

# Wiltshire College

Lacock, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 2NY

Inspection of residential provision

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this further education college with residential accommodation

Wiltshire College has four main campuses in Trowbridge, Chippenham, Lackham and Salisbury, with three smaller satellite centres in Corsham, Devizes and Warminster.

At present, residential provision for students aged under 18 is only available only on the Lackham campus. The Lackham campus is a land-based college that also offers an expanding range of further and higher education courses in such areas as rural environmental management, animal science and management, equine management and agricultural engineering. Lackham has a working farm that provides young people with hands-on experience of the rural economy.

At the time of this inspection, the Lackham campus provided accommodation for 28 young people under 18. The college was not providing, or arranging accommodation in local lodgings or with host families.

Inspection dates      22 to 24 May 2018

**Overall experiences and progress of young people, taking in account**      **good**

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:** good

**Date of last inspection:** 10 May 2016

## Key findings from this inspection

This college is good because:

- Young people thoroughly enjoy their experiences at the college. They develop friendships, independent skills, confidence and self-esteem. They make good progress in their educational achievement.
- Young people have good access and support in relation to their health and emotional well-being. Leaders and managers recognise that the young people's mental health and well-being are linked to eating well, sleeping well and physical exercise. Leaders, managers and staff take effective action to help young people to achieve these.
- Safeguarding arrangements to protect young people are effective. Investigations into allegations of suspicion and harm are shared promptly with the appropriate agencies. Staff benefit from regular safeguarding training, and demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding protocols.
- Young people say that they feel safe and listened to and can identify whom they would speak to if they had any concerns and worries.
- Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the college and residential provision. They have developed an action plan to further improve the residential provision.

The college's areas for development:

- Some safer recruitment checks relating to gaps in employment history and obtaining information from previous childcare employers are not consistently conducted.
- Currently, the quality of the accommodation is mixed. Some areas provide good facilities and others are tired and dated. The college has an action plan to improve the accommodation.
- Records relating to complaints and safeguarding matters are sometimes held in different locations, making it difficult to demonstrate clear audit trails.
- Young people said that they would benefit from cooks in the residential accommodation, as this would further develop their independence skills.
- The college does not routinely gather the views of parents, carers or other interested stakeholders in relation to the quality of the residential provision.

## **What does the college need to do to improve?**

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

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

#### **■ Staff recruitment and checks on other adults**

Ensure that the college's system for recruiting staff (including ancillary staff, contract/sessional staff and volunteers) who will work with learners under 18 includes all the following before appointment, which can be verified from recruitment records:

interview, with a written record of the outcome:

requirement that applicants supply a full employment history, stating that any previous employer may be approached by the college:

contact by the college with each previous employer where the candidate was involved in work with children, young people or vulnerable adults to check the reasons why the employment ended. (NMS for the 'Accommodation of students under eighteen by FE colleges' 34.2)

#### **Points for improvement:**

- Review how information in relation to complaints and the discussions held with the designated officer is gathered and collated, to ensure that it is more accessible.
- In consultation with young people, regularly review the cooking facilities that are made available to them in the residential accommodation.
- Implement the plans for the redecoration and refurbishment of under-18 residential accommodation.
- Formally seek the views of young people, staff, parents and other interested stakeholders on the quality of the residential provision.

## Inspection judgements

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

Young people receive individualised care and support. They are very well supported and cared for. They make good progress in their educational achievements. Most students continue onto further education or gain employment.

Young people are happy to be at the college and thoroughly enjoy staying in the residential provision. They enjoy good relationships with the residential staff and say that they feel listened to. Young people consider that they make genuine friendships and that they support and help one another. One young person said, 'I know I have got friends for life from here'.

Staff have developed and instilled an ethos of a safe and respectful culture. This has a direct positive impact on young people. Young people receive help, advice and support that develops their self-confidence, independence and social skills and raises their self-esteem.

Staff ensure that young people's healthcare needs are well supported. This includes support for their physical health, sexual health and mental health and well-being. The young people have good access to a wide range of specialist support services, both on campus and with external providers. One student with particular healthcare needs is complimentary about the support and help that he continues to receive.

Young people enjoy a wide range of activities provided by the college. Residential staff seek the young people's views about the types of activities that they wish to pursue, and obtain their feedback on activities and events that have taken place. Staff use the feedback to plan future activities.

