

Bridgwater College

Inspection report for further education college

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Inspector	David Kidner / Wendy Anderson
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Date of last inspection	14 March 2005

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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

On 1 September 2004 Bridgwater College merged with Cannington College, a specialist provider of land-based courses. The merger of the colleges has resulted in a significant investment and improvement of the facilities that it provides. There has been significant improvement in the animal care unit and heritage gardens. There has been significant refurbishment of Jeans Hall which accommodates students over 18 years of age and a new sick bay is now provided in this accommodation area. Residential accommodation for students under 18 years of age is based at Cannington Centre and at present currently provides accommodation to 30 students in three Lodges. The centre is located in the village of Cannington a few miles from the town of Bridgwater. The college also provides host families for motor vehicle students who are under 18 and are on block release and accommodation for land based students on farm duties. Each Lodge is well maintained and presented and accommodates 10 students. Each student has a single bedroom with full en-suite facilities. There is a main common room for students to access with a variety of recreational facilities although each Lodge has a small common room. No students under 18 are accommodated full time, over 18 year olds are accommodated in separate lodges. The Student Support Staff includes a team of three wardens who provide 24 hour support to the students. They are managed by a Senior Tutor. Students access the working farm, animal management centre, gardens and sports facilities that are based at Cannington Centre. There are excellent arrangements in place to promote security.

Summary

This was an announced Full Inspection. All key National Minimum Standards were assessed. The college is committed in providing a high quality service to the students accommodated at the college and are continually looking at ways to improve the services it provides. Students and parents speak very highly of the facilities and services available.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection conducted on 14 March 2005 the college has made improvements in the following areas: The college now ensures that all staff receive child protection training/briefings and has reviewed the documentation in relation to personal care plans. Parents/guardians are aware of and now sign personal care plans that have been developed to address individual needs. Risk assessments are conducted if students wish to be accommodated with students aged 18 years and over. However, this is not usual practice. The college has developed a specific medicines policy and parental consent has been obtained for accessing first aid, medical treatment and dental treatment. The college has installed payphones in all of the lodges.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The college has robust policies and procedures and is very pro-active in addressing matters relating to under-age drinking and substance abuse. Such information is also contained in the Residential Code of Conduct and Student Handbook. The college identifies the specific health needs of individual students and then develops an individual health care plan with risk

assessments being completed where specific needs are identified. There is access to a GP and other health care providers as needed. Consents from parents have been obtained in relation to emergency medical and dental treatment. The vast majority of staff have received first aid training. However, the college has identified further staff who require this training and have taken steps to address this. There are robust policies and procedures relating to the management of medicines and the reporting and evaluating of accidents and injuries. The college has detailed policies and procedures to ensure that students are supported in relation to any health or personal problems. Students have access to a variety of support services including counselling services, mental health services and the college has recently appointed a Health Promotions Coordinator. Students also seek the advice and support of wardens and tutors. There is an abundance of information made available to students on how to access such services and literature that promotes a healthy lifestyle. The college restaurant offers a wide range of meal options including a vegetarian option. The feedback from the students is that the quality of the food provided in the restaurant does vary at times. The college has been pro-active in reviewing the restaurant services available to students having identified areas of improvement. Students have access to drinking water and are able to prepare small snacks in their accommodation. The college provides students with a kettle and fridge in each of their bedrooms. A new sick bay has been established for all students at the college. However, most students under 18 years of age choose to be supported in their bedrooms who are then closely monitored and supported by the wardens.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The college has robust policies and procedures relating to bullying. Students do not feel that bullying is an issue within the college. The college takes bullying very seriously and all reported incidents are investigated and dealt with immediately. There are detailed policies and procedures to protect students from abuse. The Head of Learner Services is the nominated person for matters relating to child protection. However, five senior tutors have also undertaken Level 2 training in child protection to further raise this profile within the college. Records are kept of all staff who have received child protection training and briefings and have identified when refresher training is required. The college has an appropriate student disciplinary policy in relation to the management of unacceptable behaviour and breaches in discipline. The college works alongside students to identify where improvement is needed and this is recorded in the student's personal individual learning plan. Students commented that the college rules are fair. The college does not use physical intervention. There is a very detailed complaints policy and procedure, however, the complaints procedure available to students does not contain the contact details for Ofsted. The college keeps detailed records of all complaints received and the action taken to investigate these. However, there was evidence of conflicting documentation relating to the outcome of one particular complaint. This was discussed with the Head of Learner Services and the Principal. Students are protected from the risk of fire. The college is very proactive in the promotion of fire safety. Detailed records are kept of regular testing of the fire system and fire fighting equipment. Fire drills are conducted on a regular basis. Students are fully aware of the fire procedures. The college has a very robust health and safety policy and this is promoted in all areas of college life. Environmental risk assessments have been conducted and are regularly reviewed. The students' safety and welfare is promoted during high risk activities. Detailed risk assessments are conducted prior to such activities taking place. Students privacy is fully promoted by the college. The wardens and security staff regularly patrol the site. The Lodges are appropriately monitored by the use of CCTV. This does not

