

Grantham College

Further Education College residential provision

Inspection dates		17-19 March 2015
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good-2
	Previous inspection:	Outstanding-1
Outcomes for learners		Good-2
Quality of service		Good-2
Safeguarding		Good-2
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Good-2

Summary of key findings

This college is good because:

- Good support for learners means that their success rates are higher than non-residential learners. Across all courses, residential learners succeed at 88%.
- The residential provision runs smoothly and has a reputation as a consistently good service. The residential management team is friendly, responsive, and efficient. They provide clear leadership and have the respect of staff and learners.
- Effective safeguarding arrangements ensure the college is safe place to live and work.
- Learners are overwhelmingly positive about their experience. The college promotes respect for difference and diversity amongst staff and learners.
- Positive relationships are a strength. There are high levels of mutual respect between learners and staff.
- Teaching, residential, and therapeutic staff provide robust welfare support. The residential staff team are kind and act as terrific positive role models for young people living away from their parents.
- All national minimum standards are met.

This is not yet an outstanding college because:

- Residential accommodation does not yet match the high standard found within the teaching area of the college. The college has a regular cycle of maintenance, repair, and replacement, but wear and tear is high. Furnishings, display boards, and décor could be better.
- The college does not yet provide a range of excellent-quality extra-curricular opportunities for residential learners' personal and social development and fulfilment. Leaders and managers could do more to strengthen the offer of social activities that support a sense of residential community and promote the positive values of leadership, responsibility, and well-being.

- Leaders and managers do not yet evaluate what it is about residence that leads to greater rates of success, or how the residential experience enhances learners' academic personal, social, cultural, and educational development.

Full report

What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the offer of interesting social and extracurricular activities, including planned input by additional residential staff, in residential time, to maximise the opportunities for learners to develop greater success and social development.
- Refresh the furnishings and decor in residence to encourage positive ownership of the good living space.
- Ensure the service is aware of and implements in full the statutory guidance for children who are missing.
- Ensure the crisis management plan for medical emergencies addresses residence and the lone staffing arrangements there.
- Consider a residential report to reflect the impact that residence has on learners' progress. For example, how they acquire strong interests and practical and life skills because of being a resident that add significantly to their enjoyment of life and to their employment prospects.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners	Good
------------------------------	------

- Outcomes for learners are good and this is clear from their college achievements. They say they know 'staff really mean it' when they advise them about their futures. They say staff want them to succeed for themselves, not for the college's results. They express great positivity about life in the halls and their relationships with residential staff. They say staff treat them fairly and they have encouragement to do well.
- Relationships with staff are a positive aspect for learners. One overseas learner described his good experience of staff care as, 'encouraging.' Another described staff's reminders to study, or eat better or sleep earlier as 'good nagging'. They say they have a good balance of freedom and that they like the staff, and, 'have a laugh with them'.
- Behaviour is generally good and managed without sanctions or formal discipline because of the level of mutual respect and tolerance. Learners say the rules are fair and they accept adult authority. Staff talk equably to learners and they respond in kind. One learner said staff 'don't treat us like kids.'
- They have good support to keep healthy and good information about local health and wellbeing services, including about sexual health and relationships. They feel confident asking residential staff for help, saying they have a 'better understanding of young people'.
- Learners feel they have changed since coming to the college. They talked about how they can now cook and look after themselves. One learner found it had helped him to become more independent by, 'being amongst friends and being able to make my own decisions.'
- They make new friends, across nationalities and across the wide range of learners within the college community. They learn tolerance and respect for learners with intellectual and physical disabilities as they share communal dining areas and facilities during and after the college day.

- The university-style residential experience prepares learners well for the next academic stage of their lives. Those apprentices, not heading for university, have a university campus type experience while they prepare for the more immediate world of work.
- Elite table-tennis players and enthusiasts can live and breathe the game each morning, evening and weekend, perfecting their skill to national and international level, while achieving good results at A levels and BTECs becoming self-reliant about their diet and fitness regimes.

