

Chichester College

Inspection report for further education college

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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

Chichester College is a general College of Further Education located in the city of Chichester, West Sussex. The college also owns a site on the outskirts of Pulborough, known as the Brinsbury campus. The management of both sites comes mainly from the Chichester site although there is a manager at Brinsbury. Education facilities and accommodation including home stay, are based on the two sites.

The college is one of the largest of its type in England and caters for students from the UK and abroad. Accommodation for 16 to 18-year-old students is on site and in host families at Chichester and in home stay at Brinsbury. Accommodation consists of single and twin-bedded rooms. Home stay provision is in the Chichester area close to the college and also close to Brinsbury.

Summary

This announced inspection was carried out over three days by two social care inspectors. Pre-inspection information was gained from a variety of people including the Principal, the students who live on site and in home stay accommodation, the Police Community Support Officer, health related professionals and Government/Education officials from overseas countries such as the Falkland Islands and the Ascension Islands. Sixty student returns were received overall.

The inspection looked at improvements since the last visit in November 2006 and all the Key National Minimum Standards for Accommodation of Students under 18 by Further Education Colleges.

The college has two sites, Chichester and Brinsbury and the report reflects the outcomes for both; it is written jointly.

The inspection evidenced the amount of work the college has undertaken since the last inspection to now achieve an overall rating of outstanding, especially in the areas of staff recruitment and child protection and safeguarding. Improvements made as a result of recommendations made at a visit carried out in November 2006 are commented on in the 'Improvements' section

The setting has achieved outstanding in five of the six outcome areas in the report, with the sixth being good. One recommendation has been made.

Young people raised concerns around two areas; food and friends not being allowed in the halls of residence. The food is an area that the college is very proactively addressing and one that continues to improve. The college has thought long and hard about friends being allowed in the halls of residence and have come to the conclusion that safeguarding has to be the overall priority. Young people do have other areas on the college site where they can meet friends after college.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

A visit was made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection in November 2006 to look at areas identified in a previous inspection. These areas included staff recruitment and child protection. It was noted during the visit in November 2006 that the college had made good progress in ensuring staff recruitment procedures were robust and that child protection procedures were placed high on the college agenda. This inspection confirmed that the college has developed further these two areas and now functions to an outstanding level.

Since 2006 the college has put in place a policy where all host families and their family members over the age of 16 have an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check.

There is now a manager at Brinsbury with responsibility for child protection concerns. Child protection training is now part of the Corporate induction to ensure all staff are well informed of the college policy and procedures. Awareness has been raised with child protection and safeguarding embedded into the college's practice.

The new director of 'student success' was introduced in September 2007 to focus on ensuring that the student was at the centre of everything the college does and to pull together all the welfare support across the college to a centralised area. This works extremely well with excellent outcomes for young people.

Recruitment procedures have been tightened up since the last inspection with the HR department continually developing systems to ensure robust procedures are in place. All contract staff are in receipt of a CRB obtained via their employer. All college staff have a CRB check supported by other employment checks such as qualifications and references. Following a review of the recruitment process the college is currently implementing a number of changes to further enhance their robust procedures.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Students receive excellent standards of health care throughout their stay at Chichester College. Pre arrival health information is gained together with consents for emergency and non emergency treatment. All students are encouraged to register with a local General Practitioner and dentist as appropriate. The local General Practitioner's surgery will visit the college site at the beginning of term for students to register. There is a large variety of professionals young people can access and liaise with for unforeseen situations that may occur during their stay at the college. Those students who have accommodation in host families in the community are also able to receive this excellent standard of care. There is an excellent joint protocol between welfare in accommodation and health to ensure their health is maintained. The college actively promotes national health campaigns with excellent information displayed around site relating to health education. The recent, very positive move to introduce chlamydia testing on site is an indication of the college's response to the needs of this generation. Young people receive outstanding pastoral care and support with good links with numerous agencies and professionals. Staff are tuned into the different cultural issues that young people have providing the appropriate support. The on site counselling service is very well used and seen as an integral part of the college provision.

