns they have before the start of the semester .

Co-designing to create a peer support programme

A Scottish study showed the positive impact of using co-design methods to create a peer support programme in high schools, and recommends implementing neurodivergent student-led peer support for neurodivergent young people attending mainstream schools to promote inclusivity and prioritise the expertise of neurodivergent students (Fotheringham et al. 2023). These groups, as this research highlights could be open to all, and concerns raised by the young people were around how these groups could become a source of bullying, and it is important that where this is taken forward the organisation is ready and the code of conduct is clear. The research also highlights the importance of having a skilled and experienced facilitator who can advocate for an empower students (ibid).

Although not a specific pathway, in England, as already discussed, training has been underway with staff in schools to reconfigure neurodiversity to no longer be seen as a deficit but rather a different way of learning (British Education Association, 2023). Significantly, the research shows that this training has led to a reduction in school exclusions, with staff understanding more and therefore responding appropriately to behaviour affected by neurodiversity, and taking a more positive and appropriate response (ibid).

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[7] https://www.a-nd.org.uk/learningpathwaysplus

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The Learning About Neurodiversity at School (LEANS) project

The Learning About Neurodiversity at School (LEANS) project is a free, downloadable, teacher-delivered curriculum for children aged 8–11 years to teach them about the concept of neurodiversity using a mix of hands-on activities, storytelling items, and other resources (Zahir et al. 2023; Alcorn et al. 2022).[8] It has been developed by a neurodiverse team and research with 111 neurodiverse individuals showed that overwhelming support for the initiative (Zahir et al. 2023).

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Other examples of established 'pathways' were the organisation AVIVA, that has specific support for employees who have been diagnosed as being neurodivergent.[9]

Overall, the literature in this field shows as it stands there is much work needed to be done to raise awareness about what neurodivergence means, that screening and diagnosis is imperative, and that staff across sectors require training and having access to adequate resources to support people properly.

10.   Education Needs of People in Prison and Vulnerable Adults

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Key Messages: Education Needs of People in Prison and Vulnerable Adults

The evidence shows the **complexity of needs** people in prison present, both obviously related to education, such as the high prevalence of **additional support needs**, and **the less obvious need**s, such as those related to feelings of a **lack of self-worth** due to past **trauma**. Being **learner-centred** would mean taking account of all needs as well as strengths. Being learner-centred would ideally mean taking account of all needs, as well as strengths. People within prison have wide ranging levels of **abilities**, as well as needs, and therefore the **full offer of education**, from learning basic skills to access to higher education should be available.

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This section marks the shift towards specifically focusing on prison, firstly, drawing on evidence to understand education needs within prison, before turning to current practice. This section is structured to present what could be defined as the most obvious or more visible needs related to education and then the less obvious or less visible related to educational needs.

Needs more obviously or visibly related to education

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[8] https://salvesen-research.ed.ac.uk/leans
[9] https://connect.avivab2b.co.uk/adviser/protection/group-protection/neurodiversity-pathway/

Additional Support Needs
The definition in England and Wales is that this can affect:
- behaviour or ability to socialise
- reading and writing, for example because they have dyslexia
- ability to understand things
- concentration levels, for example because they have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- physical ability.[10]

In Scotland additional support needs as a term is currently being reviewed. It is currently the terms used in the The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended 2009). This refers to additional support needs, and as defined by Education Scotland can be due to disability, health or learning, family circumstances or social and emotional factors.[11] The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) means that all public services, including criminal justice organisations, have a duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment of disabled people and to promote greater opportunity for them (cited in Loucks and Talbot, 2007). Under the Act, the definition of 'disability' refers to the effect that an impairment has on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (ibid). The Equality Act 2010 and subsequent case law, defines dyslexia and other forms of neurodivergence are classified as disabilities, and this also puts responsibilities on local authorities to make services accessible to all (Centre for Social Justice, 2021).

Although there are no clear figures, it is estimated that about 30% of people in prison have what is termed in Scotland currently as additional support needs, and in England, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) (Loucks and Talbot, 2007). In the Scottish Prison Survey (Carnie and Broderick, 2019) over a third (38%) reported that they had a disability. 4% reported having Autism, 8% ADHD, 7% dyslexia and 1% dyspraxia. In the Coates Review (2016) nearly one third of prisoners self-identified on initial assessment as having a learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD). They often co-occur (Centre for Social Justice, 2021). Gormley (2022) observes that people with learning disabilities and their experiences of punishment have been invisible in prison policy and research. Past reports such as the *Unlocking Potential Review of Education in Prison* and *No one Knows*, have shown the clear need for support for individuals with learning difficulties and disabilities at all stages of the criminal justice system (Kirkby and Gibbon, 2018; Loucks, 2007).

Diagnosed prevalence of NDDs among young people in the UK range from one in 200 to one in 50 for ADHD, but for young people in secure centres, it has been found to be one in ten (Kirkby et al. 2020). TBI can also lead to secondary ADHD, and is a reason why this can also be overlooked (ibid). Cesaroni 2017 (cited in Robinson et al. 2018; Lightowler, 2017) found that over a third of the 103 young people in Polmont who took part in a study, reported that they had experienced a head injury and a fifth had experienced two or more head injuries. Almost a quarter of young people who had experienced head injuries noted that they received the head injury because of fighting (with bricks, bottles, baseball bats, golf clubs,

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[10] https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs#:~:text=Special%20educational%20needs%20and%20disabilities%20(%20SEND%20)%20can%20affect%20a%20child,ability%20to%20understand%20things

[11] https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/additional-support/what-are-additional-support-needs/

hammer etc). An internal review carried out by SPS found that between 38-46.8% of young people had ADHD (Howitt, undated cited in Robinson, 2020).

It is reported that 10% of the population have dyslexia and in the criminal justice system it as much as five times greater than the general population, so 50% (Centre for Social Justice, 2021). Research carried out by the Disabilities Trust (2021) reports that of the 100 women in HMP Drake Hall in England who screened positive for a history indicative of a brain injury, 62% had sustained it through domestic abuse. In a Scottish specific study, of 109 recruited, significant head injury was found for 78%, of whom 40% had a disability, with most (89%) reporting this had resulted because of domestic violence over many years (McMilan et al. 2021). McMilan et al. (2021) estimate that around 30–40% of all women in prison in Scotland are disabled by head injury, and recommend that this is added to the list of vulnerabilities that should be taken into account in criminal justice policies.

Research highlights that those in prison who have Neurodevelopmental Disorders (NDDs) may find it especially difficult to cope in prison and be vulnerable to victimisation (Gormley, 2022; Kirkby et al. 2020; Kirkby, 2020). In the community for example, county lines drug supply chains exploit people with learning and developmental disorders (Kirkby, 2020). In prison, people with NDDs are more likely to not access educational and vocational programmes and reduced potential for further assessment (Kirkby et al. 2020). They may use substances as a form of self-medication (Kirkby, 2020). Or as summarised 'Those, ironically, who have experienced the most adversity may be the ones who miss out most on support' (ibid: 46).

Gormley (2022) reports on a study of 70 interviews with 25 men and women in Scottish prisons who had learning disabilities, and the findings echo the earlier work of Loucks and Talbot (2007). She found that people with additional support needs faced routine oppression and exclusion. As well as dealing with prison being more challenging, some people with additional support needs didn't understand why they were there, and for how long, they struggled to adjust to the regime, and were also more likely to be victimised and unlikely to ask for help (Gormley, 2022; Loucks and Talbot, 2007). In Gormley's study, some people 'coped' with this by not leaving their cells. They are described as being marginalised, stuck between systems of control and care, and the prison exercises 'institutional indifference' (Gormley, 2022). In the Scottish Prison Survey (Carnie and Broderick, 2019) 13% of people reported that they felt discriminated against because of their disability.

As with the section relating to neurodevelopmental disorders, research points to the lack of screening and information sharing to help identify people with additional support needs (House of Commons Education Committee, 2023; Gormley, 2023; Loucks and Talbot, 2007

Supporting People with Additional Support Needs

Some of the good practice that has been highlighted in the past has been the importance of one to one support, access to speech and language therapy, the sensory room that used to exist in HMP Cornton Vale, and even the use of games such as 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' (Loucks and Talbot, 2007). Support for staff to understand additional support needs and providing specialised support is crucial.