Quality of service	Good
---------------------------	------

- The quality of service is good, but there are aspects that could improve. The residential accommodation looks dull or a little shabby in places, despite a regular programme of maintenance. Furniture is second hand, televisions are dated, and not all are reliable. Kitchen windows are bare. Some ceiling tiles are stained and some are broken. There is little artwork to reflect a wider, diverse world. Display boards are boring. One learner described it as 'basic, liveable'.
- Apart from enjoyable Chinese New Year and Christmas multi-cultural celebrations, there are few organised social activities in residential time. There is no planning or time to help learners acquire new skills, such as cooking, or to develop social and cultural interests while away from home. Some are living in a foreign country for the time and may want, or need, some extra time with the residential staff.
- The college opens its sports and restaurant facilities to residential learners at the end of the college day. They have free use of the well-equipped gym. Many learners have busy training and study schedules and the majority are happy to find social or leisure activities locally, spending time with friends, or shopping. Some learners talked of having plenty to do: 'Always out and about, everything is here.'
- The college shapes the residential provision, care, and support according to the needs of the different groups of residential learners. All have equality of access to college resources, with parents, residential staff and managers at the core of a wider welfare support network. For example, overseas Chinese learners have the benefit of Mandarin and Cantonese speaking residential staff and a range of translated documents about how to access local services. Table tennis learners have additional close advice and guidance from their 'live- in' sports coaches. Apprentices have supervision and checks by their employer and older apprentices on site.
- Communication between residential staff, parents, and academic staff is good. The student services manager is a positive conduit between tutors, parents, and learners. She sets a 'can do' approach to tackling issues in conjunction with parents. Complaints are resolved informally and learners trust managers to sort out any issues.
- The college makes clear written plans for any additional support for learning, emotional, health or social needs. Learners take the lead in decision making and staff show a high level of respect for their views and wishes. These plans identify key adults and their responsibilities.
- Residential learners are signposted and guided to take up offers of nurturing and therapeutic services within the college. There is an excellent mental health and well-being service, led by a therapist, who has provided an immediate, supportive response when learners have been in distress. Arrangements for first aid and medication promote self-reliance with trained staff supervision.
- Residential staff are always on hand, they sort out practical problems and provide a listening ear and guidance. Learners appreciate their individualism and diversity. A parent said, 'there is always someone available in accommodation office, always on hand in case help is needed.' Another said, 'my daughter finds the staff approachable and are there for her if she needs them.'
- Accommodation provides good space for groups of residential learners to live together, sharing a spacious kitchen/living room, and cooking together if they wish. Canteen facilities are available

in the evening, but most learners choose to cook themselves. Single en-suite bedrooms provide good levels of privacy, good natural light, and internet connectivity for study. Learners have asked for a common room, but there is not the space within the residential building. Parents like the accommodation. A parent said, 'my son feels safe in the halls of residence and kitchen facilities are good.' Residential learners like it too. One said, 'the rooms are big enough to live, study and socialise.'

Safeguarding

Good

- Arrangements for safeguarding are good, but some aspects of policy and procedure could improve. The college's emergency crisis management plan relates to emergencies in 'college time' and does not take account of the lone-staffing arrangements in residence overnight. Residential staff have managed any crises safely and efficiently.
- The college is not up to date with national developments about child sexual exploitation or recent procedures if any learner were to go missing. In practice, there have been no such incidents: learners are safe and their whereabouts and safety known at all times.
- Health and safety systems work smoothly. An efficient cycle of planning and action keeps the college a safe place. A parent said, 'the halls are safe and secure and movements in and out are closely monitored to keep everyone safe.'
- The local authority designated officer and the safeguarding team report good partnership working when there are child protection concerns. Effective external and internal training and clear procedures help all staff to be knowledgeable about their responsibilities to refer any concerns. There have been no concerns about learners in residence.
- The college has a positive approach to inclusion and respect for difference, while supporting those learners who are more vulnerable. The college gives a clear message about their challenge to extremism, homophobia, religious bigotry, and racism. Learners play an active role in shaping anti-discriminatory practice through representation on the college equality and diversity committee.
- Staff are vigilant, so learners do not misuse drugs or alcohol. They intervene to support more vulnerable learners in distress and keep a close eye to ensure any concerns do not impact on well-being or achievement. Bullying is not a significant issue in residence. There is a high level of electronic social media awareness. Staff and learners are trained and sign-up to responsible use.
- Safe recruitment procedures mean that adults who are not suitable to work with learners do not proceed to employment. The Principal maintains a high expectation that staff will maintain professional standards alongside genuine care and interest in young people. She takes swift action if there are subsequent concerns about practice.
- The well-coordinated safety systems across the college deliver a protective, but not restrictive environment and atmosphere. Learners benefit from responsible, caring staff who they trust with their problems. They and their parents are completely confident that they are safe at college.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- There is effective leadership and management at the college. Residential learners make excellent progression to full-time employment, university, sporting careers and further study. The college tracks destinations and keeps in touch. Despite this, they have yet to identify exactly what it is about residence that has such a positive impact on the success of the different groups of residential learners, or begin to describe that to parents or employers.

