

Shuttleworth College

Inspection report for further education college

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Information about the college

Shuttleworth College is situated in 500 acres of parkland on a self-contained campus. In August 2009 the College became part of Bedford College, and one of eight sites that make up this general further education college (GFE) offering provision from entry to university level. Shuttleworth College offers land based subjects, including equine, horticulture, agricultural and fish management courses.

There are currently 38 residential students under the age of 18 years and 22 students over 18 years. They are accommodated in five residential halls and split into under 18, over 18, male and female halls. There is accommodation suitable for a student with a physical disability. A team of teaching staff provide residential warden supervision during the evening and overnight, supported by appointed wardens from the student group and student support service staff.

There are various commercial interests also operating within Old Warden Park that are quite separate to the college, like the airfield, conference centre and wedding venue operated through the Shuttleworth Trust, who own the site.

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	good
Outcomes for young people	outstanding
Quality of service	good
Leadership and management	good
Safeguarding	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

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

Since the last inspection the college has taken action to ensure that all minimum standards are met.

Management and quality assurance is effective in driving progress to improve all aspects of the residential experience for students. This ensures that choosing to become resident is a positive decision fully supporting student learning. The benefits are measurable confirming that commendable progress is being made.

Student's safety is a paramount concern for the college. Arrangements for safeguarding and child protection are extremely well managed and particularly sensitive to emerging trends. The living environment is secure and free from hazards enabling students to feel safe. Staff exercise their protective role diligently. The quality of accommodation is good.

The quality of care provided is good and competently addresses and supports the individual needs of learners. Students have access to excellent information systems enhancing their knowledge about all aspects of the college.

The student support warden team are dedicated to their role and enjoy their supportive role with young people. The positive and trusting relationships formed is a real strength of the college residential provision.

While clearly maintaining their own identity Shuttleworth students continue to benefit from the integrated managerial approach led by Bedford College. This effectively promotes and supports the student experience by enabling access to a diverse range of resources and opportunities. Students are well motivated and complimentary about the prospects the college provides.

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 further the warden duties by providing a role specific induction programme and enhanced training related to the professional task (NMS 30.1)
- make the disciplinary policy more explicit regarding the use of acceptable sanctions or situations where reasonable force is appropriate (NMS 4.9)
- continue to improve the quality of accommodation for students in residence with particular attention to disability needs. (NMS 36.1).

Outcomes for young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Residential students make excellent progress during their stay at Shuttleworth College. The experience of living in Halls has an outstandingly beneficial impact upon

the quality of their academic studies, attendance, health and social development outcomes.

The college is imaginative and resourceful in supporting and enabling residential students to have a meaningful 'student voice' that expresses their own opinions and influences the overall quality of service they receive. Students are empowered to influence change in significant areas such as the fresher's week, developing enrichment activities during free time, reporting concerns that may affect safety and influencing college menus. This active involvement in the day to day life of the college confirms that residential students make choices and exercise influence about their experience.

One student said 'This is a really nice community to be in....it's amazing how fast we have clicked' Another student confirmed that the college had developed his tolerance and acceptance of difference by 'learning to get along with people by living together helps you see things from a different perspective'.

By receiving excellent levels of individual support within their communal residential experience students are well prepared for the transition to adult life and to higher education or employment.

Quality of service

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

The college manages complaints and continuously takes account of residential students views through different media to enhance and improve the quality of care being provided during their stays. Accessible student services staff and independent listening services are confidentially accessed, enabling the individual and collective needs of students to be heard.

Student Services and Wardens work closely and cooperatively with all other professionals across the college. The specifically developed Residential Tutor role at Shuttleworth ensures that academic programme is thoroughly supported by the residential provision. Students speak highly about the motivation and focus to achieve this support gives them. Wardens effectively communicate with and support parents to ensure that the experience of their child is positive, productive, meaningful and valued. One parent wrote 'My child has received excellent support from all staff in halls. I have seen her confidence grow. The staff have supported the whole family in supporting our child. I have a lot of respect for the staff at Shuttleworth'.

Residential wardens and Student Services staff give exceptional care and commitment by providing the key information needed to practically promote the health, welfare and social confidence of students. Staff assist students to practice self-help skills, teaching them how to become more capable and independent by providing a range of enrichment activities to improve practical skills or encourage group trust. This ensures that students become as fully prepared as they can be for

making transitions and coping with life upon leaving the college. Reflecting upon this growth a parent wrote to the college saying 'I'm extremely happy that my child has settled into college life. I was quite worried because he's a typical lad, that moving away from home would be a struggle, but he is proving to relish his new surroundings. Cooking and washing.....Wow!'

