

# Inspectorates: Urgent action needed at Oakhill Secure Training Centre

Such is their concern about the safety and welfare of children at the G4S-run secure centre, the inspectorates have issued an [Urgent Notification](#) to the Secretary of State for Justice. Dominic Raab has 28 days to respond with an action plan for improvement at the centre.

The notification follows an October inspection at the Milton Keynes centre, which highlighted unjustifiable – and in some cases unlawful – levels of force being used on children as young as 15. Staff lack the skill to carry out restraint safely, while oversight of the use of force is inadequate, inspectors found.

Systems for keeping children safe are in 'disarray', leaving children at risk of serious harm. Leaders have failed to pass on concerns and allegations to outside agencies, while some issues have been investigated internally – contrary to statutory guidance – potentially compromising any future external investigations.

The inspectorates also found:

- Frontline staff are poorly managed and supported. Many haven't received any purposeful training and development beyond their mandatory programmes.
- Staff are reluctant to challenge low level poor behaviour, leading to more serious incidents and violence. This is made worse by the lack of an effective behaviour management strategy to support staff in how to deal with challenging behaviour.
- Most children said they lacked confidence in the complaints system, discouraging them from raising concerns. This has serious implications for safeguarding as it could allow harmful behaviour to go undetected.
- Children are being cared for by staff who aren't equipped with all the information they need to keep them safe or meet their needs. Some staff told inspectors they had been given the choice of whether to read relevant information and had chosen not to.
- Children have access to inappropriate adult content via televisions in their rooms. Senior managers have been aware of this since March, but have taken no action.

This week, a monitoring inspection report found that children at Oakhill were spending up to 23 hours a day in their rooms due to inadequate staffing, a move described as 'wholly inappropriate' by inspectors. While this practice has ended, children's experiences during this period were 'bleak', and 'barely met minimum standards of human decency', the inspectorates say.

Staffing of the centre remains fragile. Records show Oakhill is losing almost 30% of its staff each year, leading to unstable, transient relationships with children – a primary factor in children's poor experiences.

A new interim director took up post in September but will only be in place for up to 3 months. While the director acknowledges inspectors' concerns and has begun to address some of the issues raised, permanent leadership has yet to be arranged.

It is the third time in 2 weeks that inspectors have highlighted concerns about treatment of children in secure centres. Today's findings also follow a [damning report into conditions at Rainsbrook STC](#) – run by MTC Novo – which was recently downgraded to inadequate.

Since 2017, Oakhill has not been judged higher than 'requires improvement to be good' for the 'overall experiences and progress of children'.

Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's Chief Inspector, said:

This is a centre in chaos, with children bearing the brunt of staff shortages and poor organisation. These are vulnerable children in need of care, yet they are living with excessive use of force and violent incidents, in conditions that no one would want for their own children. Stable leadership and a full, effective workforce are vital if children are to get the rehabilitation they so desperately need.

Charlie Taylor, Chief Inspector of Prisons, said:

Oakhill STC is failing to provide adequate care for such a vulnerable group of children and it was hugely disappointing to find a staff team that was unable to manage behaviour effectively, failed to safeguard children, and overused physical restraint. Urgent action must be taken to make sure that there is a strong leadership team in place and sufficient, high-quality staff to transform the outcomes in this long-troubled centre.

Dr Rosie Benneworth, Chief Inspector of Primary Medical Services and Integrated Care at CQC, said:

Providing safe and good quality care to children in settings such as this requires adequate numbers of staff who are fully supported

by managers. Unfortunately, we saw that this was not the case at Oakhill which is impacting on the care children at the centre are receiving. Although children had their health needs assessed and were able to attend medical appointments, it is of great concern that some children were confined to their rooms for such long periods of time, this is likely to have a detrimental impact on both their physical and mental wellbeing.

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## Over 10,000 attempts to smuggle contraband thwarted by X-ray body scanners

- game-changing technology prevents thousands of prison smuggling attempts in just over a year
- new technology across England and Wales to bolster defences against drugs, weapons and mobile phones
- part of the government's £100 million package to tackle violence and boost security

The innovative equipment, rolled out across the closed male estate in England and Wales, is part of the government's bold £100 million package to boost security in prisons and crackdown on crime behind bars.

