

# Hartpury College

Inspection report for further education college

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<b>Inspector</b>	Thomas Webber
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<b>Address</b>	Hartpury College Hartpury House Hartpury GLOUCESTER GL19 3BE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01452 700283
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Malcolm Wharton
<b>Head of care</b>	
<b>Head / Principal</b>	Malcolm Wharton
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	10 March 2008

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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**

This is an agricultural college providing further and higher education. It is situated on a 360 hectare site in the heart of a shire county. It has equine, animal, sport and outdoor education courses. It is located near a large town which is about five miles away. Students have access to a regular minibus service to the town which is provided by the college.

At the time of inspection there were approximately 523 residential students aged from 16 to 18 years on site. There are currently 971 residential students on campus with an additional 109 students in off site accommodation. Both further and higher education courses are available to non-resident students.

The vast majority of accommodation provides students with single bedrooms together with en-suite facilities. There is also accommodation without en-suite facilities which is available at a lower cost which is reported to be of assistance to some students.

Students under the age of 18 are not permitted by the college to self cater. They have their meals in the refectory or other eating areas around the campus. Kitchens are situated in each accommodation block and equipped with a fridge, microwave, kettle and toaster. All students take responsibility for their own laundry within the laundry facilities provided for which there is an additional charge.

### **Summary**

This announced, key inspection took place over four days. The inspection covered all the national minimum standards for further education colleges for students under 18. This forms part of the inspection programme to examine the standard of care and services provided to students.

The college is very well organised and provides a very positive residential experience for its students. The care practices established by the college ensure that good to outstanding outcomes are achieved for students, where an excellent standard of care is provided to them. This was endorsed by comments made by students, their families, staff within the college and observations made during the inspection.

The recruitment practices are not sufficiently robust for the protection of students and therefore the overall rating is good with some outstanding aspects.

The overall quality rating is good.

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

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

No recommendations were made at the last random inspection on 10 March 2008.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The college has established robust policies and procedures relating to under-age drinking, substance abuse and the possession of obscene material. The college takes effective measures

to protect students from illegal activities as well as to respond promptly to any incidents of misuse reported and or discovered. The college maintains close and good working relationships with the police.

The college has established a robust system to identify the specific health needs of the students prior to and on admission to the college. The college has excellent arrangements in place to identify and support students who may have medical, health or personal support needs. Comprehensive health care records and a confidential student health record is kept with restricted access. Students are registered with a doctor of their choice either locally or they retain their family doctor. Students can also access emergency dental or other health care services as required. There is a full time, qualified nurse employed by the college who has access to a designated doctor for professional guidance and consultation. Students receive excellent information and guidance in promoting sexual health with weekly clinics being held at the college. Excellent support is also provided to students in these areas of practice.

Students confirmed that they are fully aware of these services and also spoke very highly about the level of support in relation to the counselling, sexual health and health advisory services. Students were unanimous in their comments that if they sustain an accident or injury first aid is available and if further treatment is required they are supported and taken to hospital if needed. Most staff, including all wardens, are trained in first aid.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are established for the management of medicines. Students normally administer their own medicines and are provided with lockable storage facilities for the control of this. However, where students require staff support in this area of practice, only trained staff would perform this task.

A small sick bay is established for all students at the college. Students suffering from significant illnesses would either go home or be supported in their bedrooms. If they choose to remain at the college, then they would be closely monitored and supported by the wardens. There are excellent communication systems established between the wardens, educational and health staff.

The college provides students with a wide range of choices at all mealtimes. The menus demonstrate that students are provided with a balanced, healthy and nutritious diet. Dietary, medical and religious preferences are catered for and vegetarian and international options are also provided. There are systems established where students can comment and make suggestions in relation to the food provided. Students comments regarding the quality and quantity of food provided varied. Some students are very happy with the current arrangements. However, a large number of students expressed concern about the repetitiveness of menus, the quality and healthiness of food provided and the cost of purchasing meals. Catered accommodation is provided to students under 18 with each common room being equipped with facilities to make light snacks. However, some students purchase their own food rather than eat in the refectory and other eating areas. The college is being responsive to negative feedback from the students and are currently reviewing practices to address concerns raised.

Students have access to food and drinking water and other refreshments in addition to the main meals. Students are able to prepare simple snacks and drinks in their common room within their accommodation. The college provides a number of vending machines which also provide drinks and snacks.

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

The provision is good.

Clear and robust policies and procedures on countering bullying and harassment are established. These are well known to both students and staff to ensure that students are protected from bullying and harassment. The college takes bullying very seriously and all reported incidents are investigated and are promptly dealt with. External speakers provide students with presentations on bullying and anger management. Generally, students do not currently see bullying as a particular area of concern within the college.