Students say that they enjoy staying in accommodation that is welcoming and comfortable. The college has good arrangements in place to integrate all students while ensuring that the provision for students under the age of 18 is separate. Halls have individual lockable rooms providing privacy and multiple communal areas where groups actively congregate and socialise. Toilets and washing facilities provide privacy and are sufficient for the number of students. Students confirm that they enjoy the experience of staying with their friends and the range of recreational and enrichment facilities they can access while living at the college. The current opportunities for improving citizenship do not maximise the potential of students. Some halls, albeit not those currently used by students under 18, continue to require renovation and refurbishment to enhance the quality of the overall provision. While being a useful asset to the college the wheelchair equipped room would benefit from a specialist redesign.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management are **good**.

The management systems and leadership under the direction of Bedford College is good. Excellent on-line and hard copy sources of information are available for students and their parents about the college and its residential provision. This enables students to know what to expect and be able to make an informed choice about the placement. Many students enrol on the positive recommendation of friends who have had exceptional experiences in the college. One student said that it was his family's tradition to attend this land based skills college.

Management of the college residential provision is effective and efficient. It provides an integral component of the college. Routines and procedures are explicit, well developed and provide consistency and stability for students actively electing to use the service. Good student assessment and pre-admission criteria means that this valuable and limited provision focuses upon serving young people and families who will receive most educational and social benefit while promoting excellent learning outcomes.

The college utilises excellent IT data collection systems. The analysis of information enables the effectiveness of some aspects of residential living to be periodically evaluated and adjusted to maximise inclusion, for example enrichment activities are designed specifically to increase participation utilising to the full existing resources. Some further development is required to better evidence how this input benefits outcomes for residential students.

Residential wardens have the necessary levels of experience and qualification. They

receive regular mandatory training opportunities to enhance their ability to provide informed safe care for students. Further development, including a specific and warden focussed training scheme, is required to enhance the value placed on these key staff. Professional supervision and support centred on the welfare of residential students, delivered by the Student Development Manager assists wardens to deliver and maintain the existing high quality provision.

The college has introduced personal development plans for young people. This process enhances staff ability to evaluate the progress of students with regards to self-esteem, independence and confidence. Wardens know the young people well and their assessment of progress in these areas is an on-going procedure. Further development is, however, needed to identify specific needs of groups of specific students, for example those young people on the autistic spectrum or having an associated condition such as ADHD. These students could benefit from having their social communication and integration needs addressed collectively as well as individually. This would inform the shaping of responsive college provision.

Bedford College is proactive and visible in addressing the diversity and individual needs of all students. Good practice is adopted by Shuttleworth and applied in everyday living situations ; for example, through provision for disability such as wheelchair use and deaf loops, broadening general understanding of learning difficulties, and the greater acceptance of cultural ethnic and sexual difference. The college effectively ensures that each residential student is practically provided equality of opportunity.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding arrangements are **outstanding**

All students including those in residence are kept safe and secure by the colleges proactive stance relating to all aspects of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training and are knowledgeable about child protection. The college safeguarding policy is explicit and made known to parents and other stakeholders. Wardens develop really positive trusting relationships with students enabling all aspects of safeguarding and child protection to be discussed confidentially and where necessary enlist and access statutory support or counselling. Young people care for each other and effectively promote the anti-bullying stance taken by the college.

Robust, protective recruitment and selection procedures ensure that only suitable adults are engaged to look after students. Students know how to report any concern they may have and are particularly aware of the risks from bullying.

The College provides a very secure and safe living and learning environment. By robustly using comprehensive risk assessments, considering and addressing all potential health and safety related hazards; including those posed by fire and traffic around the campus, students are kept safe . Residential students know what to do and who to call upon in any emergency.

Residential students display remarkably good behaviour, showing a high degree of

respect to all college staff and guests. Once students are accepted for a place in halls they quickly adapt, learning how to treat each other, and staff, with consideration, respect, and warmth. They additionally develop their understanding and tolerance of difference.

Explicit expectations, clear boundaries and positive nurturing by staff promote the development of individual growth and emotional resilience over the course of each residential students placement. Constructive affirmation of good behaviour by wardens means that sanctions or restraints are not necessary to promote good conduct. This is a real strength of the residential provision. The college however does not fully develop on this constructive feature in the existing disciplinary policy by making explicit statements about its position on the use of sanctions and physical interventions.

Students say that they really enjoy living in halls and the advantages this brings; practically demonstrating this by being kept occupied, well behaved, settled and happy. Parental feedback includes the comment 'Our child has been exceptionally happy at Shuttleworth. We are very confident that the whole environment is safe and secure, whilst giving students a great experience.'

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.