

Farleigh Further Education 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

Farleigh Further Education College is based in Swindon. The college provides education for young people aged post 16. The college is part of the Priory Group and Priory Education Services provide specialist post 16 provision for young people with Asperger's syndrome, autistic spectrum disorder and accompanying difficulties. The young people are able to access mainstream education which is delivered in partnership with local mainstream further education colleges. The college aims to meet the needs of young people, with differing levels of cognitive ability, ranging from those with moderate learning difficulties to university entrants. The college offers residential provision in four comfortable residential homes. Support for the young people is also provided on campus at the local further education college in its learning and resource centre. This supportive college environment enables the young people to work towards independence via a range of learning opportunities. Young people follow a structured daily programme. At three of the residential provisions the young people are increasing their independence and are able to look after themselves, in areas such as self catering, with staff support. Fairview House is the administrative and therapeutic centre.

Summary

This announced inspection took place on 17 to 20 May 2010. Prior to the inspection questionnaires were sent to young people, parents and other individuals involved with the young people accessing the service. The inspectors received 18 young people questionnaires and three from parents. During the inspection the college central records were inspected as well as records held at the four residences and the learning support centre at Swindon College. Young people's individual records and staff files were also inspected. Inspectors met with staff and young people.

The overall quality rating is outstanding.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the college has acquired two additional residential accommodations for the young people. The college continues to develop and improve the service it provides for the young people placed and their families. The college has implemented all of the 13 recommendations from the 2007 inspection. These include a review and update of processes and procedures relating to all medical matters which have been fully implemented. Risk assessments are very detailed, frequently reviewed, updated and implemented. The procedure regarding fire issues has also been reviewed and implemented. The recruitment vetting and selection process is very robust and this is demonstrated in the comprehensive information held on staff files.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The college has excellent policies and procedures regarding under age drinking, substance misuse and obscene material. The college's approach to these matters is very practical and sensible. Staff know that some of these areas will affect the young people in their care and that they will need to address them. The training provided in this area for the staff team is extremely comprehensive and is frequently updated. Work with young people is either tailored

to individuals or small groups. To assess the effectiveness of the work with young people the staff carry out an evaluation of the young people's knowledge before and then after the sessions. Young people interviewed said that they were aware of the college's views and expectations in these areas. The young person's handbook also clearly states the college's policy on these issues.

The college has the appropriate first aid boxes in all of its sites, which are regularly monitored. The young people receive high quality first aid and medical treatment. They have easy access to doctors and dentists. Young people are also able to stay registered with their GP at home. Young people are supported by staff in attending medical appointments but this support is tailored to the individual young person and in consultation with them. Young people's wishes on what level of staff support they receive when attending medical appointments respects their right to privacy. Staff receive training at an enhanced level regarding the administration of medication. Comprehensive records are kept on all medication administered to young people and these are regularly monitored. If an issue is identified or a drug error occurs there is a clear system in place where the member of staff concerned will be re-trained and then re-assessed before being able to administer medication. Medication is appropriately stored and refusals and disposal of medication are clearly recorded. The college has an appropriate policy and procedure which allows young people to self administer their medication which includes a robust risk assessment and sessions with the young person on how medication must be handled. Young people's files all have medical consent forms. The college robustly records all young people's accidents and illnesses.

Young people said that staff look after them very well when they are ill. This was supported by the response to the young people and parental questionnaires.

The college provides excellent support for young people with special medical and/or personal needs which is delivered by the staff with great sensitivity. These needs are assessed and form part of the risk assessments for individual young people. Where an individual need has been identified the college has access to speech and art therapy. Staff can also access an occupational therapist where required. The college provides an excellent course for young people on sex education which again is tailored to the individual. Any additional support that a young person may require will be accessed for them.

Food on all sites is excellent. Menus are well balanced, very varied and individual dietary needs are catered for. Young people are able to have input into the menus. In three of the residences they are responsible, with staff input where required, for cooking one evening meal per week. During the day young people have access to the Swindon College cafeteria. Young people said that the food at the college was very good. At one residence they said if they did not like what was on the menu the chef would make them something else. At all of the residences the dining areas are well furnished and pleasant. Each of the sites keeps clear records of fridge and freezer temperatures.

Young people have good access to drinking water, snacks and food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The college has very robust clear policies and procedures to counter bullying. These are supported by comprehensive recording systems detailing any event or suspicion of bullying. Young people

in their questionnaires and in discussion did not identify bullying as an issue and said that it would not be tolerated at the college. Throughout the college there are posters and information regarding bullying. The training of staff and the pro active work undertaken with the young people is excellent. This covers all aspects of bullying including cyber bullying. Again the level of understanding and knowledge of young people is evaluated before and after the training or work. Staff demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the policies regarding bullying and the actions to be taken.