Speech and Language Communication Needs

It is reported that between 60-90% of young people who come in conflict with the law have speech and language communication difficulties (Morrison Media, 2022; Children and Young People's Centre for Justice, 2022). The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists in Scotland call for speech and language therapy to be a part of every process in the justice system and have identified the need for more training for staff working in the sector (ibid). In a submission to the Justice Select Committee the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists further reported that 60% of people in prisons have speech, language and communication needs and call for training in this area to be provided as part of staff induction and to be refreshed regularly (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, 2023). They also stated that at present screening is ineffective and prison staff are often unaware of who they can engage with to support a person (ibid).

REACH at Perth and Kinross

The service provides intensive support to families with young people experiencing complex needs, some of whom have entered the justice system and are involved in legal proceedings. The multi-disciplinary approach brings together a range of professionals (from Children's Services, Education, and NHS Tayside) into one team and allows young people to benefit from a wide range of specialist support - in one place. The service can also provide police and social workers with a report about their communication needs.

The Box Training

There is an online e-learning tool for professionals working in the justice sector to use to identify communication needs and the skills to help individuals who have these issues.

https://www.rcslt.org/learning/the-box-training/

Lacking in education, basic skills and subsequently having low self-esteem and a negative identity as a learner

Based on European wide research, people in prison often have little or no work experience, training, education, lack participatory skills and may have severe literacy and numeracy gaps (Vryonides, 2016). In England, it is reported that 61% of the male prison population have the expected literacy levels of an 11-year-old (Ministry of Justice et al. 2023). In the 2019 Scottish Prison Survey a quarter reported they had problems using a computer, 18% problems with writing and 17% numeracy, and a third said they would like help (Carnie and Broderick, 2019). A half of all survey respondents had attended the learning centre, with two thirds attending education. A study of women across four prisons in Scotland, found that 23% lacked functional literacy and 61% of women potentially required significant support with numeracy (McMilan et al. 2021).

A particular population affected by poor literacy are Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people (The Traveller Movement, 2021). In 2016, 53% of all pupils reached the expected standard in all of English reading, writing, and mathematics, whereas for children identifying as Gypsy/Roma, only 13% met the expected standard (The Traveller Movement, 2021). Later in life Gypsies and Irish Travellers are three times more likely to have no qualifications and more likely to be economically inactive compared to the average population in England and Wales (ibid). Importantly, the article highlights that the perception that people do not want to learn is incorrect (ibid). Literacy and numeracy affect all aspects of someone's life, how they view themselves and the impact this also has on the people around them (Gal et al. 2020; Papaioannou and Gravani, 2018).

Overall, this lack of basic skills means people often also have a low level of self-esteem (ibid). The desistance literature highlights the importance of self-image as a key factor in the trajectory of someone trying to stop offending (Maruna, 2001; Rumgay, 2004; McNeill, 2016; Nugent and Schinkel, 2016; MacKenzie, 2020). Recent research shows that those who take part in education are significantly less likely to reoffend within 12 months by 7.5% (House of Commons Committee, 2023).

This particular inquiry set out to focus on the education needs of people in prison and vulnerable adults. It is worth noting however that Gal et al. (2020) stresses that people who have lower numeracy and literacy skills are often described as vulnerable, but many are employed and integrated into family and social life (Gal et al. 2020). This was also found in the literature on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller who often also owned their own businesses (The Traveller Movement, 2021). Taking this on board, Gal et al. (2020) argue instead that it is appropriate to move on to a theoretical notion of vulnerability as a continuum, which is applicable to different aspects of life (Gal et al. 2020). In the same way as referring to people as hard to reach, the use of the word 'vulnerable' can be stigmatising (Munari et al. 2021). Instead, it might be better to refer to these groups as people facing barriers to education or who have been marginalised.

> **Illiteracy: How it affects the whole person, their lives and those around them**
>
> The Traveller Movement (2021) report on a case study of a Traveller man in his 50s who has learned to read through the Shannon Trust. As well as being able to communicate better and manage his own businesses without the support of his wife, he notes that he is no longer as angry, does not feel stupid. He is also able to read to his children and be a better father. He is also appealing his sentence now he actually understands what is going on.

Negative Perceptions because of past experiences of education: It's not for me

Much of the literature notes that many people in prison have had negative experiences of education (Chaltis, 2016). Life-history interviews with twenty people in a Scottish prison, both men and women serving varying lengths of sentences, shows that the negativity of experiences in school, particularly bullying, mirrored negative experiences at home of abuse and trauma, and disadvantage is intergenerational (MacKenzie, 2020). The research also shows that people who are impoverished often feel and are powerless to change their situation, and when younger, the institutional strucutures, such as school, which should have intervened as support, have at least historically left individuals feeling even more isolated (MacKenzie, 2020). For young people who have special educational needs and are excluded from school, this can be a pipeline to prison (Barton and Hobson, 2017). As well as personal experiences, parents may also have had negative experiences of education too, and therefore be unlikely to support children or encourage them to engage (Youth Justice Improvement Board, 2021).

School exclusion is a 'social process', and like classical labelling theory (Becker, 1963), or indeed the process of primary and subsequently secondary deviance (Lemert, 1951), students perceived to be deviant can have this identity either affirmed or alternatively recast as positive through the interactions in which they engage. Schools can be 'motivational environments' (Cotterell, 2007: 147). However, as Smith (2011: 109) argues, most schools do not take account of the impact they play in the process of exclusion but rather blame the pupil themselves, dynamics regarded as 'part of a boarder strategy of 'responsibilisation'. Essentially, those who have negative experiences of education might also be surrounded by people who do not challenge this perception.

Past experiences of bullying and the threat of this can be a barrier to education, for groups such as those with additional support needs and the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community (Gormey, 2022; The Traveller Movement, 2021). However, these perceptions are not insurmountable, and the importance of educators to put in extra effort to help people to overcome this view (Papaioannou and Gravani, 2018). Research based on education in prison in Cyprus, referred to as 'second chance education' shows that education can empower people, emphasising their self-value, reconstructing past experiences, strengthening social capital, their literacy skills and combatting feelings of emotional emptiness, taking control of their lives (Papaioannou and Gravani, 2018). This highlights the word of Bandura (1997) and the importance of self-belief. In a study of 18 people who had been in prison and now living in New York, it was found that the connections they had made

to peers, improved communication skills, increased confidence all had enabled participant to connect to social institutions that provided them with employment opportunities when they left prison (Pelletier and Evans, 2019). As Pelletier and Evans (2019) explain, self-efficacy is an explanation of behaioural change, whereby those who participated in education developed a positive self-image through their achievements. Drawing on the work of Bandurra (1977 cited in ibid: 191):

"Cognitive events are induced and altered most readily by experience of mastery arising from effective performance

Language Barriers

Foreign nationals make up 13% of the prison population across the UK, and 27% of the prison population are people of ethnic minorities, so they are overrepresented by over 50% when it is taken into account they only make up 13% of the general population (Sturge, 2023). There are no Scottish specific figures in terms of foreign nationals, but 6% people in prison are from ethnic minorities (Scottish Prison Service and Scottish Government, 2023). This figure compares to 4% of ethnic minorities in the wider Scottish population, although it should be noted that the last census was in 2011 (Scottish Government, 2014).

The Eliminating Language Barriers in European Prisons through Open and Distance Education Technology (ELBEP) Grundtvig project (cited in GHK Consulting, 2013)

This offered second language education to prison staff through an online learning environment, to enable them to better support prisoners of foreign nationality. Five online language courses were produced as a result of the project, which are available via the project website. Partners felt that by working together, they were able to target audiences and to see best practices in different countries, and to reach a higher number of beneficiaries for the utilisation of the project outcomes.

Taking a holistic approach: The less visible but interconnected and complex needs that underpin education needs

Background: 'Looked After' and impact of trauma
In the Coates Review (2016) it was reported that almost a quarter of people in prison had been in care at some point in their lives. In Scotland Cesaroni (2017 cited in Robinson et al. 2018; Lightowler, 2017) found that 60% of 103 young people in Polmont reported they had been involved in the Children's Hearing System, 46% had been in care, 33% in residential care, 46% had a parent that had served a prison sentence, 24% reported that they had not enough to eat, dirty clothes or no one to protect them; 38% had been physically and 56% verbally abused at home; 30% had lived with someone who was drug dependent and 39% depressed or had mental illness; 48% had lived in a home where an adult was abusing

another adult. In the same study 10-15% reported being sexually or physically abused, more than half (58%) feared that they or someone close to them might be badly hurt (58%).

