

# North Shropshire College

Walford Hall, Walford, Baschurch, Shrewsbury SY4 2HL  
Inspection of residential provision  
Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this further education college with residential accommodation

North Shropshire College was created in 2001 as a result of a merger between Walford College, primarily a specialist land-based college with its main campus near Baschurch, and the North Shropshire College, a tertiary college with its main campus in Oswestry.

The Walford campus offers term-time residential accommodation for learners between 16 and 20 years, with priority being given to learners attending land-based courses for whom daily travel presents particular problems.

Inspection dates      9 to 11 May 2017

<b>Overall experiences and progress of young people,</b> taking in account	<b>Good</b>
--	-------------

How well young people are helped and protected	Good
--	------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
---	------

The college provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Inadequate

**Date of last inspection:** 1 November 2016

## Key findings from this inspection

This college is good because:

- Residential learners enjoy the residential experience and are proud of their personal achievements.
- Residential learners value the diverse friendships they make and lifelong relationships they form.
- Education outcomes for residential learners are good and higher than for day learners.
- Governors, the senior leadership team and staff secure the safety and well-being of residential learners and educate them to keep themselves safe, in line with their ages and abilities.
- Residential staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of residential learners' individual needs and vulnerabilities.
- The board of governors and college senior leadership team effectively lead the continuing development of the college residential service.
- All national minimum standards have been met. There is one area for further improvement: to ensure that staff record actions taken in response to learners'.

The college's areas for development:

- Ensure that any actions taken by college staff as a result of consultation with learners are clearly recorded.

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of young people: good

Residential learners settle quickly into college life and are well prepared at the point when they move on to further education or employment. Residential staff and families work effectively in partnership to ensure that these transitions are smooth. Arrangements mean that residential staff are equipped with a good understanding of learners' needs. This enables them to deliver personalised care and support packages.

Residential learners achieve good education outcomes. This is supported by the residential staff team that has high aspirations and expectations of them. The team uses an online monitoring system that identifies learners' starting points and monitors their progress. Learners learn to balance their social lives with education expectations. They attend additional evening study sessions supported by residential staff. They participate in additional evening workshops organised by residential staff on subjects such as first aid and tax and national insurance. This enhances and further promotes good learning and academic outcomes. Residential staff also work effectively in partnership with education colleagues. This ensures that any additional support that learners may need is identified and addressed, for example to overcome low attendance, poor time-keeping or late submission of assignments.

All residential learners have individual residential development plans (IRDPs), which identify residential targets and enable monitoring of progress. These are identified, reviewed and revised in regular meetings between learners and their link residential member of staff. Targets are diverse. They might encourage social interaction by taking part in different activities, develop independence by planning driving lessons or prepare for employment by writing a curriculum vitae. Managers monitor the quality of completed reviews. This ensures that learners and staff identify appropriate targets that help learners to achieve best possible outcomes.

Learners enjoy being residential. They experience a range of new social groups, situations and settings, which increase their confidence, self-esteem, independence and aspirations. Residential staff are skilled in supporting this, for example, by integrating course groups in activities, such as dog-grooming, handling reptiles and primates, encouraging practical knowledge and interests in each other's subjects through trips and quizzes and encouraging understanding of difference and identity through discussions. They ensure an inclusive safe environment where everyone is valued. Learners describe making 'lifelong friendships' and experiencing 'amazing' enrichment opportunities, such as travelling abroad and going on course-based trips, such as to Ascot for three days to help to cool down horses.

Residential learners are consulted on a regular basis. They are well informed about the operation of the college and the opportunities available to them. Their views are listened to and have influenced a number of college initiatives; for example installing phones in the residential accommodation. Their views are central to the arrangement of activities

and events and the continuous review and evaluation of the impact of residency on their progress. This supports their feelings of inclusion and promotes their safety. Learners are confident that any concerns or issues that they raise with regard to facilities or the service provided will be immediately addressed. However, the actions taken by managers and staff are not recorded and therefore cannot be tracked if an issue is raised again.

### **How well young people are helped and protected: good**

Residential learners benefit from residential managers and staff who are skilled at building learners' identity, self-confidence and self-esteem. As a result, learners respect and value the strengths of others, and this enhances the college's residential community.

The risk of harm or bullying to any residential learner is minimised effectively by a number of proactive initiatives embraced by residential staff. There are also detailed policies and procedures that are regularly reviewed and made available to all learners and parents. These underpin regular staff training that ensures that staff know how to act to make sure that they are part of a safe, responsible residential community and, as a result, serious incidents are very rare.

Residential staff promote positive behaviour, and residential learners behave well. They are aware of the rules and the consequences of breaking them. Staff support them to become responsible individuals and members of society. Rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with fairly, and learners are actively involved in resolution discussions. The focus of intervention is always to educate and support those involved, to develop their future employment opportunities and life skills. Staff use their experience of supporting residential learners to prevent incidents from occurring in the first place. For example, they initiate discussions about appropriate behaviour and expectations when a learner's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations are planned. Staff also work closely with parents if any issues or concerns arise.

The senior management team ensures that safeguarding procedures are established and reviewed. Managers also make sure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training. This covers a wide range of subjects, which include the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, the safe use of information and communication technology and awareness raising in relation to child sexual exploitation. This gives residential staff a good knowledge base, which they apply in their everyday care to ensure that learners stay safe.

Residential learners are further safeguarded by recruitment and appointment procedures and a single central register that are fully compliant with the expectation of the national minimum standards and requirements of 'Keeping children safe in education 2016' (KCSIE).

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers, including governors: good**

The residential service has a positive impact on learners' development and is regularly monitored and reviewed by the senior management team and governing body. This ensures that the service continues to meet learners' needs. Managers continue to improve and develop the service in line with the residential and wider college development plans. Detailed recordings and comparisons of data and regular quality assurance of systems and practice further inform improvements and outcomes.

Residential learners and parents all said that the residential provision is very beneficial and makes a difference to learners' lives and education outcomes. A key strength of the service is the residential managers and staff team. Its members are passionate, driven and always influenced by the learner's voice. They are excellent role models to learners, and their relationships positively influence the ethos and values of the residential community.

A member of staff stated: 'The residential management team [has] empowered residential staff to be confident in their role.' Significant work has taken place over the last eight months to develop the staff team and the service. As a result, residential staff are professional. They are continuing with their personal development and continually reflecting on their practice. They are effectively guided and informed by policies, procedures and guidance. They access good-quality induction, training, regular supervision, team meetings and annual appraisals that are relevant to their specific roles and job descriptions.

The board of governors, senior management team and staff continue to raise safety standards. They regularly review and update action plans and risk assessments. They also effectively use internal and external audits to inform health and safety and safeguarding practice. Actions taken, such as additional security measures, have been welcomed by residential learners and their parents. A parent stated: 'The college [has] definitely tightened up their rules and arrangements concerned with where learners are and the enforcing of a curfew. They now use 'tracking' devices to indicate if learners are in or out. They also make sure that keys are left with staff if a learner is going off site, so that keys have to be collected from them on return. I am satisfied with the level of safeguarding at the college.'

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of young people. They watched how professional staff work with young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the college knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing

and what difference it is making for the young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the national minimum standards.

## **Further education college with residential accommodation details**

**Social care unique reference number:** SC060608

**Principal/CEO:** Mr Peter McCann

### **Inspector**

Dawn Bennett, social care inspector

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, 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 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017