

# Walford & North Shropshire College

Inspection report for further education college

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| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 5 February 2008              |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Julian Parker / Julian Mason |
| <b>Type of Inspection</b>      | Key                          |

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| <b>Head of care</b>            | Andrew Tyley  |
| <b>Head / Principal</b>        | Andrew Tyley  |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 16 October 2006   |

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## About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Outstanding:  | this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality |
| Good:         | this aspect of the provision is strong                        |
| Satisfactory: | this aspect of the provision is sound                         |
| Inadequate:   | this aspect of the provision is not good enough               |

## **Service information**

### **Brief description of the service**

Walford and North Shropshire College was created in 2001 as a result of a merger between Walford College, primarily a specialist land-based college with its main campus near Baschurch and the North Shropshire College, a tertiary college with its main campus in Oswestry. The Walford campus offers term time residential accommodation for students between 16-20 years with priority being given to students attending land-based courses for whom daily travel presents particular problems. The campus also provides the residential base for two football academies with trainee players living on site.

### **Summary**

This inspection was a key announced visit that took place over three days. All hostels and recreation areas were visited. The inspection concentrated on examining the college's records and students files. Discussions were held with the students, key staff including wardens and senior management including the college Principal. Stakeholder and student questionnaires were sent out prior to the inspection.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Walford and North Shropshire College has made significant improvements since the last inspection and demonstrates its commitment to ensuring the service provided confidently meets the National Minimum Standards. Responsibility for the development of residential services at Walford is acknowledged by the Colleges Senior Management Team. Residential students form a significant component of the core function of this land-based college. The college have produced and effectively reviewed all its policies and procedures to comply as fully as is possible with the national Minimum Standards and the edicts of Every Child Matters. The college provides extensive, effective and responsive services for students who require assistance with educational and non academic needs through its Student Services department. The college is proactive in gathering and listening to the views of all of its service users. The college has evolved robust policies and procedures to actively address discrimination and improve inclusion. The service provided to boarders by wardens attracts strong levels of support and praise from residential students. Catering provision and variety for students is of a very high standard.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Students are able to receive first aid and health care that is consistent with their needs. The warden retains up to date health records for resident students with information from parents that assists staff awareness of students particular health issues. Staff are able to respond appropriately to medical emergencies, illness and injuries because they have received training in first aid and have access to efficient community resources. Students are provided, through the college, in addition to their health related courses, access to a range of discrete counselling services that can offer individual advice and support with addiction, personal or psychological problems. Students are provided with a good quality of catering provision that recognises a broad range of dietary needs. The catering staff responsible for the range and preparation of

meals are effectively trained and have a good understanding of what makes a balanced diet. All foodstuffs used are sourced locally, nutritious and cooked in house. The varied college menu incorporates a multicultural diversity of dishes including vegetarian and healthy options. Students have ready access to drinking water and snacks at reasonable times. Resident students have facilities within their hostels to prepare drinks and hot snacks.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Students are protected from bullying and harassment because staff are aware of their responsibilities. The college have explicit policies, procedures and practices to underpin the safety of students. When occasional incidents do occur staff are quick to respond in order to reduce the impact on the students lives. Staff and students know that bullying behaviour is not tolerated and students confirm that they know how to report their concerns. The pivotal role of the warden's are acknowledged by students in helping to make them feel safe during their stay at Walford. The college has a clear procedure for responding to child protection concerns and has developed links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board through its nominated senior member of staff. Training in child protection is provided to ensure that all staff are fully aware of their responsibility for keeping students safe. Students personal privacy is respected because all staff follow college policies in practice and ensure that on-site security practice is complied with. The college have effective disciplinary policies and procedures that are well publicised and understood by students. The use of discipline with students is fair and appropriate and differentiates between student behaviour both in residential and educational settings. The college has a clear complaints procedure and information about this is made available to students and their families. All staff take seriously the concerns and complaints of residential students. Students confirmed that any concerns or complaints they have are adequately responded to, usually before they become formalised. Residential students know how to complain and the range of staff they can share their concerns with. Under age drinking, substance abuse and possession of obscene material are effectively covered by the colleges policies and procedures and addressed through the colleges vigilance and effective links with specialist services. Students health and social wellbeing is actively promoted by the college in-house student support services. The college have comprehensive risk assessments related to all aspects of safety on the campus, including the security and standard of hostel premises, college grounds and the wide variety of activities the students engage with. Health and safety procedures adopted by the college effectively protect students from the risk of fire. Students live in accommodation that is risk assessed regularly to prevent the likelihood of fire. The colleges pro-active approach to the identification and avoidance of all potential safety hazards ensures that students live and study in a safe environment. There is a selection and vetting process for all staff working with residential students. Students are not fully protected by this process because recruitment procedures do not always comprehensively comply with the full range of checks prescribed by the National Minimum Standards. The college has a policy, followed by all staff, that ensures that any adults who have access to resident students and their accommodation, are kept under supervision when on site during term times. The college has a checking process for all staff who work unsupervised with students.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is outstanding.