In 2012, the landmark 'Angiolini' Report echoed the findings of previous reports, as is emphasised in the current SPS Strategy for Women in Custody 2021-2025, that the research shows women in prison have high rates of mental health issues, background of abuse, trauma, low levels of education and high levels of substance misuse (Scottish Prison Service, 2021). A study of 89 women in prison in Scotland found that 97.8% reported having experienced some form of trauma, with childhood trauma reported by 85%, and 92% at least one traumatic event (Howard et al. 2021). Violent offending was also linked to PTSD severity symptoms, adulthood life events and trauma (ibid).

In the Scottish Prison Survey (Carnie and Broderick, 2019) across the prison estate, a quarter report having being in care when younger. Two thirds of which had been in residential care and a third in secure care (ibid). There is also increasing evidence of men in prison having experienced significant trauma in their lives, such as abuse as children (Facer-Irwin, 2022).

Poverty
The evidence of the impact of inequalities even on early education and attainment is clear. Specifically, in terms of vocabulary ability at age five, 20% of children in the highest income quintile had below average ability, compared to 54% in the lowest income quintile (ibid). For problem-solving ability, the equivalent proportions are 29% and 53% (Scottish Government, 2015). In Scotland, by age 12–14 (S2), pupils from better-off areas are more than twice as likely as those from the most deprived areas to do well in numeracy (Sosu and Ellis, 2014). The lasting impact of a poor education is undeniable with 43% of people who left without any formal qualifications in the UK experiencing poverty at least once between 2011 and 2014, twice the percentage of those with a degree or higher (Office for National Statistics, 2016).

Masculinities
Although not discussed in terms of direct educational needs, a recent article by Cesaroni et al. (2023) highlights how the impact of trauma can lead to the performance of masculinities, and in turn not asking for help. The article advocates for trauma-informed care to take account of this and essentially recognise and overcome this particular barrier. Ansderson et al. 2011 draw attention also to the influence of the dominant culture on decisions to participate in learning, and a study of working class men in Ireland (Corridan, 2002 cited in Anderson et al. 2011: 29) found that:

> *Fear of ridicule by other men emerged as a key concern ...[where] harsh treatment was expected and a culture of 'slagging' prevailed. Some participants suggested that participation in adult education ...could sometimes be seen as inappropriate for men [and] the macho self-image may be threatened by participation in education.*

Backgrounds of School exclusion
In England, 42% of adult prisoners reported being permanently exclude from school (Coates, 2016). The Edinburgh Youth Transitions Study have consistently shown the clear links between school expulsion and criminality (McAra and McVie, 2022; McAra and McVie,

2010). Past research also reports that 80% of a sample of young men in HMYOI Polmont had experienced exclusion from school (CYCJ, 2014) and, of the young people who responded to the SPS Prisoner Survey of Young People in Custody (2013), 90% reported that they had been excluded from school, 42% on four or more occasions (cited in Robinson et al. 2018: 9). For those with additional support needs, their rate of exclusion is four times those who do not, and six times higher for pupils living in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived (Scottish Government, 2015 cited in Robinson et al. 2018).

Young People: Gang-related pressures

Young people can struggle to engage in education because of fears of meeting with other young men they have had past issues with and therefore is a barrier to engagement (HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP), 2016).

Bereavement
The impact of bereavement is unique to each person, but it is stark that 90% of young people who are serving a custodial sentence are reported to have experienced a bereavement by the age of 20 (Vaswani, 2014). 77% had experienced a traumatic bereavement and 67% four or more deaths (Vaswani, 2014).

Mental Health
In the Scottish Prison Survey (Carnie and Broderick, 2019) 40% reported that they had depression and over a quarter (29%) anxiety or panic disorder. People in prison have significantly poorer mental wellbeing than their peers at liberty, and people on remand and those with multiple prison episodes have especially poor health (Tweed et al. 2021).
In the Scottish Prison Survey 2019, 31% said they were not thinking clearly and not dealing with problems well. A third (29%) had been seen by mental health staff (ibid). The links between mental health and substance use are well documented (Scottish Government, 2021). Two fifths of those in prison also reported having issues with drugs and 40% had been drunk when they had committed their offence, with a third also reporting that their alcohol use affected their relationship with their family (Carnie and Broderick, 2019). People in prison are at higher risk of suicide, self-harm and poor mental health than the wider population (Loucks and Talbot, 2007). Women in prison are reported to have a greatetr mental health burden compared to men, with the exception of alcohol use and psychotic disorders (McIntosh et al. 2022). It is estimated that 5% of the prison population likely has a long-term mental health condition, 17% a history of self-harm, 30% an alcohol use disorder (McIntosh et al. 2022).

Dementia
There has not been any specific research found on the prevalence of dementia in prison, but the prison population is aging and the older adult population has doubled over the last decade, highlighting the need to identify and support those with dementia (McIntosh et al. 2022).

The full offer of education

Access to higher education

Although there is more research and literature pointing towards those have struggled in the past to gain an education, there are also those in prison who would like to study at a higher level. In the Coates Review (2016) it was reported that a fifth of people in prison said they would have preferred to be studying at a higher level than they were currently. In a call for evidence that informed the review in 2016, the Open University stated that there was a 'glass ceiling' beyond level 2 for people learners (cited in HMIP, 2016). It has also been noted that the number of people learning at higher levels has dropped over the years in prisons in England (HMIP, 2016; House of Commons Committee, 2023).

The Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) is the principal funder of distance learning courses for prisoners in England and Wales. A review of data of over 5,000 students showed the positive impact education made. The demand for distance learning is heavily dependent on the support people in prison have in terms of encouragement, and to enable them with their application process (Clark, 2016).

In the USA there are also many 'Inside-Out' Programmes, and this means students from universities coming into prison to study alongside their fellow students who are also studying the same course (Wyant and Lockwood, 2018). The Coates Review (2016) highlights that gaining an education can mean people build social capital, which is a way of describing connections to opportunities.

The 'Open Academy' (cited in HMIP, 2016)

This is a college within HMP Swaleside based on one of the wings. Prisoners can work, study and live on A-Wing in an atmosphere of mutual study
and shared knowledge. Any prisoners involved in education, distance learning and self-study can apply to live on A-Wing and use its IT and educational resources.

Prison ICT Academies (PICTAs) (cited in HMIP, 2016)

These offer prisoners the opportunity to learn skills in both practical (programming, networking, wiring, cabling, repair, and maintenance) and functional ICT skills that are basic to any training, education or employment context. The curriculum is taught by qualified instructors, trained to deliver the Cisco curriculum to industry standards supported by Birmingham City University.

Learning Together partnership between Open Book at Goldsmiths, University of London and HMP&YOI Isis (and supported by the Prisoners' Education Trust [PET]) (Mehay, 2017)

Learning Together seeks to bring people in prison and university students together to co-learn at a higher education level where students not only study together but they also learn with and from each other through discussions and the sharing of experiences and knowledge. The research shows that this approach strengthens the learner identity and promotes connectedness between learners and students. The main challenge is managing boundaries.

This review shows that within prison there are varying levels of education and capabilities, and the wide spectrum of choice, from having access to learning to read and write to being able to undertake higher education should be available. The above examples also show the benefits of the prison being a part of the community, making the prison walls porous, with students inside and outside of prison learning from one another, and this provides a further definition of what 'blended' might involve for education in prison.

The analysis of needs, highlights that people in prison are more likely to lack in basic skills, but also second to this is their lack of self-belief, in themselves or lack of self-belief to be able to change this (MacKenzie, 2020). Taking the idea that education should be person-centred, the review presented here, although far from exhaustive, highlights the complexity of needs people in prison present, in relation to backgrounds of trauma, abuse, the high prevalence of additional support needs and more generally negative experiences often linked to past education. The shift required in identity therefore for people to be hopeful and open to being learners is a key aspect of supporting people to begin the journey to them recognising their own ability to be learners (MacKenzie, 2020). Drawing on desistance literature, it is important then that the opportunities to realise aspirations are credible, otherwise as Healy (2014: 888) warns 'the imagined identity remains a chimera.'

