

# Moulton College

Inspection report for further education college

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## Information about the college

This college is an independent Further Education Corporation regarded as a land-based establishment providing a wide range of education and training for adults and young people. Its operations are carried on from a number of sites, but its principal campus is in a rural village setting reasonably close to a town, main railway link and motorways.

The college admits some students, including those aged under 18, on a residential basis depending on their circumstances and to facilitate its open access policy. Some 18 units of accommodation are provided including six dedicated to students under 18 and one accommodating male and female students aged 18 to 24 who have learning difficulties. Male and female students under 18 are accommodated separately. Their accommodation provides single bedrooms with en suite and shared bedrooms with no more than two sharing. Each unit of accommodation for this group of students has a communal sitting area. These students are catered for on a half-board basis. They are provided breakfast and dinner but, like all other students, purchase lunch from one of the many college cafeterias. Students have access to laundry facilities in or adjacent to their accommodation.

Health care, social, sports and recreational facilities are provided on the campus together with a range of welfare support services. At the time of inspection there were 95 resident students under 18 and a significant number of them contributed via the pre-inspection survey and formal and informal contact during the inspection visit.

### 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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the provision</b>	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 overall effectiveness of the residential experience for learners is outstanding. Residential learners are safe and say they feel safe. Safeguarding practices are central to residential life which ensures the safety of all residential learners. Learners benefit greatly from the provision of an operational police officer on the welfare team.

The national minimum standards have been fully met and many exceeded. Additional recommendations have been made where the college can improve further but there are no breaches of the national minimum standards.

Recommendations made at the previous inspection have been fully complied with. The college has continued to improve since the last inspection and this is a fundamental part of their culture. The leadership and management team have a highly developed understanding of their strengths and weaknesses.

Equality and diversity is an integral part of college life. All staff are aware of their responsibilities for promoting an inclusive culture which recognises the value of all staff and learners. Learners say there is a mutual respect between staff and learners and among themselves.

A parent said: 'I have recommended the college to other parents.'

### What should the college do to improve further?

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

- develop the multi-faith room to be a more comfortable and inviting space for learners (additional recommendation linked to NMS 17)
- provide learners with information with regards to the origins of their food. This specifically refers to the provision of Halal chicken (additional recommendation linked to NMS 22)

- review information for staff to ensure it is reflective of current good practice. This specifically refers to the administration of medication policy, the physical intervention procedure and the lack of a disposal of illegal substances policy (additional recommendation linked to NMS 31)
- provide robust evaluation and interrogation of data for residential services (additional recommendation linked to NMS 8)

## Outcomes for young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Outcomes for residential learners are outstanding at this college. Learners thoroughly enjoy their residential experience. They have strong relationships with the welfare team and each other. Learners say 'I love it', 'We respect each other', 'Wardens are literally like friends' and 'Like a big family at the end of the day.' Learners talked about a mutual respect between learners and wardens.

Learners feel they are fully supported to make exceptional progress. The residential provision supports them to achieve this. For example, it enables them to easily attend their courses. Learners state they experience a highly inclusive residential provision mixing with learners from other courses.

Learners are actively encouraged to take an interest in looking after their health and leading healthy lives. The promotion of a healthy lifestyle is successfully integrated into how the college operates. Learners are educated on how to live a healthy lifestyle through enrichment sessions that cover healthy eating, exercise, environmental issues as well as drug and alcohol awareness.

Learners are actively encouraged to contribute to the running of the college. Their views and opinions are valued, which provides social cohesion and a strong college identity. Learners say that the college is helping them to be responsible and independent by effectively communicating with them about matters concerning their lives, progress and future. There is also a learner presence on college groups such as the equality and diversity group. Additionally, learners have the opportunity to express their views regarding their progress and barriers to achievement via their course manager who oversees and coordinate their care and education. Furthermore, learners are actively involved in the running of the college and any developments or changes to college life. For example, learners were asked their views about the new build and refurbishment of the resident blocks and social centre.

Residential learners demonstrate exemplary behaviour on the whole. However, the college takes a firm stance regarding the use of illegal substances and underage drinking while remaining supportive of learners whose behaviour may be of a temporary nature. Learners are protected from bullying and harassment by effective staff responses tackling any form of discriminative or oppressive behaviour. They report that bullying and harassment is not an issue for them.

Learners are fully supported with their successful transition into higher education and employment. Course managers provide regular and formalised support to individual learners. This support is reinforced and enhanced by welfare support officers who support the learners in their enrichment and residential activities. Learners have good access to information about careers and accessing universities.

