

Exeter College

Exeter College, Hele Road, Exeter, Devon EX4 4JS

Inspection of residential provision

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this further education college with residential accommodation

Exeter College provides further education for 16- to 18-year-old learners, including apprenticeships, A levels and the International Baccalaureate, as well as courses for 14- to 16-year-olds, higher education and adult courses, community education and professional development courses. Residential accommodation is provided for learners who are unable to travel into college each day. Accommodation is provided in host families for overseas learners and in local student accommodation for learners enrolled in Exeter Chiefs Rugby Academy.

Inspection dates 9 to 11 October 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: This is the first inspection since the residential provision was registered in February 2018.

Date of last inspection: N/A

Key findings from this inspection

This college is good because:

- Residential learners are safeguarded and feel safe in this college. Learners identify several adults who they can readily talk to and trust to act in their best interests.
- Planning of the residential provision and introductions to the college for residential learners are carefully considered and well managed.
- There is a clear focus on supporting the welfare and emotional well-being of learners so that they can thrive in their chosen course. Welfare and support services are well established and developed.
- The college and the residential provision is led and managed by enthusiastic and dedicated staff who are passionate about the progress and experience of learners.
- Residential learners' experiences are positive, they encourage personal growth, development of skills and independence.
- Learners are treated with dignity and respect, their views are sought in providing and developing the college and residential provision.
- Policies and practice in the college demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity and valuing diversity.

The college's areas for development:

- Ensure that managers and staff receive regular supervision that is focused on the residential learners' experiences, needs and feedback.
- Improve risk identification and risk assessment for learners living in student accommodation.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of young people: good

The positive quality of relationships between residential learners, college staff and host families allow learners to settle quickly. Staff get to know residential learners well, making sure they spend time with them, have regular meetings and provide support and guidance promptly when needed.

The support offered allows learners to focus on both their academic studies and extra-curricular opportunities. Independence skills are enhanced. A learner attending the rugby academy told me he had developed essential time-keeping skills in a short space of time.

International learners benefit from careful matching with host families. The information provided and introductions to host families prior to them leaving their home country is appreciated by learners. They describe feeling as though they have a second family. Most benefit from improving their English language skills, and in addition are afforded many opportunities to take part in activities.

Rugby academy residential learners live in suitable, purpose-built student accommodation within walking distance of the college. Their commitment and enthusiasm for the game is encouraged and supported by equally passionate staff. Opportunities include tours abroad and coaching by rugby professionals. Learners benefit from being looked after in the accommodation by member of staff who is also a dietician and a professional rugby strength and conditioning coach.

Additional and specialist services to support the health and emotional well-being of learners are exemplary. A number of health professionals are employed by the college. Careful planning and consideration (particularly around equal opportunity and diversity) by leaders and managers, ensure that access to these services is inclusive.

Listening to learners is an integral part of the college. Learner views are sought to inform policy, practice and review of services offered. Residential learners recently prompted significant changes to the quality and quantity of food available needed by those who are training and playing rugby.

How well young people are helped and protected: good

Effective communication between staff, including competent use of electronic recording systems to share information, protects the safety and welfare of residential learners. Concerns are highlighted, and chronologies allow staff to understand the experiences of learners.

Subtle changes in behaviour or achievement are readily noted by staff. Action is taken to provide the help and guidance that may be needed in these situations.

Clear expectations of conduct are embedded in the culture of the college. Incidents of challenging or unacceptable behaviour are rare. Physical intervention doesn't feature in managing the behaviour of residential learners and neither are there any examples of them going missing.

Residential learners can readily identify at least one trusted adult who they can talk to and trust to act in their best interests. In addition, there are a number of adults independent of the college who are available to support learners. All residential learners have regular contact with their families and friends, which provides an additional level of protection.

Staff induction and training is focused on the safeguarding of residential learners. Risks are understood, and unnecessary risks are negated where possible. Staff and host families have effective checks in place to make sure they know the whereabouts of residential learners.

Arrangements for the recruitment and employment of all college staff follow safer recruitment practice. This avoids those who are known to harm children from having access to them. The academy student accommodation is secure and monitored frequently by adults to ensure the safety of learners.

Complaints are dealt with effectively and fairly, usually to the satisfaction of the complainant and always with a regard to the safeguarding of learners.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have high expectations for the achievements of all learners. Their enthusiasm in discussing the college and its successes is captivating and infectious. Morale among both staff and residential learners is high. Without exception, residential learners say positive things about their time at the college and the staff looking after their welfare.

Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the residential provision. Improvement plans are in place. Policy, practice and review is developed and implemented following research, consultation with other agencies and listening to the experiences of learners. Attention to diversity and inclusion ensures equality of access to college services and demonstrates to learners that uniqueness and individuality is valued.

The college has many partnership agencies which enhance the opportunities, safety and welfare of learners. The relationship with Exeter Rugby Club typifies these partnerships in providing unique sporting opportunities and potential for long-term employment options for some learners.

Leaders, managers and staff have a shared ownership in wanting every student to achieve their potential. They are aware of the progress of learners and take effective action should progress not be meeting expectations. Without the residential provision,

many young people would be denied access to acquiring the skills and qualifications they need to fulfil their ambitions.

Host families who provide accommodation for international learners report that the information they receive and the support available from college staff is exceptional. Host families and international learners are asked to provide a written personal profile with photos. This aids the matching of learners to families who have shared interests, and contributes to the success of placements.

The supervision provided to the care staff does not consistently focus on the experiences of residential learners to help with development planning, and some risks associated with residential provision are missing from assessments. There was no discernible negative impact on residential learners of these minor shortfalls.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences 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: 1274769

Principal/CEO: Mr John Laramy

Inspector

Janice Hawtin, social care inspector

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