11.   Environmental challenges to delivering education in prison

Key Messages: Environmental Challenges to delivering education in prison

There are specific challenges to delivering education in prison, namely the **specific needs** of people in prison, the impact of overcrowding, people being transferred, thus disrupting their education, and the poor infastrucutre in prison which can make teaching difficult. The **lack of digital resources** in prison is emphasised as a barrier to social inclusion, and as well as being able to access technology, the **need for digital educators** for those who lack confidence in this area is crucial. Research in England and Wales highlights that the lack of clarity of responsibility for education, bureaurcary and wider influences, that is the social, political and cultural backdrop all affects the delivery of education in prison.

Overcrowding, transfers and the poor infrastructure

As well as the specific needs of people in prison, the literature highlights the challenges the prison environment presents that disrupts or undermines attempts for people to become

educated. A particular challenge is overcrowding and the impact this has in terms of space, access to programmes, courses, and that this can lead to the transfer of people, sometimes with little notice, meaning someone who may have been participating in education is taken away from it (House of Commons Committee, 2023; GHK Consulting, 2013). The space in prison itself is not ideal, and educators themselves face precarious employment contracts, unsatisfactory continue personal development and lack of career progression (University and College Union, 2022).

Digital Exclusion

The lack of access to digital resources is a significant barrier to education (House of Commons Committee, 2023, Behan, 2021). Hewson et al. (2021) note that there is a principle of equivalence so that people in prison have the same access to health care as those in the community, and contend that the same principle should be applied to digital access. Giving people in prison access to digital technology promotes social inclusion. As stated by the Centre for Social Justice (2021: 7):

"Given the pace of change in the non-incarcerated population, by freezing a prisoner at a particular technological point in time, denying them access to digital technology actually leaves the individual more excluded and skills-poor relative to the rest of society than at the time of incarceration."

The Scottish Government's digital strategy has set out an aspiration that an ethical digital Scotland will mean that people are able to access technology and ensure 'no one is left behind' (Scottish Government, 2021b: 24). Some of the actions are to deliver broadband coverage for all and improve 4G mobile coverage. The key National Performance Outcomes are that people are well-educated and able to contribute towards society, poverty is tackled by addressing inequalities, and communities are inclusive. "The Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) has argued that digital "remains the essential ingredient that would revolutionise prison education. Without this, the digital divide will become a chasm, as prisoner learners miss out on developing digital literacy skills (cited in Centre for Social Justice, 2021: 4)."

Supporting people in prison to use digital technology can impact on the dependency culture that often exists, by giving prisoners more responsibility to manage their lives, so that they in turn are more prepared for the realities of life on the outside (McDougall et al. 2020; Palmer et al. 2020). For example, McDougall et al. (2020) report that prisoners being able to access their personal accounts made them more aware of their finances and how to manage their money more effectively. It is also important to recognise that for many older and long-term prisoners digital skills training is needed to support inclusion and to overcome fear and lack of confidence to use technology, and therefore digital educators are crucial (Teemu et al. 2021; Monteiro et al. 2015).

There is even the potential for the technology to be co-produced with service users and for this to be extended for of rehabilitative and therapeutic service engagement (Morris and

Graham, 2019). It is recommended that the Ministry of Justice provide in-cell laptops to those participating in education (House of Commons Committee, 2023).

Denmark's open prisons "internet cafes" (cited in Centre for Social Justice, 2021)

These allow prisoners expanded access to the internet, primarily for educational purposes, job applications and other communication. There is monitoring of prisoners' use and inappropriate content is blocked. Denmark operates a tiered approach with prisoners granted different levels of access based on their individual risk profile. The Danish model operates three tiers: communal internet cafes, tightly controlled classroom use through a secure network, and "fairly unrestricted" access, including use of email.12 In-cell access is determined on a case-by-case basis.

The lack of clarity around responsibility for education in prison, contractual and resourcing issues

The Coates Review (2016) raised the question as to who was responsible for the quality of education in prisons in England and Wales, and at the time called for this to be for Prison Governors to decide. Seven years on, a further review in England set out an ambition for Governors to raise the profile of education, and recommended that a Deputy Governor of Education to be within every prison with direct responsibility for educational outcomes (House of Commons Committee, 2023). The Ofsted and HM Inspectorate of Prisons report shows that prisons are not prioritising people in prison learning the basic skills they need, in particular literacy, with the focus instead on gaining level 1 qualifications (PA News Agency, 2022). The lack of resources, staff shortages, poor screening and reliance on third sector delivery has an impact (ibid).

Research conducted in England and Wales shows that prison education contracts are very bureaucratic, making it difficult for smaller projects to bid (House of Commons Committee, 2023). Professional educators in prison in England and Wales highlight that prison education is outsourced, and this has led to cost cutting, with frequent changes in the tendering process meaning that there has not been long-term accountability and a fragmented, unsupported workforce (University and College Union, 2022). The University and College Union (2022: 12) states:

> *"The process of commissioning education for profit in prisons has diverted resources away from the development, design and delivery of truly meaningful education. It has become more about managing the contract than its purported aims of delivering meaningful education in order to reduce reoffending. Additionally, it has created a fragmented workforce who face many challenges, including with their own employment terms and conditions. We believe the current Prison Education Framework (PEF) commissioning model is failing learners and failing staff."*

Novus, an education provider in prisons in England and Wales, also commented that the resources to deliver education are not enough to support the complexity of need presented

(Hoise of Commons Committee, 2023). The focus on basic skills has reduced flexibility of learning, the opportunities made available to prisoners, and become too narrow so that people were not able to achieve their full potential (ibid). This meant that other forms of education, such as art could be overlooked (ibid). A broader curriculum is regarded as essential for delivering the soft skills people require (ibid). A review of reading in prisons by Ofsted and the HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2022) describes how the focus on prisoners gaining level 1 qualifications and for those who lack basic skills, they instead are passed on to the third sector. The failure to teach people how to read is described as a 'huge missed opportunity (ibid).' Those with the greatest need are therefore the most likely to be without support.

Moreover, the curriculum offer was not available to those on remand and on shorter sentences (ibid). There were also concerns expressed that the vocational education was not offering the skills required in the current labour market and outdated (ibid). It was also noted that vocational training was gender steretyped, with the focus on courses for women on hairdressing and beauty (ibid). Coates (2016) found that current funding arrangements restricted access to higher level learning.

In the review by Ofsted and the HM Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) in England (2022), it was noted that people in prison had around an hour a day to take part in education; they were paid more to go to work than attend education; libraries were rarely used; the curriculum waws too narrow with a the emphasis on low level qualifications, so that those without basic skills or those who wanted to pursue higher education missed; and for those without basic skills being passed on to the third sector to be taught. Some prisons were so short staffed people were not able to access education (Ofsted and HMIP, 2022). There were no routine phonics assessment so identifying those who lacked basic skills was not happening (ibid). Information on previous education was not being passed on (ibid).

Although not recent, Barton and Hobson (2017) stated that at the time young offender institutions had been mandated to undertake 30 hours of education a week so the regime would better reflect a typical school day. This was criticised for the inflexibility, the output measures being on time alone and limiting choice. This approach is especially not going to work for young people who perceive education to be a waste of time (Barton and Hobson, 2017).

The Coates Review (2016) calls for a people culture to attract new talent into prisons and professional development.

The Ministry of Justice et al. (2023) in England have said they will have new contracts for education providers with tough targets on math and english to ensure every prisoner can finish their sentence with a basic level of comprehension in these areas. Furthermore, prison governors in five prisons in England will be given increased freedoms on how they organise prison education, skills and work opportunities in their prison (ibid). The Shannon Trust – a peer-to-peer mentoring scheme is highlighted as being good practice. Overall, the lack of support is regarded as a missed opportunity (PA News Agency, 2022).

Education essentially does not exist in a vacuum, as Behan (2021: 13) states:

"As with all forms of pedagogy, prison education is not a neutral activity that is independent of the context in which it operates. It must be considered against a wider historical, social, political, economic and cultural backdrop."

12.   Learning in Prison

Key Messages: Learning in Prison

The research on education in prison echoes the wider literature. This emphasises above all else the importance **of caring, understanding and inspiring educators** that are skilled at **building relationships** and providing **person-centred learning**. The education offer should be as wide as possible.