Young people say that they feel listened to and that the college listens to their suggestions to make changes to improve the quality of the provision. As a result of consulting young people, the college now provides a snack bar and has made improvements to the television room.

Young people say that they like the food provided in the college's restaurant. They have access to a good range of meals, snacks and refreshments throughout the day. Each residential accommodation area has basic cooking facilities where snacks can be made. At present, this provision consists mainly of a microwave. Nonetheless, young people say that they would like more cooking facilities, such as a cooker, as this would increase their independence.

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

Safeguarding arrangements to protect young people are effective. Investigations into allegations of suspicion and harm are shared promptly with the appropriate agencies. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that there are good audit trails to demonstrate the action that has been taken following a referral to the designated officer.

Staff demonstrate a good awareness of safeguarding procedures and protocols. Staff across the college receive regular training and updating in relation to safeguarding and child protection. This includes the appropriate training at a higher level for those with specific safeguarding responsibilities.

The majority of recruitment practices are carried out effectively, including the verification of references, which was a recommendation at the last inspection. Residential staff typically do not start working with children until leaders and managers are satisfied with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and references. Leaders and managers have recently introduced a new policy and process to demonstrate how a decision is made in relation to a person's suitability to be appointed. This is based on the information provided by the DBS, supported by a risk assessment. Leaders and managers do not always ensure that they consistently keep notes of interviews, ensure that all gaps in employment are explored, make contact with previous employers if candidates have worked with children or vulnerable people and record the reason why they left that employment. These systems need to become rigorously embedded in practice, as leaders and managers do not routinely use the recording templates that they have devised.

Young people say that they feel safe and that there are trusted adults whom they can speak to. Leaders and managers assist young people to develop their skills and understanding to enable them to keep themselves safe online. Young people do not identify bullying as a concern. Young people have not been missing from the residential provision.

Leaders and managers use the college's student disciplinary procedures and code of conduct to address any behavioural concerns in a fair, proportionate and pragmatic way.

Effective risk assessments such as environment, campus premises and on-site and off-site activities keep young people safe.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

Leaders and managers have a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the college and residential provision. They have developed a comprehensive strategic plan for the college. Leaders and managers acknowledge that the quality of the accommodation is mixed. Some areas provide good facilities, while other areas are tired, dated and require redecoration. As a result of this, the college has an action plan

to further improve the under-18 residential accommodation. The college is meeting its stated aims, objectives and values.

Since the last inspection, there have been some changes in the leadership and management of the college. This includes the appointment of a new accommodation manager. She is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic, and undertakes her role effectively.

All staff have high aspirations for young people to achieve, and have a clear understanding of the progress that young people are making. Leaders and managers monitor young people's attendance and achievements, and can demonstrate the positive impact the residential provision has on their progress and opportunities.

Leaders and managers are extremely proactive in working with a wide range of safeguarding agencies and authorities in order to share current issues and/or concerns that are affecting the local population. This includes regular meetings in relation to Prevent, extremism and radicalisation, and child exploitation. This demonstrates good partnership working and the desire to increase their awareness and knowledge in such concerns. In turn, this informs their practice.

Leaders and managers ensure that the residential staff receive effective support in their professional development, and regular appraisal. Staff receive specific training to meet the needs of the young people. In addition, they receive college-specific training in 'promoting a safe and respectful' culture. This culture is in evidence at this college.

Staff work together to provide young people with consistency and stability. Leaders and managers ensure that there are clear lines of accountability and responsibility. Staff said that they feel very well supported by the accommodation manager.

Complaints are taken seriously and are addressed effectively. There have not been any complaints in relation to the residential provision. However, some of the information to demonstrate how complaints have been addressed, and the final outcome of a complaint, are not always easily accessible, making the oversight for leaders and managers less rigorous.

Although leaders and managers formally seek the views of young people, they do not always seek the views of parents, staff and other interested stakeholders to further improve the quality of help and support.

## **Information about this inspection**

This inspection was an aligned inspection with the short Further Education and Skills inspection of the education provision at Wiltshire College. Some joint meetings between FES, social care inspectors, leaders and managers were conducted in relation to safeguarding and aspects of leadership and management.

Social care 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:** SC042852

**Principal/CEO:** Amanda Burnside

### **Inspector(s)**

David Kidner, social care inspector  
Wendy Anderson, social care inspector  
Guy Mammatt, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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