The 74 scanners, developed specifically for the Prison Service, allow staff to instantly identify whether prisoners are smuggling illegal contraband items within their bodies. The scanners have picked up Spice, morphine tablets, mobile phones, SIM cards, phone chargers and tobacco. These illegal items would have been destined for the prison wings, fuelling the illicit economy that drives debt and associated violence.

At HMP Garth a prisoner was found to be in possession of an iPhone and charging lead during a body search. The scanner revealed a large package in his bowel, later discovered to be full of tobacco, and HMP Berwyn banned items found on the same day the scanner was installed – showing the impact of value of these machines.

Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Justice Secretary Dominic Raab said:

Drugs and weapons wreak havoc behind bars and stop frontline staff from doing their crucial work to rehabilitate offenders and cut crime.

Our new scanners help us keep out dangerous and illegal items from prison that means our staff can create a better environment to get offenders off drugs and into work – which is the key to reducing reoffending.

Joanne Sims, Governor of HMP High Down said:

This equipment is proving to be a successful deterrent to anyone wanting to smuggle illegal items into our establishment.

The X-ray body scanner supports our aim to provide a safe environment for our prison officers and the men in our prisons.

The cutting-edge technology has been installed at 73 sites meaning 100% of the closed male estate have the X-ray scanners, ensuring that there are no vulnerable points.

The equipment is being funded as part of the government's commitment to transform the prison estate and cut crime. This includes:

- £100 million to bolster prison security, clamping down on the weapons, drugs and mobile phones that fuel violence, self-harm and crime behind bars, including X-ray body scanners, drug dogs and enhanced gate security
- £4 billion to provide 18,000 additional prison places and create modern, efficient jails that rehabilitate offenders, reduce reoffending and keep the public safe
- £156 million to tackle the most pressing maintenance issues to create safe and decent conditions for offender rehabilitation

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## [G7 Finance Ministers agree to work together to address global supply chain pressures](#)

News story

The Chancellor has welcomed an agreement from G7 Finance Ministers to work together to monitor supply chain pressures as the global economy rebounds from the pandemic.



- During a meeting hosted by Chancellor Rishi Sunak in Washington DC, G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors have agreed to work together to monitor global supply chain pressures.
- Rishi Sunak also announced that the UK will commit over £1 billion worth of Special Drawing Rights to support vulnerable countries, and gives its backing to a new IMF Trust to help developing countries support green and sustainable economies.
- G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors also launch a report setting out public policy principles for issuing central bank digital currencies, a digital version of money that if introduced could be used alongside physical notes and coins.

During a meeting of G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in Washington DC on Wednesday (13 October), Rishi Sunak stressed the importance of global co-operation to ensure that supply chains are more resilient as the world emerges from the pandemic.

This builds on action being taken at home to ease the supply chain issues through temporary visas and support for businesses as they transition towards a high-skill, high-wage economy through skills bootcamps and the Government's 130% super-deduction for capital investment.

**Following the meeting, Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:**

Supply chain issues are being felt globally – and finance leaders from around the globe must collaborate to address our shared challenges.

Today we have collectively agreed to work closely over the coming months – and together we will build a strong and resilient recovery.

**Support for vulnerable countries**

During the meeting on Wednesday (13 October), the Chancellor also announced that the UK is pledging an additional loan of over £1bn worth of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) to the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PGRT) and called on other countries to do the same. The PGRT provides zero interest loans to vulnerable countries who need financial support.

Weeks ahead of the COP26 conference in Glasgow, the UK has also given its backing to the IMF's proposed Resilience and Sustainability Trust and called on global counterparts to do the same. This trust would redirect SDR reserves to low-income and vulnerable middle-income countries to help them address health and climate risks and support green and sustainable economic growth.

### **Central Bank Digital Currencies**

Under the leadership of the UK, G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors also launched a set of public policy principles for retail Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs), which if introduced could be a digital form of central bank money that would be used alongside physical notes and coins. This report will help support and inform exploration of CBDCs and provides an important contribution to the global policy conversation.

### **Carbon pricing**

Today the G7 also agreed, for the first time, to work together to consider how best to coordinate efforts on the pricing of carbon to mitigate emissions, and to explore international solutions to prevent carbon leakage, helping us deliver the transformational change required by the Paris Agreement.