Steps towards education can be around **personal and social development**, the **arts**, peer to peer learning, using different mediums, or what is referred to as **'stealth' or 'sneaky'** learning, so that activities that appear fun are actually about learning.

The research highlights the advantages of blended learning and that this depends on **strong instructor-learner interaction**. Learning can be **incentivised**, from offering longer recreation time in the USA to shortening prison sentences in Brazil. Access to higher education, vocational training, connections with local employers to identify shortages in the market, and clear opportunities, and the provision of throughcare support, are all shown to support people away from criminality.

Becoming a learner in whatever form, whether it is through formal or informal routes can be a **'hook for change'** promoting **desistance**, helping people to shift their **identity** from being a prisoner to learner, teacher, and an **'effective contributor'**. It is also important to recognise that for people leaving prison, meeting basic needs can be challenging, and therefore may often require **throughcare** support.

Research on the assessment of the cost and benefits of in-prison education in the UK, found that benefits were more than doubled when the investments were made (GHK Consulting, 2013). The Coates Review in 2016 called for education to be central within prisons in England and Wales, however, the House of Commons Committee (2023) reported that this vision has not come to fruition, and in fact investment in learning has declined.

Understanding, caring and inspiring educators

The centrality of relationships and importance of educators in their approach to those in prison, their understanding, empathy and ability to put in an extra effort to support people to overcome their negative feelings about education and themselves is pivotal (Toiviainen et al. 2019; MacPherson, 2017). They are 'seen as agents of change' (Sam, 2014). MacPherson

(2017) writing from his own lived experience of studying in a Scottish prison, draws on the wider desistance literature, to describe this as being a 'hook for change' (Giordano et al. 2002). He also reflects on the importance of meeting the 'most amazing and wonderful teaching staff that I have ever met in my life' at HMP Low Moss, he says:

"The teachers ignited my motivation, helped me to see that I possessed the capacity to sustain change as well as putting in place the opportunities that would be the silver bullet required to neutralise the proverbial werewolf of my past offending activities. By positively reinforcing my motivation, my teachers made me feel like a valued person rather than an offender, which led to the realisation that I had the capacity to foster a a lifestyle transplant whereas before I was hesitant about the whole process. Perhaps the reason for my hesitation was that I had no opportunities to provide the bridge from persistence to desistance. These teachers showed me that bridge. I love them for their warmth, acceptance and altruistic kindness they showed me." (MacPherson et al. 2017: 37).

Teaching is an emotional experience (Karavakou and Antoniou, 2021). There is some evidence that it takes students in prison longer to complete programmes, and this indicates the importance of educators who also understand this (Davis, 2019). In a guide produced around supporting young people with speech and language difficulties involved in the criminal justice system, notes that this may be linked back to disrupted attachments in life and how this then impacts upon interactions and cues (Children and Young People's Centre for Justice, 2020). It advises that young people who have had disrupted attachments can even find warmth and openness disconcerting and instead relationships have to be built gradually with the young person taking the lead (ibid). It also further states that many young people with speech, language and communication needs may have difficulty understanding humour and so even affectionate teasing should be used with great caution (ibid). This also highlights how with young people who have not had positive relationships with adults, taking account of this and recognising that the role any adult plays in their lives could help them to recognise that positive relationships are possible, and therefore could be life changing. The research stresses the positive impact one trusted adult can have on children and young people (Youth Improvement Justice Board, 2021), there is less emphasis on the impact this one adult could have on an adult, however, based on this research, it would seem that an educator could play this role in helping someone to redefine who they want to be, and to take the steps both practically and mentally to making that possible.

Educators in prison offer advice, support, and it is imperative that they show respect regardless of lifestyle and possible serious crimes in the past (Toivianen et al. 2019). They address those vulnerabilities that are visible and invisible (ibid). As Papaioannou and Gravani (2018: 445) state:

"His/her ability to create supportive relations and a safe environment for individuals are of pivotal importance…the need for educators' professionalisation to reach a better understanding of the learners, acknowledge the barriers arising from stereotypical thinking and develop the skills to better facilitate the learning of vulnerable adults"

Person-centred learning

HMIP (2016) in England called for every person who comes to prison to be given a personal learning plan, and for their to be more bespoke learning as well as private study, to be facilitated using technology. This plan could by information from their education record from schools (Coates, 2016). The research indicates the importance of staff in prison recognising the impact they could have and as the National Offender Management System in England and Wales states 'every contact matters' (cited in Coates, 2016).

HMP Parc an 'LDD Pathway' (cited in HMIP, 2016)

This was introduced to improve the management of prisoners with learning difficulties and disabilities. This approach included: providing all staff with awareness training; ensuring close integration with health care; and ensuring prisoners with LDD have a supportive living plan which can be accessed by all staff. The prison has also identified prisoner support mentors for learners who have severe LDD needs and who require one-to-one support within and outside the learning environment.

Neurodiverse Affirmative

Coates (2016) calls for all prison information and forms to be written and available in simple, plain English, on coloured paper where appropriate to support those with dyslexia, and with simple illustrative diagrams or images to accompany the text where possible. In England there are now new neurodiversity support managers in every prison to support people with their needs, to access education, skills and work opportunities (Ministry of Justice et al. 2023).

Steps Towards Education

The literature points to ways in which people can begin their journey into education, taking a wider approach to learning and support.

A wider view of learning: Personal and Social Development

In the Coates Review (2016) as well as basic skills, vocational learning and training, the education that is promoted is also around personal and social development, including behaviour programmes, family- and relationship-learning, and practical skills (e.g. parenting, finance, and domestic management). Quality health education should also be considered, that includes mental and emotional wellbeing; physical activity; nutrition; cooking; dental health; sexual health; relationships; consent; medication; substances; relationships; feelings; sleep; confidence; and stigma (Youth Justice Improvement Board, 2020). Coates (2016) notes that sessions for example that give people the opportunity to reflect on what they would like

to be can be a powerful way to begin the journey of education. It can also be a way for people to think ahead and better shape their identity beyond the identity of a 'prisoner.'

Education of Older People in Prison (cited in HMIP, 2016)

The education provider at HMP Rye Hill has worked with the Oxford and Cambridge and RSA awarding bodies to develop 'Moving towards Retirement', a specific older prisoner curriculum. This is intended to prepare individual prisoners for release by focussing on the productive use of leisure time and healthy living alongside basic skills refresher courses.

Storybook Dads (cited in Ministry of Justice et al. 2023)

This helps over 5,000 prisoners a year in England record bedtime stories for their children.

In HMP Barlinnie, HMP Low Moss and HMP Greenock in 2023, a small group of men and women worked with the organisation Media Education to develop short films to raise awareness of the ease of testing and treatment of blood borne viruses (BBVs) and some key messages around sexual health.

Access to high quality arts and caring practitioners

The Mandela Rules, Rule 105 states that 'recreational and cultural activities shall be provided in all prisons for the benefit of the mental and physical health of prisoners' (cited in Behan, 2021). The benefits of engagement in a range of arts, such as singing, playing music, writing often has a positive impact on wellbeing, increases confidence, self-esteem, improves communication and literacy skills, creates a positive identity, contributing to better relationships and building social capital (Sams, 2011; Anderson et al. 2011; Nugent and Loucks, 2011). Anderson et al. (2011) found that people reported that working together, they had become less self-centred. Nugent and Loucks (2011) also reported that in one case a woman said it had impacted on her reducing her self-harm, and another that she was no longer 'thrashing' her room, because it helped them to feel calm. The quality of experience is dependent on the artists being able to connect with individuals (Anderson et al. 2011). For some, their initial engagement is prompted because they just want to have something else to do, to break the boredom, and the outcomes therefore are not always expected (Anderson et al. 2011; Nugent and Loucks) It can also be a stepping stone to people realising their capabilities and shifting towards participating in education (Sams, 2011; Anderson et al. 2011; Nugent and Loucks, 2011). Coates (2016) calls for there to be greater provision for high quality arts. In the Scottish Prison Survey (2019) of the 58% of respondents who said they had attended the learning centre, just under half (47%) had attended art.

Bard Prison Initiative

In the USA, the Bard Prison Initiative provides a liberal arts curriculum in six New York State prisons. The programme 'creates and protects academic spaces where students and faculty engage in ambitious college coursework, challenge one another intellectually, and build supportive community' (cited in Behan, 2021).