The college has a clear and robust policy on drugs, alcohol and substance abuse. Staff are well informed of its contents and the referral/disciplinary process in place if needed. Evidence shows that the college is vigilant and determined in dealing with any drug, alcohol or substance abuse matters. Close communication with other agencies allows staff to refer students on for specialist help if appropriate. The college has recruited a full time Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) jointly funded by the college and local police, who is also vigilant in dealing with any issues or suspicions at both sites.

Each young person has a welfare interview with the halls supervisor and this has been a very good development since the last inspection together with student tutor support provision.

There is good first aid provision with on going training for staff, including qualified nurses who are actively involved in health promotion sessions. All halls of residence staff will have completed a first aid qualification by April 2009.

Welfare plans are currently being developed further with a new draft plan in place. Any student with a specific health or welfare concern will have a care plan in place for staff to follow and monitor. Any identified areas relating to specific health needs for staff training are addressed.

Catering in general is very good. Feedback from students identifies some areas that the college needs to improve and is considering. The catering department and college staff are very pro-active in listening to and making changes in line with students' views and ideas. Such an example is the amount of money students get each day for their food allowance; this is being increased in September 2009. The college acknowledges the importance of continuing with food focus groups and may wish to carry out further surveys to get a current overview of students' eating habits. Students are able to purchase snacks in the halls of residence and have a good variety of food outlets in the college itself, from roast dinners to jacket potatoes to Paninis. A shop on site also provides food for students to buy. Special diets are catered for with excellent liaison between the college staff and catering department. Overall there is good promotion of healthy eating options within all outlets across the college areas. The change of supplier for water has meant that the college is now contributing money to a charity who provides water wells in India.

The catering is provided by an external company and was been subject to an environmental health inspection in August 2007. Three minor recommendations resulting from it have been addressed.

The catering staff are robustly recruited and have a full CRB check.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Young people at Chichester College are fully protected from harm and abuse. Robust policies and procedures together with excellent practice provide protection to a high standard.

The college has a clear policy on bullying and do not tolerate it at any level. There are clear links with external support to manage and offer guidance on incidents of bullying. During the inspection no student raised any concerns about bullying. Evidence showed one or two incidents raised previously had been addressed swiftly and effectively. Chichester College is the only Further Education College in West Sussex involved in a bullying support project, where a case

worker from the local authority comes on site and works with the students around bullying. The college's grievance policy outlines the college's policy on harassment at work, and outlines what type of behaviour is acceptable and what is not.

The college has a clear, robust policy and procedures on child protection and safeguarding. There are two designated staff with responsibility for ensuring all procedures are correctly followed. One is based at the Chichester site and another at the Brinsbury site. Both work closely together and attend regular training. All staff receive good quality training on child protection issues and records show referrals are made to the appropriate agencies for investigation, with the college liaising closely with them. Records show no child protection referrals for young people accommodated at the college, but numerous entries for day students. Records are clear, well maintained and stored securely. Each year the college produces a safeguarding report to present to the governing body for monitoring. Governors also receive training in safeguarding.

There is a clear policy for students on expected standards of behaviour. Residence agreements are in place between the college and students who live on site or in host families. Woodlands, the on site accommodation building, has its own handbook for students that has information about behaviour expectations. During the inspection the inspectors noted the excellent behaviour of all students and the high level of respect shown to each other and staff to be commendable.

The college's complaints procedure is comprehensive and visible for students to access. Students stated they would happily go to their halls supervisor, student tutor or any member of the college staff if they had a complaint. Any complaints received are dealt with by senior staff with the Principal dealing with the more serious. Information is made available for parents/carers to make a complaint and followed through by senior staff.

The college last had a Fire and Rescue Service inspection in November 2008 which resulted in one recommendation that has been addressed. Record show that regular fire drills take place and all students spoken with knew of the evacuation procedures. Effective records of all fire appliances and emergency lighting are kept.

Supervision of students is not intrusive and respects their privacy. Staff patrol the grounds and buildings but do not intrude on students or their individual bedroom or toilet/washing accommodation.

Young people are protected from harm by the college's robust recruitment procedures firmly in place. Much work has been undertaken since the last inspection to ensure recruitment procedures are robust and consistent. Contract staff are in possession of a full CRB check. All college employed staff have a CRB check at the appropriate level supported by other employment checks such as qualifications and references.