### **Further information:**

- Detail about the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust can be found [online](#).
- The G7 agreed Central Bank Digital Currencies report and statement can be found [online](#).
- While no G7 authority has yet chosen to issue a CBDC, these principles will help in designing and potentially delivering a CBDC that would be fit for the future.
- The Special Drawing Right (SDR) is an international reserve asset created by the IMF to supplement other reserve assets of member countries.
- The UK has this week committed to channel around 20% of its new allocation of Special Drawing Rights at a value of around £4bn, out of which the UK will loan 1bn Special Drawing Rights to the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust.
- These loans will be provided at a concessional interest rate, which is also expected to provide the equivalent of a further SDR 100m in implicit grant resources.
- Carbon leakage is the displacement of production, and associated greenhouse gas emissions, in ways that would not have happened if the pricing (or regulation) of emissions across jurisdictions was implemented in an equivalent way.
- The G7 will work together to better understand the macroeconomic consequences of the different possible paths to net zero.

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# [FCDO agrees partial sale of British Embassy Tokyo estate](#)

Press release

The FCDO has agreed the sale of a section of the British Embassy compound in central Tokyo.



The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office has agreed the sale of a section of the British Embassy compound in central Tokyo, currently being used mainly for staff accommodation.

The proceeds of the sale will go towards making the Embassy more modern and sustainable, including through solar panels and improving energy efficiency, and to upgrading the FCDO's wider diplomatic estate in New Delhi and elsewhere.

An FCDO Spokesperson said:

The proceeds of this sale will contribute towards making our Embassies in Tokyo, New Delhi and the wider Indo-Pacific region some of the most modern and environmentally friendly diplomatic buildings in the world. By constantly reviewing the set up of our 270 overseas missions we can deliver value for money for British taxpayers while we promote the UK's interests around the world.

The land is being bought by Mitsubishi Estate Group. Exact terms of the transaction, including sale price, are confidential at this stage.

The FCDO continually reviews its global estate, in order to maintain a world-class platform from which to promote UK interests, while maximising value for money to the British taxpayer.

## Notes to Editors

- The FCDO is responsible for the UK's overseas diplomatic estate. The estate is highly diverse, comprising around 5,400 properties.
- The estate is a platform for One HMG: around 30 different government departments work out of the buildings that includes Embassies, High Commissions and Ambassadors' Residences, as well as staff accommodation, in around 270 overseas locations.

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## [1,000 schools connected to top-of-the-class full fibre broadband](#)

- Thousands of pupils in schools with slowest speeds can now access gigabit broadband
- Nearly 7,000 hospitals, libraries, police stations and other public buildings to be upgraded by end of March
- Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries says: "We are levelling up pupils' and teachers' access to the fastest future-proofed broadband"

Children in more than a thousand schools are now enjoying next-generation internet speeds thanks to government investment.

Full fibre networks stretching for thousands of kilometres are now supplying lightning-fast gigabit broadband to 1,084 schools and thousands of other public buildings previously stuck with slow speeds.

It means teachers can make use of the most cutting-edge learning tech – such as video conferencing platforms to host joint classes and assemblies with schools anywhere in the world and online tools that bring lessons to life such as films and learning games. It will also support teachers to spend more time planning and delivering lessons and less time staring at loading screens.

The work is part of the government's national mission to level up internet access across the UK by investing in blisteringly fast gigabit broadband and busting barriers to speed up commercial roll out.

Most schools in the UK are in urban or suburban areas which already have access to fast full fibre broadband, but this investment focused on schools in around 30 per cent of the UK that currently cannot access speeds of 100



megabits per second and were not in line to receive an upgrade commercially from broadband companies.

Many of them are in rural or hard-to-reach areas, so the government has stepped in to fund their connections and make sure they don't miss out on next-generation speeds.

The areas seeing the most schools upgraded include Norfolk (115), Wolverhampton (81), North Yorkshire (45), the Highlands (37) and Dumfries and Galloway (35).

Work is underway to bring gigabit speeds to even more schools, with 884 earmarked to be connected by March next year.

It comes as the government today launches a [call for evidence](#) to understand the future wireless connectivity needs of the UK and how it can support the rollout of 5G and other advanced wireless networks.

This includes looking at technologies such as satellite, the Internet of Things – which will underpin innovations like driverless cars – and at the development of 6G networks, the next generation of mobile.

6G will power things like virtual reality calls, which give the sensation of being in the same room as the person at the other end of the line, revolutionise wearable technologies to improve healthcare and could allow for greater advances in smart cities and manufacturing.