Inspiring Change

More than 230 people in different prisons took part in high quality arts projects collaborating and co-producing music, theatre, writing with esteemed organisations such as Scottish Opera and the National Galleries of Scotland. People in prison, working with the artists, planned, created and delivered a public outcome, such as a performance or exhibition. Their families were able to attend these and overall these experiences had a really positive impact on both people in prison, their families and the artists. For many, it helped them to shift their identity from prisoner to student (Sams, 2011; Anderson et al. 2011).

STIR Magazine

Example of a project, who through an inspirational teacher an editorial board was formed at Shotts, high quality, focused on the arts and celebrating talent and communicating to wider society. There is also a strategic group of individuals from academic institutions that meet to discuss the plans for the publication. Although many in prison were sceptical about the publication initially but it has been really successful. The only issue raised is that for those involved they received no renumeration, as it was not classified as prison work. The high quality of the work can be viewed at www.stirmagazine.org (cited in Sams, 2011).

Stealth or 'Sneaky' Learning

Reaffirming the work of Sharp (2021) stealth, or as Robinson (2020) defines it 'sneaky' learning is another way to try to engage people who may otherwise not engage with education. This can be through some of the ways as described above, through personal social development, the arts, and effectively building skills through different fun approaches, so that it may not appear to be learning on the surface, but that is exactly what is happening. Perception of tasks from the outset has a lasting impact, as is shown by evidence in research also in early years and play. Namely, a study of 129 children found that when children were given an activity session, one group was told it was 'like play' and the other it 'not like play' and the sessions were video recorded and analysed, rated blind to reduce bias. This found that when children perceived an activity as play, they showed more signs of emotional well-being, such as smiling than when they perceived the same activity as not play. There was significant difference in the level of emotional well-being displayed by

children in the two activity session types (Howard and McInnes, 2012). Essentially, if you think it is going to be fun, it is more likely to be fun and so how learning is framed is very important.

Paws for Progress at HMP & YOI Polmont

A rescue training programme has been running at Polmont since 2011. The young men are taught how to train and rehabilitate the rescue dogs for re-homing through support from Paws for Progress Instructors. It helps the young men to develop skills, increases engagement in education and improves well-being. The testimonies available on their website show how much it means to the young men, to feel a sense of achievement and accomplishment.[12]

Widening 'Support'

In research carried out by The Traveller Movement, focused on the education of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people, one of the recommendations is that the education system links up the prison chaplain, so they can give advice to the community about what is available to them in prison, as this is often a service they will be in touch with.

The importance of Libraries

Libraries are an essential educational resource (Behan, 2021). Rule 64 of the Mandela Rules states: 'Every prison shall have a library for the use of all categories' (cited in Behan, 2021).

Using different mediums to engage with and educate the prison population

Coates (2016) argues that there is 'untapped potential' for delivering more education in prison through the TV and radio. It is noted that 76% of people in prison listen to the Prison Radio Association every week and supports learning such as the daily book-club programme 'Books Unlocked.'

Peer Support: Role Modelling and Peer Learning

The Coates Review (2016) describes the importance of people in prison hearing from role models among current and former prisoners. Peer learning is also very successful and this particular area of work could be expanded (Coates, 2016). Peer learning significantly can promote desistance, helping people to shift their identity from being a prisoner to learner, teacher, and what is defined by the SPS in their *Vision for Young People in Custody,* to become as an 'effective contributor' (SPS, 2021).

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[12] To read more refer to: https://pawsforprogress.co.uk/services/prison-based-services/hmp-yoi-polmont/#:~:text=Our%20rescue%20dog%20training%20programme,you%2C%20it%27s%20that%20mutual%20bond.

> **Peer to the Future (PttF) programme operating out of HMP Leeds and run by St Giles Trust West Yorkshire**
>
> Trained Peer Advisors provided prison leavers with mentoring and practical support to obtain stable housing and benefits, provide routes into employment, education and training, and facilitate access to specialist services for those with addiction or mental health needs. Both Peer Advisors and the clients they serve are given the opportunity to obtain an NVQ Level 3 qualification in Advice and Guidance as part of the programme.[13]

> **Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop (USA)**
>
> The Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop is a non-profit organization based in Washington DC, USA, for young people and adults in the criminal justice system. It uses books, creative writing and peer support to help young people incarcerated as adults to develop to their fullest potential. The goal of Free Minds is to empower young people in prison so that they can envisage different futures for themselves. By encouraging them in reading and writing while they are in prison, it is hoped they will also become voices for change in their communities (cited in Behan, 2021).

Incentivising Learning

Prison education is often paid at a lower wage than work. The House of Commons Committee (2023) and Coates Review (2016) suggest that pay for education is equal to the pay for work and that the Government examines the potential of using the Release on Temporary Licence as an incentive to encourage people in prison to engage in education. in In Canada, life sentenced prisoners can apply to have a jury examine the progress they have made in prison and review parole eligibility if they have been engaging in education (HMIP, 2016). Other forms of incentives could include longer recreation or access to games such as the X-box (Dewey et al. 2020). In Iowa, incentives for participating in Education include popcorn, cookouts and extra visits (ibid).

It was also noted in the review in England that 95% of prison labour is internal and 5% comes from other govt departments (HMIP, 2016). But some of the work is very menial e.g. sandbag- sewing. It is argued that rhere should be some progression to the work and this being closer to a traineeship (HMIP, 2016).

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[13]Information taken from https://www.stgilestrust.org.uk/our-impact/evaluations-of-our-work/peer-advice/peer-to-the-future-programme-evaluation/

> **Reading and Reduction in Sentencing in Brazil**
>
> In 2012, Brazil implemented a law that enabled prisoners to reduce their sentences by reading books. The 1984 Criminal Enforcement Act (LEP) affirms that it is the duty of the state to prepare prisoners for their return to society. The law was modified in 2012 to guarantee prisoners one day of remission for every 12-hour block of study undertaken up to a maximum of 48 days of remission (cited in Behan, 2021).

Blended Learning

Blended learning emerges in the research as being especially effective in custodial settings (Chalatis, 2016; Vryonides, 2016c). However, this is still underpinned by a strong instructor-learner interaction (Chalatis, 2016; Vryonides, 2016c). In the Scottish Prison Survey (2019) of the 58% of respondents who had attended the learning centre, around half (47%) had attended IT.

> **Learning Platform in Prison – LIS – project in Brandenburg, Germany, the 'Virtual Campus' and Pebble Project in the United Kingdom and the Pebble (Chalatis, 2016)**
>
> The support provided by educators and trainers is still imperative, since a relationship between educator and learner is often necessary for effective learning to occur. Their role is particularly important to help overcome past negative experiences or perceptions of education and training.
>
> The Virtual Campus is a secure web-based intranet system. It offers a range of skills (examinations and courses) and employment focussed material (job searches, submitting job applications, CV building and secure relay messaging). Initially, it was designed for the delivery of education, but more recently broader rehabilitative content has been introduced (e.g. relating to family relationships, health and support for breaking addictive behaviours) (cited in HMIP, 2016).

> **Level 3+ Distance Learning/Higher Education Virtual Learning Environment (HE VLE) (cited in HMIP, 2016)**
>
> Level 3 up to first-year degree standard courses in Business Skills, ICT and Marketing. The work on the VLE is being integrated with the development of 'In-cell' technology, which is trialling a 'virtual classroom' approach. The virtual classroom enables a single lecturer to deliver tuition to geographically disparate locations, enabling large groups of learners to be taught simultaneously via video-streaming and podcasts. This approach will help to address the issue of creating financially viable groups of higher level learners, regardless of their prison establishment.

> **Investment in Aps**
>
> In England there is a £1.8 million investment to raise literacy levels with a new digital literacy app developed. This provides a dedicated coach and allows individuals to set personal goals such as learning to read a letter from their family or writing a CV (cited in Ministry of Justice et al. 2023).

Modular Training

Breaking the programmes or courses into short modules is also shown to be effective for learners in prison (Chalatis, 2016).

Access to higher education

Although not applicable to Scotland, it is worth noting that in England the current student loan regulations state that prisoners with more than six years left until their release date cannot access a student loan and the House of Commons Committee (2023) suggest that this condition is removed. In Scotland the SPS are able to fund a number of Scottish Nationals to take up Higher Education every year, so they can gain accreditation for free. This is determined on a case by case basis by the Higher Education Access Board (Scottish Prison Service, 2023). For those living outside of Scotland, they are required to apply to the appropriate funding body in the area they were living in prison to custody (ibid).