### Quality of service

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

The quality of service provided to residential learners is outstanding. Individual support to learners is given high priority by the college. Learners benefit from living in a college where both teaching and non-teaching staff are focused on the learner's success, needs and achievements.

Staff work in a very encouraging and supportive manner, and consequently the care, social opportunities and educational achievement are exceptional. Learners are very clear which members of staff they can go to for personal support and freely initiate interaction and seek help from a variety of staff across the site. These include the learner's allocated tutor and the welfare support team who ensure their continual care needs are met. A learner said, 'Wardens actually genuinely care.'

Learners receive a good induction into the college. This includes a Fresher's fortnight where they are encouraged to attend a variety of activities to get to know each other. Learners said they enjoyed this experience. A parent said, 'Learner welfare has been brilliant' with regards to helping their child settle into boarding at the college.

Learners participate in an increasing range of sports and activities. The developing programme of social events provides learners with opportunities that encourage them to achieve educationally and socially to their fullest potential.

Resident learners benefit from a high standard of accommodation. All accommodation is well equipped to meet the needs of learners. Learners and parents express a high degree of satisfaction with the standard of the accommodation believing it to provide the necessary facilities and equipment for their comfort. For example, accommodation for those under 18 is separated from that for older learners and all provide en suite study bedrooms. Some learners have additional needs such as disabilities and the college accommodation has been adapted to meet those needs. The college is accessible to wheelchair users.

The accommodation is comfortable, clean, well heated and lit. All maintenance issues reported by learners are dealt with quickly and effectively. A parent said, 'He loves his bedroom. There was a problem with his door lock but he reported it and it was quickly fixed – in fact they replaced the whole door.' The ancillary staff are integral to the college's success and are involved at more than one level with the learners. For example, if cleaners find a learner ill in bed they will report this immediately to the welfare team to ensure the learner is properly looked after.

In February 2012 the college opened a new state of the art social centre which provides areas for social functions, a learner shop, a large dining hall, kitchen and servery, bar facilities, games and cinema rooms as well as a further large space to meet up with other learners and friends. This building also houses the welfare support team, the health centre, chaplaincy, counselling services and a multi-faith room.

The grounds that surround the college are vast and well maintained. They offer the learners a safe environment in which to relax or pursue hobbies, interests and sporting activities.

The college provides an environment where learners understand the value of equality and diversity and this is actively promoted. Arrangements are made for learners who wish to attend religious or spiritual services off campus including to churches or mosques. The College has a Lay Chaplain based on site who provides enrichment sessions as well as spiritual guidance. The college also has a multi-faith room. However this requires further development as it is not currently a comfortable and inviting space for learners.

Learners' physical, emotional and healthcare needs are proactively met by a multi-disciplinary staff team who are focused and committed to providing a high quality service. All learners have access to a network of specialist support including a qualified nursing team, chaplain and counsellors. A parent said, 'She was taken ill last year. The college contacted us straightaway. They worked with us to ensure she received the appropriate treatment.'

The college demonstrates a strong commitment to developing the health and nutrition of learners through a range of healthy choices at meal times. Residential learners have access to hot food choices at breakfast and dinner, with vegetarian options. Learners had mixed views with regard to the quality and quantity of the meals provided. Some matters raised by learners have already been identified by the college prior to the inspection and some were addressed immediately during inspection. Some learners felt strongly that they were uninformed that all chicken served at the college is Halal and they were not aware of this until the inspection. However, the college is committed to making sure the varied needs of the learners are consistently met and an outstanding service is achieved.

## **Leadership and management**

The leadership and management are **outstanding**.

The leadership and management of the residential provision is outstanding. Learners receive an individual service, which is designed to meet their personal needs. All staff have an in-depth knowledge of the learners they are working with, ensuring their needs are consistently met. Staff work in partnership with parents and professionals to ensure a high quality service where the ethos is centred around meeting the individual needs and aspirations of learners.

Learners benefit from a highly qualified, professional staff team who are extremely motivated and enthusiastic. Staff have access to an excellent training programme and are provided with good policies, procedures and guidance that promotes the strong values and ethos of the service. However, some information for staff could be enhanced or reviewed to reflect current good practice. Staff are caring, competent and well supported by each other and by the residential management team. They are passionate and dedicated to the work they do and to the learners.

This very positive and enabling staff team have developed mutually respectful relationships with learners. They support learners to understand and address their emotions and how these affect their behaviour and interaction with others. Staffing arrangements are organised around learners' needs and changing circumstances. This demonstrates that the staff team are flexible and work in partnership with each other for the benefit of learners. Staff effectively share information with each other so staff can provide continuity of care and have an awareness of learners' current circumstances.

