

Boston College

Further education college residential provision

Inspection dates		30/01/2017 to 01/02/2017
Overall effectiveness	This inspection:	Good
	Previous inspection:	Good
Outcomes for learners		Good
Quality of service		Good
Safeguarding		Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management		Requires improvement

Summary of key findings

This college is good because:

- Students make good progress academically and make better academic progress than their peers. A student wrote: 'Thank you for an amazing year that gave me experience and a passion for maths.'
- Students like the residential provision, and particularly the freedom that they are given, the independence that they have and the ability to make new friends from other cultures. They said that they are getting a good education and like their teachers. An agent wrote: 'Our students love Boston College.'
- Students are mostly well behaved and keen to study. They are respectful of each other and their different cultures.
- Residential staff (who include the security guards and domestic staff) are highly committed to the students in their care and have a good understanding of their individual needs.
- There is a strong, rigorous and proactive response to safeguarding students. All staff, including residential staff, have a comprehensive understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities.
- Host families have a good understanding of their responsibilities. They appreciate the high level of support that they receive from the college, including comprehensive training.



- The organisation of the supervision of students requires improvement.
- The voice of the student is not yet strong in the residential provision.
- Residential students do not have a good understanding of the disciplinary procedures.
- Students do not use the common room, which would be a good place for socialising.

Full report

Compliance with the national minimum standards for accommodation of students under 18 by further education colleges

The college does not meet the national minimum standards (NMS) for accommodation of students under 18 by further education colleges:

- Ensure that a member of staff holding a current first aid qualification is available to students at all times on college sites. (NMS 29.4)
- Ensure that there are satisfactory cover arrangements for supervisory staff sickness and absence. (NMS 29.7)
- Ensure that there are means for staff to know, as far as reasonably practicable, which students under 18 are sleeping in each building or unit each night (for example, in case of fire or of an expected student being missing). (NMS 29.10)
- Ensure that there are sufficient staff, in numbers and availability, to maintain adequate supervision of students on all college sites outside teaching time, taking into account the age and nature of the student population, the layout of the college and grounds, and the range and nature of any activities involved. (NMS 29.2)

What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Consider replacing or repairing damaged equipment in the common room to encourage students to go in there. (Point for improvement)
- Consider creative ways of engaging residential students to make a positive contribution to the running of the residential provision. (Point for improvement)
- Ensure that students have a better understanding of the behaviour and discipline policy. (Point for improvement)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for learners

Good

- Outcomes for students who access the residential provision are good. Most students make good progress academically, and those who do not are very well supported. Generally, residential students make better academic progress than their peers.
- Students are mostly well behaved and keen to study. They are respectful of each other and their different cultures. Students said that they are happy at the college and feel that they are getting a good education. They like their tutors and get on well with the residential staff. A member of staff said: 'We try to help them to live as one big family.'
- Students make good progress with their independence skills. This is something that students said they particularly like about staying in residence. They learn to cook and manage essential household tasks, to budget and to manage their own health needs. A member of staff said: 'We do try to protect them as much as we can, but they have to have their independence.'
- Some students complain of being bored. However, the college has increased the range and frequency of activities offered. Furthermore, a number of trips are put on throughout the year, such as to York, Nottingham and a Chinese restaurant to celebrate Chinese New Year. Planning for trips is well thought out and supported by clear and comprehensive risk assessments. Students have access to free swimming at the local pool and to a gym and a sports hall. Additionally, there is a student common room. However, this good resource is not often used by students. They said that a vending machine and the repair or replacement of some of the broken equipment might encourage them into the common room.
- Students are fit and healthy. They have good access to a range of sports, such as swimming, football and badminton. They have contact numbers if they feel unwell, and the majority of time staff are available to provide reassurance and help. Furthermore, students have access to college counsellors and a sexual health clinic. They are registered with the local doctor and can access dental care if this is required.

Quality of service

Good

- The quality of service for students who access the residential provision is good because residential staff and host families are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of students.
- Students undertake an effective induction that helps them to settle quickly into college life, understand how to keep themselves safe and develop self-care skills. A high number of residential students are accepted into higher education. They are supported well through the university college application system (UCAS).
- Residential staff, including the security guards and domestic staff, are highly committed to the students in their care and have a good understanding of their

individual needs. They recognise the particular vulnerabilities of young people who are under 18 living independently and are proactive in supporting them. A student said: 'Our cleaner is good. She is very friendly and lovely.' Likewise, students who live in homestay provision are happy with their accommodation and the families they are living with.

- Host families have a good understanding of their responsibilities. They appreciate the high level of support that they receive from the college, including comprehensive training. They said that they never have any concerns about their students. Homestay students are very well behaved. Homestay accommodation is of a high standard. Homes are homely, comfortable, warm and welcoming.
- Complaints are rare, but well managed.
- Students living in the on-site residential provision are provided with single study bedrooms and access to a shared kitchen and bathroom. Students said that maintenance issues are quickly resolved. Flats are clean and well maintained.