Vocational Training

"Vocational education is an education for the mastery of knowledge and skill that have economic value, according to market needs with high education labour coefficient, so it creates a quality workforce" (Hayzaki and Nurhaeni, 2018: 3). The research points towards men and women having different needs and vocational training needing to take account of this (Hayzaki and Nurhaeni, 2018; HMIP, 2016). Vocational training can often however comprise low-skilled tasks, and may not always resember potential opportunities in the community (Piacentini et al. 2018). Criticisms have been made that opportunities to females in priosn are gendered, such as cooking, laundry and hairdressing (ibid). There is potential for SPS to create more partnerships with colleges, social enterprises, social co-operatives, private and wider industries, so that working in prison can lead to tangible opportunities and aligns with industry in the communities people are returning to (ibid).

Building a better future (Bolivia)

A United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Programme encourages women to learn trades that will increase their self-sufficiency and take them away from traditionally female-dominated, low-paying sectors such as sewing, domestic services or the food sector. UNODC's innovative programme is currently being rolled out in Bolivia, focusing initially on a group of 50 female prisoners. These prisoners are trained to work in construction – an industry requiring a vast range of skilled specialists, including builders, metal workers, plumbers, pipefitters, electricians and carpenters. Following their release from prison, these women are encouraged to join the National Association of Women Constructors in Bolivia, which helps its members to promote their skills, find work opportunities and eventually launch their own businesses (cited in Behan, 2021).

On the job training

'ECO-PC' enables female prisoners in Berlin and Brandenburg prisons to undertake 'on-the-job' learning and to work towards an individualised certificate through learning units in subjects such as IT basic skills, German and mathematics.

Défi-Job, in Luxembourg, enables those in Givenich prison, an open prison, to take part in its sheltered workshop to acquire a range of both generic and specific skills to enhance their employability. The scheme is funded by the national Ministries of Labour and Justice.

The work undertaken by the prisoners involves the design and production of a number of lines of items, including furniture and document holders, which are sold in a small number of retail outlets. Through their work, the participants are supported to develop the skills and capacities they need to take up formal employment on release from prison. Prisoners must apply for employment with Défi-Job and must meet certain criteria in order to obtain a place on the scheme. These criteria are based on: 'readiness' – i.e. their attitude and motivation towards work and future social integration; behaviour and working relations with the psycho-social-educational services; attitude towards drug addiction; and administrative legal situation (identity card, working permit, official address, etc.).
There are a number of factors within the design of the project which help to increase the self-esteem of the participants, by helping to create a feeling that they are reintegrating into the community: They are given an employment contract; they are paid the equivalent of the minimum wage (which is much higher than the wages paid for prison work); They are entitled to make social security contributions; They are paid two extra days per month instead of being given holiday. (cited in GHK Consulting, 2013)

Enterprise and Self-employment

The Coates Review (2016) calls for education in prison to include around enterprise and teaching people about self-employment.

Entrepreneurship Training

The Ministry of Justice has piloted entrepreneurship training with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), to help prisoners develop business plans and skills in running their own businesses as well as offering access to the Start Up Loans Company where appropriate.[14]

Connections with local employers

In the Coates Review (2016) it was reported that three fifths of prisoners leave prison without an identified employment or education or training outcome In England some prisons have employment hubs and this means that people in prison can meet with prospective employers. There is a call for the Government to introduce incentives to encourage businesses to employer former prisoners, such as national insurance holidays for a year (House of Commons Committee, 2023). However, there is also a caution that employabilty is important but should not drive focus (Coates, 2016).

In Scotland, organisations such as Timpsons have been successful in providing employment opportunities for former prisoners. The company reports that it now recruits 10% of staff through prisons from across the UK (Pandeli and O'Regan, 2020). Piacentini et al. (2018) review of employability in Scottish Prisons found that in the literature, the most successful models are those that co-ordinate work both in the prison and in the community (citing Sapouna et al 2015; Shapland et al 2012).

As it stands in Scotland, based on data published in October 2023, worker shortages were most reported in Accommodation and Food Services (48%) and Construction (44%), with most businesses (63.5%) reporting that worker shortages led to employees working increased hours or the business was unable to meet demands (41.6%) (Scottish Government, 2023b). Furthermore, a study carried out by Censuswide in May 2023 found that 67% of small and medium businesses reported a skills shortage. People management (25%), finance (24%), digital technologies (22%) and project management (20%) were identified as the top areas SMEs are facing skill shortages. The research also found that two thirds of the small and medium businesses in the community were unaware of the Scottish Government's fully funded employee trainee support available and the Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF).[15] These findings point towards the value in the prison service working with local busninesses, large and small, to establish a clearer pipeline of training

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[14] Cited in https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/66896/html/
[15] To view please go to: https://www.mygov.scot/employee-training

and employment, meeting gaps and also supporting people in prison to get into the roles they want to, so offering real and tangible alternatives to criminality.

Employment Advisory Boards (cited in Ministry of Justice et al. 2023)

There re Employment Advisory Boards running in all 92 resettlement prisons in England and Wales. These link up prisons to leading businesses, such as Co-op, Greggs and Iceland, to provide advice on how to get offenders into work on release.

Sue Ryder in England

The charity, Sue Ryder, runs a Prison Volunteer Programme that offers volunteering placements in its shops and offices to women (and male) prisoners who are released on temporary licence (ROTL). These placements build confidence, prepare participants for eventual release and increase the skills and experience they can offer employers. Every year, around 400 participants contribute 111,000 volunteering hours with a value of more than £680,000.

Bounceback (cited in HMIP, 2016)

The charity Bounceback works with Land Securities and Lend Lease to run a 'dry-lining' training centre for inmates at HMP Brixton prison. It has been developed to meet the urgent need for trained 'dry-liners' in in the construction sector. The project is expected to train around 100 prisoners per year.

Milton Keynes College 'Employment academy' (cited in HMIP, 2016)

This approach links college training to employment. The college identifies employers who are willing to take on offenders and then tailors an academy curriculum to meet the needs of that employer. At HMP Hewell a cohort of prisoners have chosen to join the 'employment academy' in railway engineering with the employer RMF. It supplies workers to the rail industry. RMF interviews prisoners prior to them joining the academy to assess their suitability. They then complete all the qualifications needed to secure employment with RMF (with tutors supplied by RMF), and undertake work experience with the company while on ROTL. Almost all the men who complete the academy programme are then offered work by RMF on release.

Employment Passports (cited in HMIP, 2016)

NOVUS has adopted an approach to ensure that motivated prison learners are given additional support and 'employment passports' that record and link their achievements directly to employment pathways.

The Employer Forum for Reducing Reoffending (EFfRR) established by NOMS (cited in HMIP, 2016 and Department of Work and Pensions and Ministry of Justice (2016)

This is chaired by James Timpson and is a group of 200 employers who are committed to employing offenders. A series of Minister-led roadshows, in conjunction with EFFRR, in prisons across the country has led to additional employers coming to the table.[16]

Prison Apprenticeships cited in Ministry of Justice et al. (2023)

The first ever prisoner apprenticeships in England, in catering and construction through ground-breaking partnerships with Greene King, Kier and Clipper, with talks underway to open up apprenticeships in other industries was announced in 2023.

Further Skills Programme (cited in Ministry of Justice et al. 2023)

Training up over 2,000 offenders over the next two years in vital industries such as scaffolding and electrics, before linking them up with employers in the local community and guaranteeing interviews on release.

The ZUBILIS DP, based in Germany (cited in GHK Consulting, 2013)

This aimed to increase the relevance of education and training provision for (ex)-prisoners, by modernising its content and methods of delivery, in close cooperation with employers and other labour market actors. Its activities focused on three main areas: increasing the media competence of teaching and training staff in the penal system and developing media-supported programmes for prison inmates; adapting existing vocational qualification programmes for use in prisons; mobilising, and capitalising on, relevant expertise available outside the penal system, for example from temporary employment agencies and research organisations.

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[16] DWP and MOJ reference: https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/66896/html/

13.   The importance of throughcare in education

> **Key Messages: The importance of throughcare in education**
>
> For people leaving prison, meeting basic needs can be challenging, and therefore may often require **throughcare** support (Scottish Government, 2022).

