

# Walford & North Shropshire College

Inspection report for Further Education College

---

|                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC060608                  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 14/03/2011                |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Lynne Busby / Robert Curr |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Key                       |

---

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Setting address</b>         | Walford & North Shropshire College, Walford Hall, Walford, Baschurch, SHREWSBURY, SY4 2HL |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01691 688000  |
| <b>Email</b>                   |   |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Walford & North Shropshire College  |
| <b>Head/ Principal</b>         | Andrew Tyley  |
| <b>Nominated person</b>        | Jon Parry   |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b> | 05/02/2008  |

---

© Crown copyright 2011

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

You can obtain copies of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters and The National Minimum Standards for Children's Services from: The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

## 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 outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

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

## **Service information**

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

Walford and North Shropshire College was created in 2001 as a result of a merger between Walford College, primarily a specialist land-based college with its main campus near Baschurch and the North Shropshire College, a tertiary college with its main campus in Oswestry.

The Walford campus offers term-time residential accommodation for students between 16-20 years with priority being given to students attending land-based courses for whom daily travel presents particular problems. The campus also provides the residential base for two football academies with trainee players living on site.

### **Summary**

The overall quality rating is good.

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

This was an announced inspection to look at how the college promotes and safeguards the welfare of residential students under 18 years. An assessment was undertaken of how the college has implemented the recommendation made at the last inspection.

The residential aspect of the college is well managed and the senior management team are supported by a governing body who are driving improvements forward to ensure the students have a positive experience. Health needs of students are well met with a range of accessible services available. Students are safeguarded by staff who are aware of the policies and procedures and follow them in practice. Students benefit from excellent levels of support from a range of people.

The shortfalls from this inspection are identified in the outcome areas.

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

The college governing body was asked to confirm timescales for making appropriate resource provision for the maintenance and development of student residential accommodation. The college have invested in a new building which houses 24 students. This is well equipped and appointed and provides students with individual en-suite rooms and a dining kitchen. The other buildings are on a continuous programme of improvements and updating.

## **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is outstanding.

Students' health and well-being is effectively promoted because there is good communication between all staff at the college with welfare responsibilities. These arrangements help ensure strong support for students whilst keeping sensitive issues private and confidential. Students health histories are known from the point of enrolment and health issues are not a barrier to attending the college. The wardens hold confidential medical records as necessary and there is effective monitoring of accidents and illness. No medicines are administered on site and students are responsible for the storage and self-administration of their own medication. Staff have completed first aid training.

Students are supported in relation to any health or personal problems; they are able to confidently identify staff who they can go to for advice and support. In addition, students have access to a confidential counselling service and visiting health professionals who can sign post students to other services as required. This means that students can choose from a wide range of ways to access health information, services and help. In addition there is an excellent tutorial system which provides students with information and opportunities to discuss health issues such as smoking cessation, alcohol and drug misuse.

Students benefit from a good quality catering provision which supplies nutritious and well balanced meals. Students are encouraged and supported to maintain a healthy diet because thought and consideration is given to menu planning. Students are able to express their choices and preferences and they are actively educated about healthy eating. Menus are varied and realistically reflect diversity and provide for any special dietary needs of students.

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

The provision is good.

Students live in a safe and secure environment where their welfare and protection is conscientiously monitored and promoted by staff. Students are carefully supervised to ensure their whereabouts are known so staff can be confident that they are safe. Students protection is promoted through a clear and comprehensive set of policies and procedures which support good safeguarding practices. Staff have a clear understanding about their responsibilities in respect of keeping students safe. However, there is no specific guidance for adults that live on the site but do not work at the college in relation to their standard of conduct. Therefore, this does not ensure they have clear information about contact with students and supervising visitors.

The arrangements for child protection is well managed. There are designated child protection coordinators who are clear about their roles. There are effective working relationships between the college and the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the

local authority. Staff have had training in safeguarding and demonstrated a good awareness of the procedures. The students who act as mentors also receive training in child protection and were very clear on appropriate action to take if they suspect or receive any allegations of abuse.

The college has a clear policy on countering bullying and harassment. Students do not report bullying as a concern but say that staff will challenge any forms of bullying. The college has clear and appropriate policies and guidelines relating to behaviour and discipline. Students are encouraged to maintain appropriate behaviour through the minimal use of sanctions and an ethos where respect and consideration for others is encouraged and promoted. Students show respect towards each other and to the residential staff; they are well behaved, friendly and represent the college well.

The students say they are clear about the complaints procedure and identified a number of ways they could raise a concern which include approaching wardens as well as other staff in the college. Students are clear that they are listened to. Complaints are taken seriously and are swiftly acted upon.

The privacy of students is respected. Students say that staff knock on doors before they enter. Room checks or searches may be carried out if there is a sound reason staff are concerned about the welfare of students or others. However, there is no written guidance for staff on this. Therefore, it does not provide clarity to staff.