Safeguarding

Good

- The safeguarding practice of this college is good because there is a strong, rigorous and proactive response to safeguarding all students. All staff, including residential staff, have a comprehensive understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. These include management of concerns about sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Host families are included in training events, such as on safeguarding, the 'Prevent' duty, and equality and diversity. Appropriate and rigorous action is taken when concerns are identified. Bullying is not widely reported. However, staff have a quick, effective response to any bullying concerns.
- Students have a good range of trusted adults whom they can talk to about concerns that they may have.
- Students are generally well behaved. The disciplinary system is clearly understood by staff and is effectively and fairly implemented. However, students feel that the implementation of the procedures is inconsistent and the process to challenge disciplinary decisions is not clearly stated in policy or guidance.
- Students enjoy the freedom that living in residence offers and regularly go to the local town. They are not known to go missing or to be at risk when they leave the college site. Staff are quick to manage any unsafe situations, for example other young people coming into the college grounds and starting altercations between themselves and residential students.
- Staff have a good understanding of online safety and have good systems to quickly address any issues that arise.
- Staff understand potential risks posed by adults. Staff and students are given good information about online safety, extremism, radicalisation and bullying. There is a culture of respect, tolerance and anti-discriminatory practice.
- Host families appear safe. An annual accommodation check is completed by the

college to review the provision. Host families are very protective of their lodgers and treat them as children of the families.

- Vetting procedures help to protect students from unsuitable adults working with them. Furthermore, adults who are not students but live on site also go through good vetting procedures. Health and safety procedures help to keep students safe from hazards.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The leadership and management of the residential provision require improvement because management systems are not formalised or sufficiently well organised for managers to be able to demonstrate robust oversight of the college.
- Managers are not able to demonstrate clearly how they assure themselves that students are all accounted for each night. Nevertheless, students are well supported by staff when they are available to them. Staff are proactive in ensuring that the students are safe and that they know the whereabouts of each student when they are on duty.
- Staff are routinely not on site and available to students. For example, when the member of staff on duty, the security guard, has left the site to check on other college-owned sites, and during the daytime and every weekend, there are no members of staff on duty.
- Cover for staff who are sick or on leave is limited. This results in periods when a member of staff is not available to students.
- There are regular times when there is no first aider available to students. This was an unmet standard at the previous inspection. Although all residential staff now have a first aid qualification and the student warden is also a trained first aider, they are not always available in the residential provision.
- The voice of the students is valued by the college but is not yet strong in the residential provision. Students have been given opportunities to have their say by completing annual surveys, and staff have taken action on suggested improvements. However, students are unclear who their student council representatives are.
- A student warden provides students with some help when staff are not on duty. Students go to him if they have locked themselves out of their flats or require cleaning equipment. He also opens the laundry for them.
- Managers are very experienced and provide good support and guidance to staff. Staff have access to a high standard of training that ensures that they have the skills to effectively care for the students in residence.
- There is good communication between residential and academic staff. This

enables staff to have a more holistic view of the students and provide them with the individual help and support that they require.

- Information about extra-curricular activities is clearly communicated to students so that they know what is available to them at college.
- The college is able to demonstrate some improvement since the last inspection, having complied with most of the recommendations made.
- Performance monitoring and review are carried out regularly. This is a detailed evaluation of progress, which includes feedback from students. This system leads to improvements in practice, for example the development of the range of activities offered and staff training.
- Established monitoring systems of homestay provision mean that accommodation is safe and secure.
- Governance provides good support and challenge to managers. They have a clear understanding about safeguarding children and have strong monitoring systems that enable good oversight.

COLLEGE DETAILS

Type of college	Further education college residential provision
Age range of learners	16–18
Approximate number of learners in residence	43
Principal/CEO	Amanda Mosek
Date of previous inspection	04/03/2014
Website address	www.boston.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

Boston College is situated close to the town centre of Boston on the east coast of Lincolnshire. There are four college sites, but all residential students live at, or are linked to, the main site at Skirbeck Road, where the international office is based. The college offers a wide range of vocational and academic courses to degree level. The college has approximately 1,700 full-time students. There are 43 residential students, 15 of whom are under 18. Learners choose to live in halls, mostly under self-catering arrangements or to stay with local homestay families, approved by the college. Currently, four students live with homestay families and 10, who are under 18, live in halls of residence. The majority are international students from Europe and Asia who are studying A levels, although there are a very small number of local students in halls of residence. The college was last inspected in March 2014.

Information about this inspection

Lead inspector	Joanne Vyas SCRI
	Phil Cass (RIM)

A social care regulatory inspector (SCRI) and a regulatory inspection manager (RIM) carried out the inspection at short notice.

Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors also used data on learners' achievements over the last three years, to help them to make judgements. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners; these views are reflected throughout the report.

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>

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