

SPSO decision report

Case: 201201755, Scottish Prison Service
Sector: Scottish Government and devolved administration
Subject: personal property
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained because he was unhappy that he was not allowed to use puzzle books that were handed into the prison for him by a friend.

Our investigation found that prisoners are not allowed to have reading materials handed in for them by family or friends. This is because it is possible for prohibited items to be hidden in the pages of reading materials. Instead, prisoners must purchase reading materials themselves through the prison's approved supplier scheme. By only allowing reading materials purchased through that scheme, the prison are able to increase the security and good order of the establishment. In addition, the prison rules confirm that the governor could refuse to allow a prisoner to have in their possession or keep in their cell any items that the governor considered to be damaging to the security and good order of the prison.

We were satisfied the prison had appropriately exercised its discretion in taking the decision not to allow Mr C to have access to the puzzle books handed in for him by his friend and because of that, we did not uphold his complaint.