

# Brockenhurst College

Lyndhurst Road, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7ZE

Inspection of residential provision

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this further education college with residential accommodation**

Brockenhurst College is a general further education college situated in the New Forest National Park, with its main site in Brockenhurst. The college has a construction and marine skills centre in Marchwood and provides education and training to communities throughout the local area, including Southampton. Courses range from entry level to higher education and the college manages a number of apprenticeships. The college is a major employer in the region.

Around three quarters of the college's students are following 16 to 19 study programmes, with the majority of students studying A levels. Although the local area is not designated as deprived, the college also serves young people and adults from Southampton and the surrounding area, where unemployment is substantially greater than in other South East of England local authorities.

All the students who stay with homestay carers are from abroad.

### **Inspection dates: 11 to 13 February 2020**

<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

**Date of last inspection:** N/A

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** This is the first inspection of the residential provision.

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

### **Recommendations**

- The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the college and action taken as appropriate. (National minimum standards for further education residential accommodation. 13.8)

This is in relation to ensuring that all records are kept up to date and contain the details needed.

## Inspection judgements

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

Homestay students come from a variety of nations across the world. Their influence and richness of cultures is seen as a treasured jewel in this community. Their diversity is enjoyed and celebrated by the whole college population. 'Everyone has made us so welcome here, everyone is interested in us,' was a comment made by a student.

Emphasis is placed on making students feel welcome and that their opinions are valued and taken seriously. They are able to share their views and feelings in numerous forums such as tutorials and meetings with staff. Additionally, there is an intensive support team that students can approach for extra guidance and help if needed. This ensures that students have ample opportunities to discuss their feelings and views either in groups or in individual sessions.

Homestay students achieve well when compared with their non-residential peers. This is reflected in their academic progress as well as their attendance. There is swift communication between college staff and homestay carers if a student is absent for any reason. This not only ensures their safety but evidences close communication and joint working. This reassures the students and their families that there are people who have a genuine interest in their progress and well-being.

The staff approach to supporting homestay students who have differences in culture and customs is thoughtful and helpful to the students. Students have a period of induction, 'acclimatisation' and team building which prepares them for life in the UK. Students report that this process is both helpful and enjoyable.

The students' religious or cultural needs are known prior to their arrival and homestay carers ensure that these are met. Homestay carers voice their delight in learning about the students' backgrounds and customs and say that they enjoy celebrating key festivals with students.

The open and welcoming nature of the college community means that widespread friendships are developed across the international population. This leads to an enriching experience for all. Consequently, students are able to take part in varied activities and experiences which expand their social circles and their understanding of living in the UK.

Each student's health needs are known prior to their arrival. Homestay carers are, therefore, prepared to offer assistance to students if that is required. All are registered with local health services and receive the support and treatment that they need.

Students are able to contact their families when they wish. Additionally, homestay carers also stay in contact with students' carers or parents to keep them up to date with any significant events. This builds a trusting relationship and reassures parents that their children are being cared for to a good standard.

A recent global healthcare crisis had a significant impact on a number of students who originate from mainland China. The action plan implemented by the college managers was very carefully thought through and sensitively delivered. This not only ensured that arrangements have kept students safe, but also meant that they were emotionally supported. The management of this issue was of a high standard.

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

All members of staff and carers know what to do and who to inform if they have concerns about a student's welfare. Everyone has a strong sense of their responsibility to keep students safe. Clear systems, which are followed in practice, ensure that any issues are shared with the relevant agencies promptly. In turn, actions are taken to keep all students safe in both the community, their homestay premises and on the college campus.

There are clear protocols in place for homestay carers to follow in the event that a student is missing. There have been instances of students breaking their curfews and coming home late, but none have had to be escalated to the point of the student being reported missing to the police.

Behavioural expectations and conduct are made clear to the students. These are understood and respected by the students. The behaviour of the homestay students is of an excellent standard. This reflects their motivation and respect which is embedded and displayed across the daily routines and atmosphere in the college.

Students know how to keep themselves safe both in the community and while using the internet. Initial induction acclimatises them to living in the UK and helps them to adjust to established behaviours and culture of the community.

All homestay premises are inspected at least annually to ensure that they are safe. Staff ensure that safety measures such as gas checks and smoke alarms have been tested and examined. The premises are also assessed as to whether the living accommodation and bedrooms are suitable and conducive to students carrying out their studies.

Recruitment practice is acceptable and ensures that all the necessary background checks on staff and homestay carers are carried out to ensure that they have been assessed as suitable to work with students. The recruitment records are inconsistently maintained and this makes auditing of checks and references difficult. Managers have acknowledged this and have plans to address the administrative shortfall.

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

The residential provision in this college is well organised and managed. A motivated team has high aspirations for the students and the homestay carers. This results in a united drive to support each other and to improve outcomes for the students.

The support packages for students are designed so that strengths and vulnerabilities are known. They are then able to receive the guidance that they need. If any student is in need of specific support, whether emotional or academic, this is put into place promptly.

Training for key staff and especially homestay carers ensures that everyone has the knowledge and skills to provide a good standard of care. Importantly, homestay carers are aware of individual needs and characteristics of each student prior to their arrival. This means that students' care and routines can be sensitively well planned, taking into account specific needs, whether these are cultural, medical or emotional.

Managers are keen to learn from others and welcome feedback and comments from all stakeholders. This attitude underpins a drive to do better and ensures that there is no complacency. The approach also means that there are good working relationships with external agencies and professionals and that communication on any matters is prompt and open.

Some records have not been updated or maintained accurately or with the detail expected. For example, a support plan was not promptly updated and shared, some recruitment records were difficult to audit, and the contents of some key telephone discussions with homestay carers were not recorded in detail. These shortfalls, while not compromising the safety of students, undermine the evidence and efforts made by members of staff to provide a high-quality service.

The promotion of diversity is excellent. All cultures are welcomed and seen as an opportunity to learn and enjoy and enrich everyone's experience. The presence of students from different backgrounds and cultures is seen as a huge benefit for the whole college community. This is major strength of this organisation.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of young people, 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:** 1251708

**Principal/CEO:** Di Roberts CBE

### **Inspectors**

Paul Taylor, Social Care Inspector

Liz Driver, Social Care Inspector

Jan Hunnam, Ofsted Inspector

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