

Hartpury College

Inspection report for further education college

Unique reference number	SC046577
Inspection date	02/10/2012
Inspector	Wendy Anderson / Clare Davies
Type of inspection	Full

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Information about the college

This is an agricultural college providing further and higher education. The campus is situated on a 360 hectare site a short distance from the local town to which students have regular mini bus access provided by the College. The campus is extensive and includes a working farm, an equine unit, a small animal unit and specialist sports facilities. The College also offers an extensive range of A level courses.

Students are aged from 16 upwards and at the time of inspection there were approximately 577 residential students under the age of 18 years. 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.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Summary report

Overall effectiveness of the provision	outstanding
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Outcomes for young people	outstanding
Quality of service	outstanding
Leadership and management	outstanding
Safeguarding	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **outstanding**.

The residential provision is an area of excellence. It meets and exceeds a significant number of the National Minimum Standards and provides numerous examples of outstanding practice which are worthy of being disseminated to the sector. The residential provision is exceptionally well managed. The recommendations from the last inspection have been met. In particular, the systems for monitoring the fitting and maintaining of window restrictors and the process for the recruitment of staff have been exceeded.

The safeguarding and well-being of the students is seen by all staff as their core business and there is robust evidence to support this is what happens in practice. Equality and diversity is embedded throughout all aspects of College life. This is closely linked with safeguarding and the students' well being.

Staff have very high expectations for the students in their care and the records on student achievements provides clear evidence as to the added value of being a resident. The College not only focuses on their academic achievements but on their development as an individual and as a positive member of the College and wider community.

Outcomes for young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Overall outcomes for students is outstanding. Excellent relationships exist between the students and the staff which are appropriate and based on mutual trust and respect. These are supported by excellent pastoral arrangements to ensure that students are treated as individuals and their dignity and right to confidentiality is respected by staff who deal with all issues with great sensitivity.

Students feel safe at the College and feel that the security arrangements are appropriate and not intrusive. They understand and appreciate the reviewed signing in procedures and know that these are there for their safety as staff had thoroughly explained this to them.

Students are very proud of and 'love' their College and said they would happily recommend it to others. They appreciate that they are 'fortunate to be living in such an amazing environment with fantastic facilities.' They are actively involved in organising social, sporting and cultural events as well as pursuing their chosen hobbies and interests. Staff and students encourage each other to pursue their interests and to take the opportunity to try new things and have new experiences.

The College has a relaxed happy atmosphere with lots of laughter and banter between students and staff. The behaviour of the students observed was exceptional and there is robust evidence of the added value of the residential experience to those students who are non-resident. This includes residential students achieving better academic results than other students thus having a very positive impact on their individual development and future opportunities. Examples of this include a major increase in some students' confidence and self-belief. Students are given numerous opportunities to develop their personal skills including communication and leadership, which not only enables them to have an impact on life at the College and the community in which the College is located but also equips them for later life. Community involvement enables the students to develop an understanding of being part of and contributing to their local community as well as enabling them to be coaches and mentors to other young people.

Students said they received the individual support they need. A number of students made very positive comments about the College counsellor. One said, 'I would never be as confident and happy as I am today without the input from the Counsellor.' International students have a dedicated staff team and this provision is important to the students who reported that their maturity as well as their language skills have vastly improved since being placed at the College.

Students are enabled to keep fit and healthy and are given ownership to manage their own medication. Support and advice on healthy living are readily available through common room discussion, support from the College nurses and the College welfare team. Students have access to the College's exceptional sporting facilities. Those students who are part of the elite sporting academies encourage other students to take part in their chosen sports.

Quality of service

The quality of the service is **outstanding**.

The College has outstanding pastoral arrangements for the students which fully support the students in all aspects of their College life. The basis for this is the strong relationships the staff have with the students which enables them to provide support to the individual in a sensitive manner, with dignity and observing the individual's right to confidentiality and privacy. This work is enhanced by the exceptional facilities the College has both on site and their access to external professionals. The residential provision is an area of excellence that has direct impact on the outcomes for students.

The College has an outstanding induction processes which ensures each individual student is robustly assessed prior to placement. This coupled with the exceptional documentation supplied by the College prepares students well for life at the College and what the College expects from them. This process also clearly identifies where a student needs any additional support enabling this to be available for the student on commencing their placement. Where a need is identified then the relevant services/support is put in place. Where required an individual care plan is produced with the students and parents full involvement. These plans are clear, focused and kept under frequent review which enables their effectiveness to be monitored. Academic staff are also involved in this process and on occasions will take the lead. International students and their parents receive a visit from a member of the College staff in their home country as part of this process. They felt this was very good and much better than just an exchange of emails.

The academic and residential teams work holistically to ensure the students receive the best possible service from the College. This is a major strength of the College. Both aspects of the College have very high expectations of the students and this is made clear throughout the application and induction process.

The College provides outstanding leisure, sport and extra-curricular activities for the students. These are age appropriate and enable the students to develop skills for later life as well as having fun. The appointment of the FE Association will further enhance the students' involvement in this area. The students are involved in a number of projects both in the local and wider community which have included collecting fire wood for villagers, being Olympic stewards, conservations projects and repairing a tractor which then went to an African village. These projects provide students with excellent opportunities for personal growth and development.

There is a robust policy and procedure for managing complaints which is supported by clear records. There have been very few complaints since the last inspection. Those that have happened have been thoroughly investigated and resolved. It is also evident from the complaints records where lessons have been learnt, policies and/or procedure have been reviewed to incorporate these.

Students are able to maintain good contact with their families and friends. Staff too have built good relationships with students' parents. This is based on open communication and good availability.