The call for evidence will inform the Wireless Infrastructure Strategy which was [announced](#) in June.

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

We are levelling up pupils' and teachers' access to the fastest future-proofed broadband, giving hundreds of schools better access to important learning opportunities, no matter where they live.

The Government is on a mission to connect the country to next-generation networks. Today's announcements will help harness the huge potential of 5G and future wireless networks such as 6G to supercharge our plan to build back better.

The government is also on track to connect around 6,800 public buildings across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland by the end of March – including hospitals, GP surgeries, fire stations, leisure centres, museums and libraries.

The upgrades form part of a more than £210 million investment by the government to bring next-generation connections to places where internet speeds are slower, such as in rural areas.

This will help raise efficiency and quality across vital public services. For

example – libraries will be able to offer faster connectivity for users, GPs and blue light services will access records and specialists faster, and museums will be able to have more interactive exhibitions.

The investment also makes it easier for broadband providers to extend the network to surrounding communities, with around 1.5 million more homes and businesses now within 200 metres of a fibre optic broadband cable thanks to the investment.

The government is also supporting technology upgrades in classrooms, improving education for pupils and enabling school staff to work better by investing £30 million in the pilot project “Connect the Classroom.” This aims to upgrade technology within over 1,000 schools, allowing them to benefit from fast Wi-Fi and cloud services.

Schools Minister Baroness Barran said: > > It is great to see schools being prioritised for these transformational broadband connections, which alongside our £30 million pilot programme to install the latest Wi-Fi infrastructure in schools, will help bring out the full potential of technology in our classrooms. > > Whether it’s supporting teachers to stretch all their pupils to meet their potential or helping children develop the skills they need for modern life, the impact of these improvements will be felt by thousands of children and teachers for years to come.

### **Clive Selley, Openreach CEO said:**

Research shows that full fibre broadband can deliver social, economic and environmental prosperity throughout the UK, so we’re proud to have supported the Government in upgrading the majority of these schools.

We’ve always said that upgrading the entire country will need a monumental team effort across industry and government – and nobody’s investing more, or building further or faster than Openreach. We’ve already built this life-changing technology to five and a half million homes and businesses, and we’re on track to reach 25 million by the end of 2026.

### **Wireless Infrastructure Strategy – Call for Evidence**

The UK is set to see major changes across the telecoms landscape. Over the next decade wireless networks will need to cope with far larger quantities of data consumption and connect billions of devices, supporting critical applications across the entire economy.

That is why the government is developing a Wireless Infrastructure Strategy, which will set out a vision for making wireless infrastructure – such as 5G networks – an integral part of the UK economy and contributing to levelling up Britain.

It will also anticipate the UK's wireless connectivity needs for the next decade, set out the role government should play to support investment, and introduce a new policy framework to encourage innovation, competition and investment in 5G and future networks, including 6G.

To inform the Strategy, the government has today launched a call for evidence to understand in detail:

- The future wireless connectivity needs of the UK;
- The extent to which the UK market is likely to be able to meet those needs over the next decade;
- How the regulatory and policy framework can best continue to support investment, competition, innovation and adoption of wireless infrastructure;
- How the government can support the development and deployment of future wireless networks, including 6G.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Alongside today's announcement, the government has published a [report](#) exploring the early and expected benefits of gigabit connections for schools. This was based on a survey of 261 schools connected under the government's Rural Gigabit Connectivity (RGC).

The benefits include:

- Time saving across the whole school including teachers, office staff and pupils
- Increased confidence and creativity in the classroom – for planning and using technology in lessons
- Improved pupil experience and opportunity
- Staff satisfaction and reduced frustration due to lags and slow speeds

The more than £210 million investment forecast to be spent by March 2022 is spread over two programmes:

- £180.8 million has been invested as part of the Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN) programme to help roll out the next generation of faster, full fibre broadband connections to eligible public buildings including schools, libraries, medical centres, community shops and village halls.
- The Rural Gigabit Connectivity (RGC) programme aims to assist the government and partner organisations to deliver nationwide gigabit-capable connections in locations that are unlikely to benefit from commercial investment. £31.1 million was invested in upgrading connections in schools as part of the RGC.

The call for evidence seeks responses from a wide range of interested parties, including fixed and mobile network operators and service providers, academics, the public, consumer interest groups and businesses and their trade associations.

The government intends to publish the Wireless Infrastructure Strategy in 2022.