Robust child protection policies and procedures are established to protect students from abuse. These comply with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. All staff have received varying levels of training in this area of practice. There are clear nominated persons for matters relating to child protection. A high profile is maintained within the college with posters being displayed and staff receiving regular refresher training. Comprehensive and detailed records are maintained of all child protection referrals.

The college has established a clear student disciplinary policy in relation to the management of unacceptable behaviour and breaches in discipline. The college manages negative behaviour appropriately and detailed records are kept of all offences and sanctions applied. Very good recording and monitoring systems are established in relation to the use of college discipline. The use of discipline within the college is seen as being fair by students. Students were very pleasant and polite during the inspection.

Clear policies and procedures are established for dealing with complaints. A number of complaints have been received from both students and their parents about a range of concerns. Records show that all complaints are suitably recorded, responded to and addressed without delay. Students are supported to raise any issues of concern openly and the process of making a complaint is clearly understood by them. Students identified a range of staff with whom they felt comfortable going to should they have any concerns.

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. During the inspection some repair work was identified as needing attention and this was promptly dealt with by the college.

Students' privacy is fully promoted by the college. There are clear policies established for staff accessing students' bedrooms and for room searches. Staff were observed to knock and wait before entering students' bedrooms. Appropriate door locks are fitted to all toilet and washing facilities where en-suite facilities are not provided in students' bedrooms.

Appropriate policies and procedures are established for the careful selection and vetting of all staff working at the college. However, these procedures are not always consistently applied prior to new staff commencing employment at the college. These include the lack of enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks, verification of references, proof of qualifications and maintaining check of identity against an official document on staff files. These deficiencies are being addressed by the college. Visitors to the college are supervised at all times.

There is restricted access to all the residential accommodation and students carry key fobs that control the individual access to their accommodation. Students' accommodation is appropriately monitored by the use of closed circuit television and the wardens and security staff regularly patrol the site. However, these activities provide security to protect students without compromising their privacy. Students are satisfied with these arrangements which help to keep them safe.

Students are given reasonable protection from safety hazards. The college has a very robust health and safety policy and this is promoted in all areas of college life. Windows presenting a significant risk are fitted with restrictors. However, where students remove these, the college takes prompt action to replace them.

Environmental risk assessments have been conducted and are regularly reviewed.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The college has sports academy status and has its own excellent equine centre which is used by students throughout the week. The college provides an outstanding range of sports and recreational facilities for students as well as delivering an abundance of other activities and trips which students can choose to engage in. The college actively consults and promotes any suggestions made by students. Clear survey systems are established within the college to monitor and evaluate the range of activities that are provided. The students' safety and welfare is promoted during high risk activities. Detailed risk assessments are conducted prior to such activities taking place.

Students receive excellent personal support from a variety of sources. Students spoke very positively about the personal support they receive from the wardens, personal tutors and other services readily available to them. They described these services as being very helpful and supportive. The Student Services Department is well organised and provides focused help and support to students. The counselling service is well used. Students are fully aware of the services available to them as there is an abundance of literature and posters. The college has extensive written information for students in a variety of mediums with useful telephone numbers being available. Excellent communication systems are established between staff supervising student accommodation, student welfare and teaching/lecturing staff to support the safeguarding and promotion of students' welfare. Necessary information regarding students that does not unnecessarily breach student confidentiality is well communicated between these groups of staff on a need to know basis.

Students do not experience inappropriate discrimination whilst living at the college. College documentation confirms that equal opportunities and the avoidance of inappropriate discrimination are firmly embedded into the culture of the college. There is clear evidence that students with additional needs are well integrated into the college community. Appropriate support mechanisms are in place for students where English is not their first language.

Students have access to a range of recreational areas at the college. There is limited communal space in each accommodation block. However, a specific common room for under 18s is available providing a wide range of recreational and leisure facilities which is effectively managed by the college's youth worker. The college is exploring the possibility of providing students with additional communal space. Students have access to their bedrooms at all times.

## Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Students are enabled to contribute to the operation of the residential provision through a range of forums. Student representatives attend formal committee meetings and regular block meetings are also held. Students also complete surveys on a regular basis to express their views. Students are also supported to express their views on a day to day basis. Students commented positively that their views are listened to. However, some students commented that they are not always aware of the outcomes of their suggestions. This is acknowledged by the college who are taking action to address this area of practice.

Students maintain private contact with their families and friends. Each block is provided with a landline telephone, however, students tend to use their own mobile phones for calls and texting. A telephone is available in the Student Services Department for international calls. Email facilities are also available to students although the college acknowledges that there are occasions where there are problems with the wireless access. Feedback from parents confirms that the students can keep in touch with them with most students spending weekends at home. Excellent systems and protocols are established by the college to maintain contact with parents if there are major welfare issues.