According to the Mandela Rules, Rule 104 (2) states that: 'So far as practicable, the education of prisoners shall be integrated with the educational system of the country so that after their release they may continue their education without difficulty' (cited in Behan, 2021).

The Coates Review (2016) promotes the idea pf providing through the gate support, so that people can continue the education they have begun in prison when they return to the community. Those serving more than four years in Scotland are entitled to statutory throughcare support, but for others, including younger people, this support can be requested. Without support to meet basic needs around housing and support, access to education, training and employment is challenging (Youth Justice Improvement Board, 2020). Cesaroni (2017 study of 103 young people in HMYOI Polmont found that 73% wanted support to get a job, 66% to find housing and 61% to build relationships with their family (cited in Robinson et al, 2018; Lightowler, 2017). The backdrop of poverty pervades all aspects of peoples' lives, and is often the background and foreground to criminality, and there is a need to challenge these wider structural determinants (Scottish Government, 2022b).

> **Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) (cited in HMIP, 2016)**
>
> These work with prisons to provide a 'through the gate' resettlement service and supervision in the community for nearly all offenders released from custody. – multi-agencies, prisoners said they were sick of answering the same questions.

> **The Clink Restaurants (cited in HMIP, 2016)**
>
> The Clink is a charity that supports prisoners through training (undertaking NVQs in cookery or catering that equip them to work in the kitchen or front of house) and into production. Prisoners provide commercial services by working in one of the charity's restaurants for paying customers, or by producing food for the Clink's events catering service while in prison. Prisoners are then released on ROTL to continue working in the Clink restaurants, and they are then supported into employment. There are Clink restaurants at HMPs Brixton, Cardiff, High Down and Styal.

'Steps to the Gate' Programme (cited in HMIP, 2016)

This brings together Novus, the National Careers Service, and CRC to work together to provide appropriate advice and guidance in the last 12 weeks before release. Offenders also need training on when and how to disclose convictions. This is run by some education providers, as well as by some CRCs. Several voluntary organisations, including the charity Unlock, and Nacro's Aeneid Project, offer practical solutions to address the challenges of supporting job-seekers with criminal records into employment. They provide support to both job-seekers and to organisations that can offer them training and employment opportunities.

HMP Springhill and Oxford Brookes University: Higher Education on day release
HMP Standford Hill and Cantebury College: Construction and ICT Courses

The partnership enables prison learners to attend Higher Education courses on day release, and then to continue with their studies there on release. Sometimes the newly-released prison learner is given university accommodation and bursaries. HMP Standford Hill has also built a productive relationship with Canterbury College, who deliver construction and ICT courses in buildings adjacent to the prison.

Norway: Follow on classes

Norwegian prisons include a lower student-teacher ratio and the option of 'follow-on' classes after release if a student does not complete his or her education while in prison (Langelid, 2015; Tønseth and Bergsland, 2019 cited in Behan, 2021).

Scotland Works For You

Providing people with convictions with good quality information and support regarding the disclosure of criminal records including the periods of disclosure, what requires to be disclosed, and how this can be managed (cited in Youth Justice Improvement Board, 2020).

> **Saracens Rugby Club (cited in Coates, 2016)**
>
> Saracens rugby club 'Get Onside!' programme is a personal development project that uses rugby to engage prisoners at Feltham Young Offenders Institute in West London. It is a 10-week programme provides young men with life skills such as behaviour management, leadership and teamwork. It also contains educational aspects such as CV writing.

14.   Conclusion and Principles

This literature review focused on the wider evidence about education before specifically concentrating on education in prisons. Above all else, this review has shown that effective practice in education is fundamentally about the relationships established between the teacher and learner, no matter what the context, that is in schools, higher education, using blended learning and in prisons, and this applies across all ages. Learners in all contexts want to feel listened to, have choice and the learning experience ideally personalised, with the teachers' and learners' expectations aligned, taking account of interests, needs and strengths. For those who do not view 'education' positively, because of their own past negative experiences, and/or also being surrounded by family or other influences that have also experienced education negatively, sometimes learning or stealth learning, through for example the use of sports or the arts can be effective. The message is that everyone has the ability to learn. Blended learning is recognised as promoting inclusion because of the flexibility it offers, but again is dependent on positive student-instructor interaction. The evidence is also that giving students more control, for example by promoting peer learning can be a very effective way of teaching and learning. Teachers being able to do their job well require adequate support and continued professional development.

The practice of education is about inclusion. "A fresh approach to penal policy would foreground pedagogy over punishment." (Behan, 2021: 97). Removing barriers and helping people to address needs that are more visible, such as additional support needs, and those less visible, such as a lack of self-confidence is imperative, and again down to the skills of educators and often connecting to other support. The literature, both in wider education and in prison promotes the idea of being person or learner-centred, and for those who have experienced challenging lives, the teacher(s) be compassionate and help them to regulate their emotions, creating a safe trauma informed space. People learn when what is being taught to them interests, matters or is relevant to them, such as social practice, whereby people are learning through practices that are useful to them in their daily lives. There is growing understanding about the complexity of additional support needs, the importance of screening for neurodiversity, and staff need to be appropriately trained and have adequate resources to provide support. Evaluation of teaching is important in understanding the quality of education and ensuring the teachers' and learners' expectations are aligned. There appears to be a shift in how success is measured, so that it is not just about quantitative outcomes but also using qualitative approaches to understand the leaners experience.

In prison, as in the community, there should be a full offer of education, from learning basic skills to accessing higher education. To say that people are 'hard to reach' is stigmatising and instead, it may be better to state that they face barriers to learning and may well have been marginalised. Delivering education in prison is not easy, because of the high prevalence of additional support needs, the environment itself and challenges relating to overcrowding, staff shortages, infrastructure, bureaucracy and currently the lack of digital access. In terms of the latter point, this review further strengthens the call for people in prison to no longer be digitally excluded. Steps towards education for people in prison are important, such as engaging in personal and social development or peer learning. Every interaction that takes place with someone in prison, whether it is with a prison officer, peer learner or teacher could help them change their conception of themselves, to recognise their potential. The opportunity that exists around blended learning is very clear based on the evidence. Incentivising learning is also an important consideration, particularly to help people take those first steps into education. The research shows that vocational training in prison is often in low skills and gendered, and instead creating stronger connections with colleges, local employers and private industries could offer new and innovative ways of thinking about how to get people into education and sustain their involvement towards tangible goals that align with their interests.

Becoming a learner in whatever form, whether it is through formal or informal routes can be a 'hook for change' promoting desistance, helping people to shift their identity from being a prisoner to learner, teacher, and an 'effective contributor', promoting citizenship (SPS, 2021; MacPherson, 2017; Giordano et al. 2002). It is also important that for people leaving prison, where education has begun this should not end, but also meeting basic needs can be challenging, and therefore may often require throughcare support too (Scottish Government, 2022). Adult education enriches peoples' lives, it helps to build inclusive communities and create sustainable societies (Behan, 2021). Learning is lifelong, affects all aspects of life, and should be leaner or person-centred (Scottish Government, 2022).

Principles

1. Everyone has the ability and right to learn.
2. Effective education is fundamentally about the relationships established between the teacher and learner.
3. Learners wants to feel listened to, have choice and the learning experience is personalised, taking account of interests, needs and strengths.
4. Education is inclusive. Removing barriers to education is about addressing needs that are both visible, such as additional support needs and invisible, such as feeling a lack of self-worth.
5. Being trauma-informed is about building positive relationships, and is reliant on the teacher and wider support being compassionate and creating safe spaces.
6. Teachers and wider staff require appropriate training and adequate resources so they can support people to reach their potential.
7. In prison there should be a full offer of education, from teaching people basic skills to being successful in higher education.
8. Referring to people as 'hard to reach' is stigmatising. People can be supported to take steps towards education, such as through stealth learning or incentivising learning. Every

positive interaction that takes place with someone in prison could help them recognise and build on their potential.

9. Prisons are part of communities. Connections with colleges, local employers and private industry are important. Access to appropriate further or higher education and vocational training designed with these partners would mean tangible opportunities are created in the community for people leaving prison.

10. Becoming a learner can be a hook for change promoting desistance.

11. Adult education enriches peoples' lives and helps to create inclusive communities.

12. Learning affects all aspect of life and should be person-centred.

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