The college operates appraisal and performance review systems for all staff. These identify individual's aims and objectives and training needs that then feed into the college's workforce development plan. This is designed to drive and support the achievement of college targets for a skilled and qualified workforce.

Equality, diversity and inclusion have a very high profile at the college. All staff are aware of their responsibilities for promoting an inclusive culture which recognises the value of all staff and learners. Staff have an excellent understanding of the differing needs of the client group and are flexible in adapting the delivery of services to meet those needs.

There are a range of quality assurance systems, which involve staff and learners. The residential management team ensure proper scrutiny of learners' pastoral care. Any shortfalls in these areas are identified and addressed. The college also ask for regular feedback from both learners and parents. A parent said: 'They ask for feedback on a regular basis. We have never had to raise any concerns.' Data collected through monitoring systems contribute to the reports presented to the board of governors and the college's overall strategic plan. The college does not fully evaluate and interrogate data and therefore cannot demonstrate how services are meeting the needs of all their learners. However, the college has substantial strengths and a sustained record of delivering excellent performance and managing improvement.

## **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding arrangements are **outstanding**

Safeguarding practice at this college is outstanding. It is at the forefront of practice at the college. Policies, procedures, staff practice and training continues to be reviewed and developed in line with societal trends and behaviours, changes to legislation and the needs of the learner group.



The innovative initiative of employing a police officer in partnership with the police force further enhances the safety of learners. Learners benefit greatly from her expertise during enrichment sessions, for example, drugs and alcohol. The officer provides a positive image of policing and resolutions between the college and the local community. For example, she has reduced the number of cars parked in the village and influenced the decision to extend the speed limit to encompass the college.

Learners are systematically protected from harm by robust arrangements for safe personal care. Staff thoroughly respect learners' need for privacy and confidentiality. Residential living arrangements provide space where learners can relax and easily find privacy away from others if they wish. Sensitive information is held securely and learners' issues are not discussed openly.

Learners feel safe and are safe at this college. The college's protective strategies are exceptionally strong and enable them to act appropriately when welfare concerns are suspected. All staff have robust training that covers all safeguarding and welfare issues. In addition, all key staff receive additional training relevant to their role. For example, a core group of staff from human resources and those staff involved in recruitment interview panels have undertaken safer recruitment training. The college also works in partnership with other colleges and the local authority in order to share best practice.

Staff recognise the importance of enabling learners to take controlled risks in a safe nurturing environment. This helps learners learn how to keep themselves safe in preparation for independence, how to take responsibility for their actions and the impact of their actions on others. Staff are effective at assessing and reducing risk. Learners know and understand the college rules. The welfare team actively enforce the rules to ensure the safety of learners. A parent said, 'There are clear rules if a learner is under 18 years. They have to be on site and back in their bedrooms at set times. This is reassuring. I have had telephone calls checking where she is but this has been because of her not communicating her whereabouts or miscommunication. I am please they chase her rather than just leave it.'

Staff work hard to protect learners from the impact of bullying, anti-social or intimidating behaviour and learners are clear about their right to feel safe from this. Staff are sensitive and attuned to individual needs. Good staffing levels, vigilance and working practices adopted by the college reduce opportunities for bullying to occur. For example, staff work with learners to develop their understanding of the diversity of their community and the importance of tolerance of others.

Staff follow a safer recruitment policy and ensure safety checks such as references and the Disclosure and Barring Service check are completed prior to staff commencing employment. There is an in-depth interview process where the applicant's experience, knowledge and attitudes are fully explored.

Learners expressed confidence in the safety and security of the college. There are

robust security arrangements to deter unauthorised persons accessing the learners' residence and to control access to and supervision of visitors to the wider college premises. Resident learners and parents say they value these initiatives, which include permanent security on site, swipe card access to buildings, individual keys to bedrooms and closed circuit television.

Learners learn how to protect themselves in an emergency because they regularly practise the emergency escape drill and staff receive fire safety training. The college has a team of fire wardens who all receive additional annual training. Safe procedures are in place to protect learners through tests on fire systems and other electrical equipment at appropriate intervals. Environmental risk assessments are in place to ensure the college is fully informed about potential hazards to reduce risks.

The college has thorough risk assessments for all aspects of the premises, grounds and activities, both on and off site. Particular efforts are taken to ensure that all areas used by learners are free from avoidable safety hazards. Furthermore, the college operate additional safeguarding measures such as shuttle buses between college sites. They also provide transport to work experience and enterprise initiatives early in the morning and late at night, for example, during the lambing season.

## 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 the inspection of accommodation in further education colleges.