intrude on the privacy of the students. There is restricted access to all the Lodges and students carry key fobs that control the individual access to the Lodges. Students and parents are very happy with these arrangements. The college have robust policies and procedures for the careful selection and vetting of all staff working at the college. All appropriate checks are in the main being undertaken. However, it was noted that the college has not always verified references. All staff have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure and the college does not allow any member of staff to have regular contact with students under 18 years of age until this has been received. Visitors to the college are supervised at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The college provides an excellent range of activities for students, which are posted in the Lodges. The vast majority of students really enjoy the range of activities on offer and are regularly consulted about the programme. The students stated that the wardens are very flexible and will change the activities at their request. The college has developed systems to monitor and evaluate the activities that are provided. Students receive excellent personal support from a variety of sources. These include the Contact team which provide a counselling service, Health Promotions Coordinator, Mental Health Officer, Hypnotherapy service, wardens and tutors. The college provides each student with a personal tutor. Students are fully aware of the services available to them as there is an abundance of literature and posters. There are very detailed and robust policies and procedures in relation to equality and diversity. The college has a Single Equality Scheme and actively ensures that students do not experience inappropriate discrimination. The feedback received from one student praised the college from not treating them in a different manner to their peer group. The college restaurant is able to cater for different cultural and dietary needs. There are no onerous duties imposed upon students, although some students have morning duties which will be commencing one hour later in the very near future. This has been welcomed by the students. The college provides a range and choice of recreational facilities. Each lodge has a small common room that has a television so students can socialise in smaller groups. There is also a larger common room in the main building which is available for all students to socialise, play pool, listen to music and watch television. There is a sports field and sports facilities also available including a golf course.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The college is very pro-active in seeking the views of the students. There is a Student Council and a Student Residential Forum. Student representatives seek the opinions and ideas from the rest of the students and these are then discussed at the appropriate meeting. The action plan and outcomes of such meetings are posted on the college intranet. Students are able to maintain private contact with their parents. There are ample telephones available to students throughout the college, including the lodges. The college's admission process is excellent. All prospective students have an informal residential interview and prospective students and parents are invited to a presentation and tour of the accommodation areas. This provides an excellent introduction to the arrangements of the residential services. Very good contact arrangements are maintained between the students' parents and the accommodation team. Parents commented that they are kept up to date with matters affecting their son or daughter and they are always made to feel welcome when they visit the college. There is an abundance of information given to students on arrival and when leaving the college including an

Accommodation Welcome Pack and an Accommodation Allocation Pack. The feedback received from students stated that they all feel involved in monitoring their own progress at college and the planning of their future. The college has developed a number of support systems provided by other students, these are known as know as Angels and Ambassadors. The Angels and Ambassadors support new students at the college and help to familiarise them in their new surroundings and give practical support and advice about college life. Students commented that the wardens and tutors are very supportive to them and that they get on very well with them. Some students stated that they have total respect for the wardens and tutors and that they can approach any of them at any time. There is a friendly relaxed atmosphere and excellent student and college staff interaction was observed.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The accommodation provided is all mixed accommodation, hence no differences in services provided for different genders. There are three lodges that currently provide accommodation to students under 18 years of age. The college completes a detailed risk assessment if students are accommodated in facilities for those aged 18 and over. Students' personal possessions and money are protected. All bedrooms have appropriate locks fitted and students are able to keep any personal items safely stored in the finance office. Students are happy with these arrangements. All lodges are maintained and presented to a good standard. There are plans for the lodges to be redecorated and refurbished in the near future. All students commented that they are very happy with their accommodation. All bedrooms are of single occupancy and have full en-suite facilities. There is a residential handbook that outlines the services provided and code of conduct. There is adequate heating, lighting and facilities for students to undertake their college work. There is an on-site laundry facility available to all students. The welfare of students placed by the college in host families is safeguarded and promoted. There are robust policies and procedures in place. Host Contracts and Student Contracts with host families have been completed. Annual inspections of the host's accommodation are undertaken by the accommodation team to ensure a safe environment is being provided. Host families report very good support from the college. Appropriate Criminal Record Bureau checks have been conducted. Students were extremely positive about the accommodation provided and reported that very good relationships exist between them and the host families. The welfare of the students is safeguarded and promoted whilst accommodated away from the college. Detailed risk assessments are conducted as needed and visits are made to ensure the accommodation is suitable.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The college has an excellent range of information that is made available to students and their parents in relation to the welfare, accommodation and policies and procedures provided by the college. The college keeps individual records relating to relevant health and welfare matters. Individual care and support plans are developed based on the information provided and risk assessments are completed if needed. All records are well maintained and kept secure. Personal information is treated confidentially and access is restricted on a needs to know basis. There has been recent changes in how the accommodation and welfare of students is managed. The college is committed to ensure that the services provided are of a high quality and the management team are continually reviewing the services that are provided. There is a good

process for self-assessments and the management team are very professional in their approach to this. There is clear leadership of residential provision in the college. The accommodation and welfare of students is managed by the Head of Learner Services. There is a Senior Tutor who is responsible for the direct line management of the wardens and the services provided for students under 18 years of age. Wardens commented that they feel very well supported and consulted. All staff have a thorough induction programme and there is a staff disciplinary procedure. The college has a crises management policy to safeguard students welfare. The college is extremely pro-active in promoting health and safety and risk management. Risk assessments are conducted and are regularly reviewed. Accidents are audited by the health and safety manager and then forwarded to the College Principal for agreement. The students are well supervised during free time. There is information in the accommodation application pack that details the extent at which the college monitors and supervises students during free time. There is an entertainments and activities programme and a wardens' duty rota to ensure that adequate support is provided to students. Students are fully aware of the signing in and signing out procedure. There is a missing persons procedure and parents and police are contacted if needed. The college does not provide accommodation to students under 18 years of age during holiday periods. All staff have a job description and complete an induction that includes matters relating to child protection. First Aid training is provided and dates have been set for staff who require this training. Staff receive regular appraisals and records seen demonstrate that wardens have appropriate experience and training. There is a detailed staff handbook that contains the appropriate policies, procedures and guidance.

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
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Recommendations

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

- ensure that the complaints procedure given to students contains the contact details for Ofsted (NMS5)
- ensure that the outcome of all complaints consistently reflect the college's records and those that are conveyed to complainants (NMS5)
- ensure that the college makes direct contact with each referee in order to verify all references received. (NMS34)

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.