Students are protected from unsupervised contact with adults who have not been subjected to the college's complete recruitment checking procedures and have to sign in and out of the halls of residence to ensure staff know where they are and also for fire safety reasons. Suitable security measures are in place to prevent unauthorised access by the public to students' residential accommodation. The college has closed circuit television on the premises and campus. Young people did raise an issue where they are not allowed to invite their friends back to their accommodation and after considerable discussion with senior staff it was felt the reasoning

behind this was satisfactory. The college feels the balance between keeping young people safe and allowing friends (which could be numerous as there are approximately 100 students in Woodlands) into the residential setting is outweighed by the college's need to protect the students. Students do have other areas on site where they can meet friends during the evenings.

The college employs a PCSO who stops people and asks for identification if necessary; this was seen during the inspection.

Students are protected from hazards with very good risk assessments that are detailed, agreed and signed off. Risk assessments cover all high risk areas and activities which are also closely monitored.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The college provides 100% commitment to providing each individual student with the appropriate support to enhance their individual journey whilst at the college. Support is provided by college staff, student tutors, accommodation staff, college counsellors, two specialist mental health team workers from West Sussex County Council, and anti bullying case workers. Students spoken with during the inspection were very clear that they had numerous members of staff they can confidently turn to for personal guidance or with a personal problem. The introduction of the student tutors has proven to be effective and is seen as a positive by students. Communication systems between staff supervising accommodation, student welfare and teaching staff are excellent. Staff are fully aware of the need for student confidentiality if necessary.

The college does not inappropriately discriminate on grounds of gender, disability, religion, cultural background, linguistic background, political beliefs, sexual orientation or academic or sporting ability. College documentation demonstrates an appropriate approach to equal opportunities and avoidance of inappropriate discrimination of all forms. Students who live at the college come from numerous overseas countries with many from the Falkland Islands, the Ascension Islands, Cyprus and Germany. The college has an International Centre that works closely with all college departments. Language officers are employed, for example, who speak Japanese and Chinese, plus many staff have a second language. The college has excellent support systems for students who need support with complex learning and/or physical difficulties.

The promotion of non discriminatory practice is evidenced in the admission and enrolment policy, rigorous disclosure procedures, a structured and effective approach to learning support, student feedback, awareness campaigns and attendance at the West Sussex Equality Forum. Student tutorials also raise awareness of cultural differences. Other documents such as the student code of conduct, core values and behaviour, enhance the embedded practice seen throughout the inspection. The college has a equality and diversity operations committee who monitor an action plan in place. All staff receive training on equality and diversity during induction. The college is working towards the 'two ticks' award for equality and diversity.

Young people enjoy a wide range of leisure activities that they have a voice in choosing. The college's enrichment programme involves numerous departments providing a very wide variety of activities, some paid for some not, that students enjoy. Feedback from students confirms they enjoy the activities on offer. Records show an excellent uptake of all activities. Staff are very positive and to be commended for their commitment and forward planning to ensure all

programmes are student friendly. There is excellent inclusion by the Student Union, seen as an integral part of college life, and funded by the college. All areas link together well and are very centralised. Examples of activities include paint balling, go karting, ice skating, adventure weekends, skiing, camping and themed parties.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

There is an outstanding number of avenues for students to contribute to their life at college, for example a residential focus group, a food focus group, student council, termly welfare interviews, student tutor sessions, student surveys during induction at the end of the year, suggestion box in the halls of residence, the student centre and learning resource centre, student representative groups and the student complaints procedures. Through discussion with both young people and staff it is clear that staff take seriously students' opinions, views and concerns and act on them with feedback given to the young people. The student voice is strong and numerous changes have been made as a result of their voice throughout all areas of college life.

The college enables students to contact their parents and families in private. Telephones are provided together with computer links enabling electronic communication. Since the last inspection more telephones have been installed and students are asked to agree to published terms of usage for IT equipment. Records kept clearly show contact details of parents/carers. Most students use mobile phones to maintain contact with family/carers. The college welcomes support from families and maintains links with international families through designated liaison officers.

