

SPSO decision report

Case: 201404373, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: progression
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that his prison did not follow relevant policy in dealing with his progression through the prison system to less secure conditions, in preparation for his eventual release. Mr C felt that two Scottish Prison Service (SPS) policies about progression were contradictory. He also complained about how the SPS handled his complaint.

We looked at the relevant SPS policies and found that they did not set out an automatic progression route with mandatory timescales. Instead, they set out a framework within which SPS staff could assess the needs of, and risks presented by, prisoners. Each prisoner's case is dealt with on its individual merits, taking into account a number of relevant factors, with timescales presented as a guide. One of the policies clearly stated that it was setting out a best case scenario, and that the time taken to progress could be longer or shorter than suggested. We could not see any contradiction, in administrative terms, between the relevant SPS policies. Having looked at the records for Mr C's case, we could not conclude that his prison unreasonably failed to follow policy in dealing with his progression. In addition, we were satisfied that the SPS' handling of Mr C's complaint was adequate in the circumstances.