

SPSO decision report

Case: 201608503, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: progression
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) did their assessment of the programmes he was to complete in prison without considering all of the relevant information. He was also unhappy that they had cancelled some of his parent and child visits, which he felt had been unreasonable.

We considered the administrative handling of SPS's programmes assessment. That is because we are not a route for prisoners to appeal SPS's decisions about the programmes they are to complete. We looked at the evidence and it indicated that SPS had handled the matter in line with the relevant guidance. They had recorded the matters they had considered, the evidence reflected the information detailed in the guidance, and there was nothing to indicate that they had failed to consider relevant information. On that basis, we did not uphold Mr C's first complaint.

In terms of Mr C's visits, SPS confirmed that parent and child visits supplemented the visits he was entitled to receive under the prison rules. The paperwork indicated that several steps had to be taken before a prisoner was registered for the parent and child scheme. Mr C had wrongly been put on the scheme before those steps were complete, which was why his visit had been cancelled. SPS had acknowledged and apologised to Mr C for that error. By the time another visit was cancelled several months later, it was because all parent and child visits in a specific session were cancelled for operational reasons and it had not been Mr C's visit that was cancelled specifically on this occasion. We noted that Mr C remained registered for the scheme and could book future visits. Viewed as a whole, the evidence indicated that SPS had made decisions they were entitled to have made, that they explained their reasons to Mr C and that they had apologised for their initial error. We did not uphold this complaint.