Students health and safety is promoted well with a robust and systematic approach to assessing risks and taking actions to ensure the college and residencies are safe. Students are protected from the risk of fire by rigorous safety precautions and well-trained staff. Regular fire evacuations take place and all fire safety equipment is checked and serviced in line with the necessary requirements. Students demonstrate a very good understanding of the college's evacuation procedures which helps to them keep safe. There are a range of risk assessments undertaken for activities, in order to minimise risk. Written permission is obtained for unsupervised activities away from college. However, this is not explicit and does not include activities organised by students themselves, such as travel arrangements.

Overall, there are robust recruitment and selection processes in place to make sure students are safeguarded. Arrangements are also in place to ensure the college is aware of people who are on-site that need to be monitored or supervised such as contractors. There are some minor shortfalls in recruitment practices when compared to the national minimum standard requirements. For instance, existing employees who are employed into other roles are not subject to the college's full recruitment and selection processes. These circumstances do add a small element of risk in determining the suitability of staff to newly appointed positions.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Students at the college benefit from excellent levels of personal support. There is an established network of support systems across the college which students are made aware of via written information that also includes contact details of external support agencies. Residential staff ensure that they are available to students when required or called upon. There is an excellent system of peer mentors who support other students who need help with academic work. In addition there is a 'buddying' system which helps students who need support in other areas. There is a dedicated pastoral team and the communication between tutors and wardens is seamless, which promotes students well-being.

The college's policies outline and demonstrate a clear commitment to deliver and promote services in relation to diversity and equality of opportunity. Students live and learn in an environment where social inclusion is important and discrimination in any form is not tolerated.

There is a range of activities provided for the students which they can choose to participate in if they wish. There is a range of recreation areas including a club house which has table tennis and pool table and a bar but this only offers alcohol to over 18s. There is a sports hall and grounds providing for outside activities.

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

The provision is outstanding.

The college actively seeks the views and opinions of students. They benefit from the college having a variety of ways in which they can express their views and influence the way in which the college operates. These include hostel meetings, the election of student representatives, college council, student surveys and specific focus groups such as equality and diversity. There is also a governor with responsibility for the residence who has begun having meetings with students to seek their views for future improvements. Students at the college feel appropriately consulted and involved about matters affecting them. Consultation arrangements within the residencies provide an excellent example of the college's ethos of working in partnership with students.

Students say they have generally good relationships with the staff and communication between them is positive. Students can maintain contact with their parents and families. Most have mobile phones and access to email. There is pay phone available that is conveniently located and offers some privacy. Parents say that staff at the college are good at keeping in touch with them particularly if there are any welfare concerns. Parents and students are encouraged to visit the college and discuss the arrangements for accommodation and supervision before they arrive as students.

## **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is satisfactory.

The newly-built accommodation block ensures a very appealing and comfortable environment for the students allocated a room there. However, some of the other student accommodation remains basic but comfortable, reasonably furnished and maintained. The residencies are kept clean and tidy and some areas have benefited from recent decoration. Close attention is paid to the allocation of accommodation so needs in relation to gender and age are appropriately considered. Overall, the accommodation and some fixtures and fittings are tired and dated especially in some communal areas such as kitchenettes and lounges. The college and students make the best possible use of the available accommodation. Students are able to personalise their own rooms with posters and personal possessions which makes the accommodation feel more homely and personal.

The showers and toilets are located in the older residences are close to bedrooms and offer privacy. The new building all rooms are en-suite. There is a laundry on site for students to launder clothes and bedding.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

There is effective management and organisation within the college which ensures good student welfare. There is plenty of essential information for students and their parents about the college and accommodation arrangements, helping to make arrivals, induction and departures a smooth process. The information provided by the college gives a detailed and comprehensive picture of campus and residential life.

There is a strong senior management team who are supported by a governing body to drive improvements which safeguard students and ensure their experience is a positive one. Staff are capable, experienced and dedicated and have an induction and training which gives them the skills and knowledge to work with the students who are resident. There are good policies and guidance which is kept under review and is known by staff, this helps ensure that students are well looked after during their time at the college. There is a staff handbook which includes the colleges approach to safeguarding.

Students welfare is promoted by appropriate monitoring systems. Managers have a clear overview of the residential operation which helps to ensure that students are cared for in a consistent and safe manner.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good. Staff are provided with clear guidance about anti-discriminatory practice and expected standards of professional behaviour. The college provides an environment where students differences are acknowledged, they are treated fairly and with equal concern. Staff actively promote students social inclusion within the college and wider community.



## **What must be done to secure future improvement?**

### **Recommendations**

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

- ensure that all adults resident in college accommodation, including those not employed by the college receive guidance that clearly sets out the standard of conduct and probity expected of them as residents on college premises (NMS 34.3)
- ensure room checks or searches guidance is produced for staff (NMS 33.3)
- ensure written parental permission is obtained for students under 18 to participate in high risk activities organised by students themselves while accommodated by the college such as travel arrangements(NMS 27.7)
- ensure recruitment checks are carried out on staff members who had taken up a post in addition to an existing post (34.4)
- continue with the planned programme to ensure that all students accommodation is suitably decorated, furnished and equipped. (36.1).