The pre arrival information available to students and parents is excellent. College staff regularly visit countries such as the Falkland Islands and Cyprus to ensure good communication and deliver information about what the college can provide. Students confirmed that the information matches the realities of attending and living at the college. The college also works closely with agents and make visits to lessen the risk of poor placements. There is an excellent induction programme for all students supported by handbooks and information relating to life at the college. Information is pertinent to different areas of college life, such as the on site halls of residence, home stay accommodation, the academic side of college life, and leaving college. The college is currently enhancing their programme of transition and progression and has a working party in situ.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

The organisation of the boarding provision across the college is excellent. It maximises safeguarding through structured support including effective management of student placements, rotas and supervision. Students either live on site in the Woodlands halls of residence or at home stay accommodation in the local area. At the satellite college, Brinsbury, students live in home stay and not on site. All accommodation offers appropriate gender segregation that is very well managed. Accommodation for over 18-year-old students in the same home as those under 18 is carefully considered with the under 18s' parents giving consent before such an arrangement can go ahead. This applies to home stay arrangements.

The home stay department works to a very high standard and is very robust in areas relating to both recruitment and support. Inspectors heard of excellent examples of host families receiving considerable support, guidance and advice when needed. The matching programme is excellent with individual likes and dislikes considered. There is excellent management of students' wellbeing through regular rigorous reviews and monitoring of accommodation provision. Students placed by the college in home stay lodgings are protected by the same robust procedures as on site provision.

Visits to home stay families evidenced the very good standard of provision. Woodlands, the accommodation building on site was also visited and seen to be of a good standard.

The toilet and washing facilities are currently being upgraded as part of an on going rolling programme, with some more in need of replacement than others. There are sufficient numbers of toilets and showers with some rooms having en suite provision. Other areas are also subject to a rolling programme of replacement such as mattresses and white goods. Woodlands does not currently provide provision for students with disabilities, for example, special toilet or washing facilities.

The college has procedures in place to protect students whilst accommodated away from the college site and on a short stay basis. All off site stays are robustly risk assessed and signed off by the Senior Management Team, monitored and reviewed. Examples include trips to Dartmoor expedition centre, Naval Air Command Mountain Centre, Eurosport, skiing trips, and walking in the Peak District. Records showed clearly planned and managed off site activities ensuring temporary accommodation is sufficient with appropriate risk assessments and checks undertaken before stays are arranged. There is currently a project improvement team reviewing off site visits and activities procedures to ensure training is provided to all staff planning and undertaking trips and provide increased levels of support across the college for staff involved.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding and is commendable in a setting as large as Chichester College. Each individual student is treated with respect and helped through their individual journey by fully committed staff, policies and procedures that all embrace equality and diversity in full. All staff have a two hour awareness session on equality and diversity during their induction programme. Events organised around the college include Cultural Awareness Week and International Week.

The college has a clear statement of principles together with a vision statement. There are also numerous booklets for both young people and parents plus individual leaflets for international students. The literature is focused and together with media information states the nature of student support and residential provision in a clear manner. All information states what the college matches in reality. Leaflets available include a guide for host families, a student counselling guide, the Woodlands halls of residence handbook and a booklet for international students titled 'Before you leave home' that contains excellent information relating to visas and entry requirements, what to bring with you, health care in the UK, adjusting to UK life, general college information, Chichester and beyond, and useful contacts.

Throughout the inspection all records and risk assessments viewed evidenced how the college contributes to the students' welfare. All risk assessments and records are routinely monitored by senior staff and fully considered.

Supervision of students is very good and students know who is on duty at all times. Staff and students treat each other with respect. Clearly the students appreciated being treated as young adults and the respect they gained. There are low levels of staff turnover and those interviewed and observed during the inspection presented as extremely professional, caring and fully committed.

Staff have specific responsibilities reflected in their job descriptions. All staff undertake a very good induction programme followed by regular supervision. The openness of the senior staff at the college enables all staff to feel comfortable in sharing difficulties/information.

There are very clear policies and procedures for staff to follow in relation to residential welfare. These are a regular agenda item on the 'Every Student Matters' operations committee who report to the Governors quality and curriculum group. The Governors meet three times a year and are fully supportive of the staff and young people and in providing protection across the whole college site.

The leadership and commitment to residential provision is strong and progressive and fully supported by all staff including Governors. Communication between directors of each department is excellent and shows the individual needs of each student as the paramount driver. Sharing of information between departments is well established, clear and open.

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):

- implement the draft care plan for students with specific health or welfare needs (NMS16.4).