Students receive very good personal support from a wide range of staff when they choose to access it. Students confirm that they are clear which member of staff they can choose to go to for personal support. The college provides comprehensive and well presented information to students about the range of support services on offer both collectively and individually. Students can access discrete counselling services from a trained counsellor employed by the college. Residential students are made aware of which warden is on duty each evening and how they may be contacted if needed. The college have a range of well publicised practices supported by policy documents designed to promote the practical inclusion of the diverse group of students accessing the services and courses on offer. Students do not experience discrimination and should they feel aggrieved by any peer behaviour they feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously and addressed quickly and practically by staff. College staff promote inclusion for all service users and the effectiveness of this practice is both well monitored and publicised. Students can choose from a range of interesting and stimulating enrichment activities that occur outside of class time. The college provides a wide range of indoor and outdoor recreational areas for the use of students at appropriate times of day. Wardens and other tutorial staff are active in encouraging residential students to engage with sports, recreational and hobby activities which may be gender specific. Residential staff will provide transport to assist students access off site activities on a regular basis. Residential staff ensure that they are available to students when required and called upon. Students confirm that they know how to contact residential staff at all times. Communication between students and wardens is effective and residential students express satisfaction about the support they receive.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Students are well enabled and encouraged to contribute to the quality and social aspects of residential life. The college has provided systems for the views of all students, including those living in the Walford hostels, to be fed back and influence any proposed developments. There are excellent relationships between residential staff and students and feedback through Information Technology systems and between focus groups and student services have a practical input into the college consultation process. The effectiveness of these systems have been rewarded in the award of a Charter Mark for the college. The college demonstrates a positive attitude towards residential students families and parental contact. Wardens have introduced e-mailing facilities to complement existing hostel telephones. These introductions have improved economical communication particularly between overseas students and their families. Residential students are sensitively supported on joining the college by the range of information and practical support provided by the team of wardens. Students said that this made them feel welcomed and helped them to settle in. Residential students leaving the college are assisted with finding further vocational training or employment associated to their studies.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is satisfactory.

Although the college provides an appropriate range of accommodation for its residential students the quality of some of this provision is not of a consistent quality across all hostels. Although the some of the newer buildings provide satisfactory individual and communal living quarters the condition of some of the older buildings fall considerably short of the high expectation the college sets for itself with procedural and child welfare areas and because of this do not effectively provide for the comfort or physical wellbeing of students residing in

these particular blocks. The accommodation provided for residential students particularly in Haughmond and Breidden hostels is of a very poor standard. The ineffective ventilation in Haughmond has given rise to high levels of condensation. Condensation has created damp conditions and rapid degeneration of wooden surfaces in residents study-bedrooms. The condition of toilets, personal washing areas, showers and bathrooms in Breidden hostel are of an unacceptably low standard of repair and cleanliness. Despite annual repainting of hostel blocks the general impression given is of buildings that require considerable investment and refurbishment to meet the acceptable levels identified by the national minimum standards. Some students report that these conditions are only tolerable because they commute home each weekend and are funded to live in by the college. Students living in the newer blocks expressed that they were satisfied with their living conditions and individual rooms.

## Organisation

The organisation is good.

The college has an effective and coordinated management system that has been introduced over the past six months. Senior managers take into account the safety and welfare of residential students and have refined systems to reflect the importance of residential students and land-based courses to the identity of the college. The needs of residential students have been acknowledged by the improved complement of wardens and the importance of their tasks and responsibilities. Although there is clear and effective leadership of residential practice in the college the poor physical condition of residential accommodation does not complement this practice. The college have produced a clear and detailed statement of welfare accommodation and student support policies and practice 'principles & practice' that is made available to parents, resident students and staff. The management of the residential provision has a place within the college Senior Management Team and wardens are provided with clear lines of communication and accountability. The promotion of effective record keeping supports the colleges robust approach to student welfare. Policies, procedures and guidance show signs of regular review and an active role in the colleges quality assurance mechanisms. The Every Child Matters format is well understood and utilised for service monitoring thereby ensuring existing services are student focused. The use of effective risk assessment and college record keeping positively contributes to residential student welfare. Residential students are adequately supervised by staff in a manner that recognises their developmental needs without being intrusive. Those college staff responsible for residential students have specific residential and welfare duties and receive adequate induction and development opportunities consistent with their role. This preparation helps ensure that residential students are kept safe.