The college has excellent policies and procedures regarding child protection which have all been ratified by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board with whom the college has a very good working relationship. There is an excellent staff training programme on child protection with staff receiving regular training updates. This training is delivered both in house and externally. There is also a comprehensive programme of work with young people on staying safe including use of the internet. Again the level of understanding and knowledge of young people is evaluated before and after the training or work. Staff interviewed had an excellent working knowledge of the colleges policies and procedures on child protection. Comprehensive records are kept where a concern is identified. The college has a clear policy on appropriate relationships between staff and young people of which staff are aware. Young people said that they felt safe at the college.

In their questionnaires and in discussion with young people they said that they felt discipline in the college was fair. The college has excellent policies and procedures which provide staff with guidance including a list of what sanctions are permissible and who can give these. The main focus of these is positive reinforcement. Both staff and young people were well aware of this guidance. Young people have been fully involved in the recent review and amendments to the college's behavioural and sanctions policy. The college has the appropriate systems in place to record sanctions and restraints. Young people's behaviour during the inspection was excellent. They were very polite, helpful, courteous, accommodating and a pleasure to spend time with. They are a credit to themselves and the college. The college has a comprehensive policy and procedure on restraint with staff having received the appropriate training which is frequently refreshed. Two members of staff are training to be restraint trainers. The staff also receive training in non violent intervention crisis techniques.

The college has a comprehensive complaints policy and procedure of which the staff and young people have a good working knowledge. Evidence was seen of comprehensive records of complaints which provide a clear audit trail.

Young people and staff were clear on what action should be taken if there is a fire. Records evidenced that regular fire drills and checks on fire equipment are carried out. Current risk assessments are in place and staff and young people have received the appropriate training.

The college has an excellent risk assessment process which is supported by a comprehensive policy and health and safety documentation.

All the young people said that the staff respected and promoted their privacy. This was witnessed during the inspection as staff said that they needed to ask the young people's permission before entering their bedrooms. The majority of the bedrooms have en suite facilities; this further promotes privacy for young people.

The college has an exceptional recruitment process which ensures the safety of the young people. Staff personnel files contain all the information required plus additional information required under the college's procedures. This includes a clear audit process and trails. No adult has access to the young people prior to their enhanced CRB clearance being received by the college. This includes volunteers who are subject to exactly the same checks as members of staff.

The college has clear procedures about visitors' access to all of its sites. At all sites visitors have to sign the visitors' book and are issued with identification badges. Also all visitors are given a fire briefing on entering each site.

As stated previously the college has excellent risk assessments which are frequently reviewed and updated. There are comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Young people at the college have the choice of an excellent range of age appropriate activities. There is a timetable of activities in to which the young people have input. This timetable is regularly reviewed and updated again with the young people's involvement. Young people were seen to be genuinely excited about the activities on offer. Due to the large number of staff on duty the college is able to offer a large number of activities each evening. This also provides the opportunity for individual activities.

Staff at the college provide the young people with excellent support throughout the entire day. This support is tailored to the individual young person's needs and also their requests for either support or independence. These individual packages of support are regularly reviewed and updated with the young person's involvement. Young people have access to a college councillor, personal tutor and their learning support worker. The young people's handbook contains the phone numbers of help lines and organisations young people may wish to contact. There are excellent communication systems in place between all staff who work with the young people.

The college has a clear senior management structure which includes a Principal, Head of Care, Head of Education, Head of Therapy and the Senior Team Leader. Both young people and their parents are very positive about the support provided by the whole staff team.

The college has excellent policies and procedures on diversity and equality. There is an appointed equalities and diversity co-ordinator and an equality and diversity committee which involves young people. Meetings are held to discuss a range of topics including race, colour recognition religion, sight, and font size on documents. All the college information for young people is available in the appropriate accessible formats. Information is provided to young people on contact details for local ethnic groups, religious groups and other community groups including contact names and the aims of these groups. The majority of the college residents are male but there was evidence of clear respect for the different genders from the young people as well as the staff. The chef has themed food night incorporating foods from different cultures. The college also celebrates significant days from different cultures, disability week, autism awareness day and comic relief. Again the level of understanding and knowledge of young people is evaluated before and after the training or work. The college environment and furnishings promote equality and have been adapted to in response to individuals needs.

No onerous demands are made on young people.

The common rooms in all college sites are well furnished and comfortable. The lounges at all the residences are very homely, comfortable and welcoming.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Each of the residences holds regular young people's meetings and there is a student council. Young people are also member of the equality and diversity committee and the health and safety committee. Minutes are kept of all these meeting. Young people are also involved in the review and updating of the colleges policies. Young people said that they felt these systems were very effective. Also within the minutes of the staff meetings there was evidence of consultation with the young people. The college carries out annual surveys of young people and staff so as to gain their views and input. This information is then collated and influences the plans for the coming year.

Young people are able to maintain contact with their family and friends. Most of the young people at the college have mobile phones. They are also able to use the walkabout phones at the residences if they wish. Young people said that there were no problems in contacting family or friends. Parents also said in their questionnaires that there was good contact with their son or daughter and the college staff. Young people's friends are able to visit the college but there is a clear code of conduct which all the young people knew and agreed with as it respects all who live at the houses. The college actively encourages parents to visit and be involved in life at the college.