The college actively encourages parents to visit the college and its residential provision before students start at the college. Regular presentations are held at the college and parents are invited to attend these. The college also offers taster courses for prospective students who are under 18.

There is a clear and robust induction programme for new students where they receive comprehensive information about all aspects of college life. There is a clear student handbook that covers areas including curriculum, behaviour management and discipline and health and safety. Each student is provided with their own USB stick which contains comprehensive details about the college.

The college also supports students to write their curriculum vitae in preparation for leaving once they have completed their courses. Mock interviews are also arranged to provide students with experience. Local businesses are invited to provide presentations to the students regarding work opportunities. Exit surveys relating to students' residential provision are currently being considered by the college.

Very positive and relaxed relationships exist between students, wardens and their tutors. This was observed during the inspection and was reinforced by comments made by the students themselves. Any concerns identified by students in relation to the conduct of staff, are promptly and effectively dealt with by senior management within the college.

## Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is good.

Students' residential accommodation is separated by gender and age. There is some variation in the standard of student accommodation on campus. However, there is a price difference, which is reported to be of assistance to some students. Students are all provided with locks to their bedroom doors, in addition to the electronic 'fob' lock to each residential block.



Student living accommodation is generally of a good standard. These facilities provide sufficient natural light, heating and ventilation. The accommodation blocks are adequately decorated and are kept clean and tidy. A good system is established for any repairs and maintenance required. There is limited communal space in each accommodation block. However, a specific common room for under 18s is available which provides a wide range of recreational and leisure facilities together with a coffee bar and this is supervised by wardens when being used. The college is exploring the possibility of providing students with additional communal space.

The vast majority of accommodation provides students with single bedrooms together with en-suite facilities. Although, room sizes can vary, students are provided with sufficient storage space for their clothes, together with private study facilities. Bedroom doors are provided with suitable locks. Students have personalised their bedrooms to their individual tastes. Students are happy with the accommodation provided.

All students are provided either with en-suite facilities or wash hand basins in their bedrooms. Toilet and shower facilities exceed the required standard. Appropriate locks are fitted to all doors to promote privacy and dignity.

There are arrangements to ensure that students' clothing and bedding are adequately laundered. There are adequate laundry facilities available which can be accessed by students to undertake their own laundry, although they have to pay to use these facilities. Most students tend to take their dirty laundry home.

The college shop offers a selection of basic food, stationary and personal items which students can purchase. The nearest shops to the college are in Gloucester. A regular minibus service to Gloucester is provided to the students by the college.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Diversity and equality are promoted very effectively in all aspects of the service. Personal support systems are equally available to all students and there are policies in relation to equal opportunities, inclusion, promoting diversity and tolerance.

The principles of the college, including the residential provision and support to students, are clearly set out in a variety of documents. These are readily available to both students and their parents and are supported by comprehensive policies and procedures and other documentation for staff which reflect the current practice at the college.

There is clear management and accountability for the accommodation and welfare of students under 18 who are resident at the college. The leadership of the residential provision is effective and maintains a strong commitment to ensure that the services provided to students are of a high quality. The management team are continually reviewing the services provided and there is an exemplary practice of regular self-assessment and quality assurance system for this provision. All staff with student accommodation and welfare responsibilities receive an appropriate induction programme. There is also a clear staff disciplinary procedure which is well established. Concerns raised by students in relation to staff are promptly and effectively dealt with.

The college is extremely pro-active in promoting health and safety and risk management. Risk assessments, sanctions, complaints and accidents are suitably monitored. The use of risk assessments and monitoring of records contribute to students' welfare.

Students are adequately supervised by staff during their free time, which provides an appropriate gender balance of staff. There is information in the accommodation application pack that details the extent to which the college monitors and supervises students during their 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 procedures established by the college.

Staff responsible for those students under 18 have specific residential and welfare duties which are clearly set out in their respective job descriptions. All new staff complete an induction programme which includes matters relating to child protection. Staff are supported to develop their skill and expertise by attending relevant training courses. Personal development plans are established for all staff which identifies future training needs. The support arrangements for staff with residential and welfare responsibilities are good. Regular team meetings are established which provides opportunities for staff to meet with colleagues and their line managers. A specific appraisal system is being established for their role as wardens whereas this was previously linked to their academic role.

Students, who are under 18, are looked after by a staff team who are provided with clear up to date written guidance on the college's policies and practice for the supervision of residential students and the safeguarding and promotion of their welfare. These are documented in the comprehensive staff handbook produced by the college.

## 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):

- review the frequency of repetition of menus and continue to monitor the quality of food served (NMS 22.3)
- ensure that appropriate recruitment procedures are followed for all staff prior to them working with students under eighteen (NMS 34.2)
- ensure that all windows that may pose a risk to students are fitted with effective restrictors. (NMS 42.2)