## What must be done to secure future improvement?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

| Standard | Action   | Due date      |
|----------|--|---------------|
| 34       | ensure that the colleges system for recruiting staff include all of the checks prescribed by national minimum standard 34.2 (national minimum standard 34.2) | 12 March 2008 |

|    |   |               |
|----|---|---------------|
| 36 | ensure that students study-bedrooms are adequately ventilated to prevent water damage to surfaces and replace such areas that have been damaged by condensation. (national minimum standard 36.1) | 12 April 2008 |
| 40 | ensure that the toilet and washing provision within hostels is well maintained and kept satisfactorily clean (national minimum standard 40.3)   | 12 April 2008 |
| 36 | ensure that student residential provision is adequately decorated, cleaned and maintained (national minimum standard 36.1)  | 12 April 2008 |

## Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the college governing body confirms the timescales for making appropriate resource provision for the maintenance and development of student residential accommodation (national minimum standard 8.3)



## Annex

## Annex A

### National Minimum Standards for further education college

#### Being healthy

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- under-age drinking, substance abuse and possession of obscene material by students are appropriately countered (NMS 6)
- students receive first aid and health care as necessary (NMS 14)
- students are adequately supervised when ill (NMS 15)
- students are supported in relation to any health or personal problems (NMS 16)
- students receive good quality catering provision (NMS 22)
- students have access to food and drinking water in addition to main meals (NMS 23)
- students are suitably accommodated when ill (NMS 43)

**Ofsted considers 14 and 16 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Staying safe

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- students are protected from bullying and harassment (NMS 2)
- students are protected from abuse (NMS 3)
- use of discipline with students is fair and appropriate (NMS 4)
- students' complaints are adequately responded to (NMS 5)
- students are protected from the risk of fire (NMS 24)
- the welfare of any young people accommodated by the college other than its own students is safeguarded and promoted (NMS 26)
- students' safety and welfare are protected during high risk activities (NMS 27)
- students' personal privacy is respected (NMS 33)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers working with residential students (NMS 34)
- students are protected from unsupervised contact with adults who have not been, subject to the college's complete recruitment checking procedures (NMS 35)
- students have their own living accommodation, secure from public intrusion (NMS 37)
- any security or surveillance measures provide security to protect students without compromising their privacy (NMS 38)
- students are given reasonable protection from safety hazards (NMS 42)

**Ofsted considers 2, 3, 4, 5, 24, 33, 34, 35, 37 and 42 the key standards to be inspected.**

#### Enjoying and achieving

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- students have access to a range and choice of activities (NMS 11)
- students receive personal support from staff (NMS 13)
- students do not experience inappropriate discrimination (NMS 17)
- student welfare is not compromised by unusual or onerous demands (NMS 25)
- students have access to a range of recreational areas (NMS 41)

**Ofsted considers 13 and 17 the key standards to be inspected.**

**Annex A**

## **Making a positive contribution**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- students are enabled to contribute to the operation of residential provision in the college (NMS 12)
- students can maintain private contact with their parents and families (NMS 18)
- students receive guidance, both on arrival at the college and in preparing to leave the college (NMS 20)
- there are sound relationships between staff and students (NMS 32)

**Ofsted considers 12 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.**

## **Achieving economic well-being**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- the college's organisation of residential provision safeguards students' welfare (NMS 10)
- students' personal possessions and money are protected (NMS 19)
- students are provided with satisfactory living accommodation (NMS 36)
- students have satisfactory sleeping accommodation (NMS 39)
- students have adequate and adequately private toilet and washing facilities (NMS 40)
- there are arrangements to ensure that students' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered (NMS 44)
- students can buy food and personal requisites while accommodated at college (NMS 45)
- the welfare of students placed in lodgings by the college is safeguarded and promoted (NMS 46)
- the welfare of students is safeguarded and promoted when accommodated away from the college site on a short-stay basis (NMS 47)

**Ofsted considers 46 and 47 the key standards to be inspected.**

## **Organisation**

**The intended outcomes for these standards are:**

- a clear statement of the principles of residential provision and student support at the college is available to those needing this information (NMS 1)
- the safeguarding and promotion of students' health and welfare are supported by appropriate records (NMS 7)
- there is clear leadership of residential provision in the college (NMS 8)
- crises affecting students' welfare are managed effectively (NMS 9)
- risk assessment and college record keeping contribute to students' welfare (NMS 21)
- students are appropriately supervised during free time (NMS 28)
- students are adequately supervised by staff (NMS 29)
- staff responsible for residential students have specific residential and welfare duties, with adequate induction and continued training (NMS 30)
- students are looked after by staff following clear residential and welfare policies and practice (NMS 31)

**Ofsted considers 1, 21, 29 and 30 the key standards to be inspected.**