- The residential provision is well managed and organised. Learners and staff expressed great confidence in the clear leadership of the residential student services manager and the assistant principal. They trust them to deal with their issues.
- The senior leadership team and the residential student services manager effectively monitor and review the residential provision. They are realistic about their strengths and the economic limitations they face. Current plans for development include extending the success of student feedback processes. The overarching college welfare service is usually coordinated at a college-wide health and well-being meeting, though this has been less frequent this year. This provides a useful point for the evaluation of any additional residential support needs, for example young overseas learners and those who are more vulnerable.
- Staffing in the evenings and weekends in residence is minimal but sufficient. Officially, there is one member of residential staff on duty, though other staff live in separate buildings on the campus. The arrangements foster resilience in young people.
- Insightful staff are well trained, and have regular staff meetings and appraisal with the student services manager about their residential role. They bring a range of life and educational experiences to the role. Many have a dual role in college, also lecturing or supporting learners in other fields during the college day. This academic insight strengthens their value to residential learners as a source of advice. They are enthusiastic about their jobs and have imaginative suggestions about how they could develop the provision for residential learners. They suggest a mentoring scheme, cookery sessions; swimming trips and more formal residential study time. One said, 'I absolutely love working here.'
- The college plans to implement a shared electronic recording programme, but currently the learners' paper-based system works well because of the close communication across residential and teaching staff. Residential staff are up to date with any classroom issues and vice versa.
- Systems for consultation in college and residence are good. They make good efforts to gather the views of non-English speakers. Residential learners represent their peers on the college's democratic forums and there is a well-used direct email route to have a say with the Principal. Residential learners say that their manager listens to them and they feel well represented.
- The residential student support manager has good relationships with parents and strikes the right balance of respect for the learners as young adults with the college's responsibility for them, 'in loco parentis'. Parents and the college are 'on board' about key issues of sleep, study, and well-being. This combination results in a good experience of residence for all.

COLLEGE DETAILS

Type of college	Further education college residential provision
Age range of learners	16-18
Approximate number of learners in residence	18
Principal/CEO	Linda Houtby
Date of previous inspection	March 2012
Website address	www.grantham.ac.uk

Purpose and Scope of 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.

Contextual information

Grantham College is a small college of 1226 learners, located in the town centre of Grantham. It provides Further, Higher and Adult Education courses in subjects such as: Performing Arts; Travel and Tourism; Small Animal Care; A levels, and a range of apprenticeships.

There is a specialist Table Tennis Academy; students take A levels alongside an intensive coaching regime. There is also a new, purpose-built provision for learners with a range of learning and physical disabilities.

Residential accommodation for learners who are 18 and under consists of 46 en-suite study bedrooms, grouped into six shared flats, in a three-storey, purpose-built accommodation, called Sedgewick Hall. There are three distinct groups of residential learners: overseas A-level students from China; first and second year water engineering apprentices, and learners at the college's Table Tennis Academy. Two thirds of the residential learners are male. The college also has separate accommodation on site for learners over 18.

Information about this inspection

One social care regulatory inspector carried out this inspection with three hours' notice. The inspector took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment and development plans for the residential service, as well as data they supplied about learners' success rates. Inspection activities included: observation of residential practice over two evenings; formal group meetings with residential learners, as well as informal discussion throughout; meetings and discussions with residential and welfare staff and tutors; contact with the statutory safeguarding authority to gather their views; and scrutiny of a wide range of documentation about the residential provision. The inspector also considered the results of the Ofsted point-in-time surveys by parents, staff, and residential learners and the college's own consultation with learners.

Lead inspector

Christy Wannop - Senior Practitioner SCRI

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Evaluation schedule for inspection of residential provision in further education colleges 2014*

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/evaluation-schedule-for-inspection-of-residential-provision-further-education-colleges>

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and provider inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