The college has an excellent induction process which is a strength. There is a pre admission open day so young people can come and meet the staff and see all of the college sites. Clear concise information is provided for both young people and their parents. There is a staggered admission process of young people which includes introduction meetings designed to ease the stress felt by the young people. The young person's hand book is at the core of the information provided to the young people. Young people said they felt that the college's induction process was good and made them feel at ease, welcome and well supported.

The staff and young people relationships are excellent. These were observed throughout the inspection. Staff treat young people with respect and courtesy and this is reciprocated by the young people. Young people are extremely positive about the staff they work with. They see their relationships with the learning support workers as key to their life and progress at the college. This was reflected in the young people's and parental questionnaires. Some said that Farleigh College was a fantastic place, the best they have ever been to.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

The organisation of the residential provision does safeguard the young people's welfare. The college carefully selects the groups of young people for each residence. The college does accommodate under and over 18 year olds in the same buildings, however this is carefully risk assessed and reviewed. Also this only happens where there are single bedrooms. There are no discrepancies in the accommodation and facilities for different genders or different houses.

All young people have their own bank accounts. On occasions when young people wish to save with the college they have an appropriate pro forma for recording this. The pro forma includes both young people and staff signing all deposits and withdrawals.

The accommodation at all of the residencies is of a high standard. The furnishings are homely, comfortable and welcoming. Young people said they really liked their accommodation and some said they have been involved in purchasing items for their house. Young people are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and also have input to the communal areas. All bedrooms are well furnished, lockable and have adequate storage. Bedrooms are well ventilated, heated and lit. The college has a rolling refurbishment and development programme.

The majority of the residences have en suite bathrooms. These and the shared bathrooms are of a high standard, well equipped and decorated. All have the appropriate locks.

All the residences have good laundry facilities. Young people are supported in doing their own laundry where required.

Young people have good access to the local town centre so can purchase what they need regarding personal items and stationary. Young people especially at three of the residences are supported and enabled to buy and cook their own food.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The college has a clear Statement of Purpose which contains all the required information and reflects current practice. This cross references to other policies and procedures at the college which provide young people with clear information on the standard of conduct and behaviour and specific rules and prohibitions which they are expected to follow. This information is also in the young people's guide to the college.

The college keeps clear medical records which contain comprehensive medical histories on individual young people. These records clearly identify specific health needs including any disability and action required to assist individual young people. These are supported by robust policies, procedures and comprehensive staff training. All information regarding young people is stored securely.

The college has a clear management structure with management roles and responsibilities being identified. The senior management team meet on a regular basis to discuss the management and development of the residential provision. Minutes are taken at these meetings. Staff spoke extremely positively about the senior management team. They said they were very supportive and very approachable. The staff said they felt valued and listened to. The college has an appropriate disciplinary process for staff; this includes support for staff who are subject to the disciplinary procedure.

The college has a robust self assessment process for the work it undertakes which is used to inform future development and training. There is an excellent induction and training programme for all staff. This covers all aspects of caring for the young people and working for the Farleigh Group. Training is seen as essential for the development of its staff team. Staff said that there are set courses that the college expect all staff to undertake but if they found a course of

particular interest to them that would benefit the young people, they can apply to do the course.

There is a comprehensive policy and procedure for the management crisis.

The college has an excellent risk assessment policy and procedure which includes a detailed risk assessment pro forma. All risk assessment are regularly reviewed and updated at least each term.

The staff to young people ratio is excellent. Staffing levels are regularly reviewed and adjusted to meet the young people's needs with input from young people to monitor the level of supervision and adjust this as appropriate as the young people become more independent. The level of staff supervision for activities with young people is excellent but it is again tailored to the individual young person's needs and independence. The college ensures that there is always a first aid qualified member of staff on duty. All staff teams have a good gender, age and experience mix. All of the residencies have waking night staff. The staff at the college clearly record information on young people including the comings and goings between each site. Young people said they always knew who was on duty and how to contact them. Staff have all the young people's mobile numbers and ensure that all the college's numbers are in the young person's mobiles.

All the staff files inspected had a copy of current job descriptions. There is a robust system of supervision and appraisals which takes place at the required intervals. Staff said that although they receive regular formal supervision they also receive a lot of informal supervision. As stated before in this report there is a comprehensive staff induction programme.

The college provides excellent comprehensive guidance, policies and procedures for its staff relating to the welfare of the young people they care for. These help to promote consistency of care. These are frequently monitored for effectiveness, reviewed regularly and up dated where required. All the college's policies and procedures are written not only for the staff but for the young people and their families or carers.

The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. Evidence supports a consistent and proactive commitment to equality and diversity. Young people receive an individually tailored service. Equality and diversity forms a part of all the college's policies and procedures and is at the heart of the work they undertake. Young people are members of the equality and diversity committee. The college and the young people promote positive role models both within the college and in the community.

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

There are no recommendations.