The College is extremely student focussed and the students are at the heart of all their practice. A senior manager summed this up by saying, 'Students must be at the core of everything we do.' This attitude was seen across all aspects of the inspection.

The College provided very robust evidence of the achievements of resident students being higher than those of non-residential students. Staff are very proactive in ensuring students make excellent progress and the residential provision enhances this.

There are excellent facilities and services for the students' medical needs which

include access to two registered nurses. Sexual, emotional and physical health needs are robustly met with the staff team being proactive in addressing issues such as drugs, alcohol and sexual health. All accidents are robustly recorded and reviewed so as to implement any lessons learned into future policy development.

Facilities at the College are excellent and students are happy with their accommodation. There is a rolling programme of refurbishment for the residential blocks and repairs and maintenance are carried out quickly. There is a wide range of communal spaces across the campus which the students can access. There is separate accommodation and common room areas for under and over 18s. This is to safeguard the younger students.

There are several catering outlets across the campus which provide a wide range of meals and snacks for the students. There were a few grumbles from students that menus are repetitive but no evidence was found to support this. The dietary requirements for individuals are robustly met. This includes meeting the dietary needs of elite sport persons, international students as well as those with allergies and intolerances. For example, the chef meeting with each individual who had dietary needs to ensure they are happy with their individual menus.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management are **outstanding**.

The leadership and management of the College is exceptional as the students are at the heart of all the work undertaken and thus given the highest priority. The management structure is very clear and they provide transparent leadership. Staff are very committed to providing the students with the highest possible standard of care with clear robust evidence of them reviewing, evaluating and monitoring their practice with a view to always do better by the students. During the inspection all staff were very well prepared for their interviews and took accountability for their area of work and pride in what they and their colleagues do. They also exhibit a strong drive for improvement with all asking, 'what can we do better, what next.'

There is very good effective communication across the College campus which is evident in the holistic approach to student care and development.

There is an excellent appraisal and development process for all staff which is linked to their training needs. Training within the College is given a high priority so as to continue providing a high standard of care for the students and to have a healthy challenging culture to ensure continual improvement.

There is a good staff to student ratio which is supported by a robust on call system. The staff team are experienced and very clear on their roles and responsibilities. The staff feel it is key that the students be fully involved in the College and have set up a number of avenues to gain their views. Students said that they felt their views were important to staff and that they listened.

The College has all the required policies and procedures in place which are robustly monitored and reviewed. There is clear evidence of amendments being made in light of lessons learned from events. They are available in a variety of formats which are clear and very informative. Students reported that they found these very helpful. 'Life at Hartpury' was highlighted as particularly useful for day-to-day life at the College.

All records at the College are stored securely and observe students' right for confidentiality. These records are also well maintained by staff.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding arrangements are **outstanding**

The safeguarding of the students is at the very heart of the College and they are proactive at implementing and sustaining excellent practice. Policies and procedures in this area are robust and strictly adhered to by staff. If staff do not do this then disciplinary action is taken. The Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer spoke very positively about the processes the College has in place and the staff who operate these. The College has a cross campus safeguarding team which meets weekly to discuss cases and procedures. Records on safeguarding are stored securely and information is shared only on a need to know basis. The students are also able to identify which member of staff they wish to be informed of what is happening. The College provides robust training for all staff across campus and this ensures staff are kept up to date with current practice. Those with the lead on safeguarding attend multi agency training run by the Local Authority. Additional training has been put in place for those staff who are going to take part in trips off the College campus especially residential trips. Students and parents also receive a briefing on safeguarding. There is robust evidence of policy, procedure and training schedules being amended from lessons learnt from safeguarding issues.

The College consistently operate a robust recruitment and vetting procedure for all staff. This is supported by comprehensive records. To safeguard students all staff, students and visitors to the campus must wear identification badges at all times. If not worn then people will be challenged. All under 18s are clearly identified on their identification badges. Any adult who lives on campus has to undergo an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Check (CRB) and code of conduct. There is a very clear code of conduct that all staff sign with a similar one for any contractor working on site. Regular contractors are CRB checked and those contracts who are not, are supervised at all times by College staff. There is an identified taxi firm who are CRB checked for the students use.

There is a key fob system used by the students to check in and out of their residencies. The system produces a report upon request which identifies who has or has not checked in. This enables the staff to monitor unobtrusively and ensure students' safety. The system can also highlight any students who may be of particular concern for example one with health issues. The College has developed an on-line system for parents to be able to check their son/daughter out for weekends.

The College has excellent behaviour management systems in place. Clear information on these are within the documentation provided to students. These policies and procedures are kept under review as are the records of disciplinary matters so as to identify and address any trends. Serious incidents are robustly addressed and appropriate records kept. Students felt that sanctions were fair and they were clear on what they were. There is the right balance between freedom, trust and responsibility. Where there are any concerns, behaviour contracts are developed with individual students. There is clear policy and procedure concerning bullying and social media bullying which are robustly implemented. None of the students felt that bullying or racism was an issue at the College.

The College has a good working relationship with the local Police and the local community Police officer visits the College on a weekly basis. They have been involved in the briefing to students around bullying, racism and other topics.

There are excellent risk assessment processes across the College campus. These are frequently reviewed and amended and are done with the involvement of the students wherever possible to develop their understanding of managing risk. The College has been commended by the Government Fire Officer on its risk assessment process and subsequent actions in preparation for the summer ball. The risk assessments are supported by outstanding health and safety policies and procedures to ensure the safety of the students. Security at the College is robust with additional security staff being employed for special events.

At the last inspection there was an issue with window restrictors not being present on all the required windows. This has now been addressed and is supported by a robust system of monitoring by staff to ensure the restrictors stay in place.

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 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the inspection framework and the evaluation schedule for accommodation in further education colleges.