

Tyne Coast College

St George's Avenue, South Shields, Tyne and Wear NE34 6ET

Inspection of residential provision

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this further education college with residential accommodation

Tyne Coast College was formed in August 2017 from the merger of South Tyneside College and Tyne Metropolitan College. South Shields Marine School is part of South Tyneside College. Students undertake a variety of maritime training programmes to prepare and equip them for a career at sea. Students attend for short or longer courses, the youngest being pre-cadets who are 16 and 17 years old.

Students use the wide range of facilities, including maritime simulators and the Marine Offshore Safety Training centre. Students also use the wider college facilities, including the gym, sports hall, learning resource centre and cafeterias.

Residential students stay in the on-site hall of residence, Dr Winterbottom Hall. There are 186 students in the hall of residence. 19 of these students are under 18 years old. There are several accommodation blocks, separated by age and gender, which have shared or ensuite facilities. Some students stay on a fully-catered option, others have self-catering facilities.

The residential manager has been in post for more than eight years. He has a relevant leadership qualification.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision for students aged 16 to 17 years at this further education college.

Inspection dates: 14 to 16 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of young people, taking in account	outstanding
How well young people are helped and protected	outstanding
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding

The college provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the college contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for young people.

Date of last inspection: 15 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of young people: outstanding

Students hugely value being part of the residential accommodation at this college. They develop excellent relationships with residential staff, who they come to know very well. Students know that staff will always listen to them, and they describe the staff as being very caring and nurturing. Students are pleased that staff are always available, including during the night. Students' families are completely reassured about the quality of care that is provided. They speak very highly about the staff who care for their children, most of who are living away from home for the first time.

Students benefit enormously from the excellent range of facilities at the college. These include a Maritime Offshore Safety Training Centre and several marine simulators. These facilities are well known to the global maritime industry. They are regularly used by the companies that will go on to employ the students. This means that students gain first-hand knowledge of the environments in which they will work.

Residential students are highly motivated, and their college attendance is extremely good. As a result, teaching staff confirm that their progress in education is excellent. They appreciate not having to travel to their lessons, and staff prompt any students who are running late. Students regularly attend structured evening sessions to help consolidate their learning. Progress coaches ensure that any students who need extra support get the right help. This range of support helps students to complete the educational component of their course.

Students' physical well-being is fully supported. Students use the on-site gym and attend exercise classes to help maintain their physical fitness. This is an important aspect of life at sea. Students are encouraged to develop good habits while still at college. Staff support students to attend the GP or other medical services, going with them when necessary. Such input is invaluable to students who are living away from home.

Students' emotional well-being is prioritised. The on-site student support team offers a range of services. This includes access to counsellors and mental health first aiders. Well-being staff have excellent links with external services and refer students when required. Students learn the importance of recognising when they need help. This is an essential aspect of being able to manage when they are away at sea.

Students' independence skills develop significantly as they learn to look after themselves. As well as acquiring practical knowledge, such as cooking, cleaning and ironing, students learn self-discipline. This includes being able to withstand unhelpful behaviours in others. Students learn to live together in a relatively small space. They make rapid improvements in these skills throughout their time at college. These are vital attributes for a successful life on board ship.

Staff encourage students to share their wishes and feelings. Students have regular individual meetings with the residential manager. They attend weekly tutorial sessions and a termly student forum. Students learn to take responsibility for sharing their views as they become more familiar with college life. Staff listen to students and act on their wishes when they can. When this is not possible, staff explain why. Students learn that they cannot always have what they want. This is important for students who will spend time at sea with many other people.

Transitions into the accommodation are effective and well organised. Students receive a great deal of information about the accommodation before arriving. This clearly sets out the support available and the expectations on students. Staff recognise that new students are unlikely to have lived away from home before. They provide enrichment activities during the first few weeks. These help students to get to know each other and to help them to build relationships with staff. This preparation is successful, and almost all students settle well into the accommodation.

Throughout their time in college, students prepare for the next phases of their lives. Students are ambitious and work hard towards fulfilling their career ambitions. All students who pass their courses move to specialist higher education, often at this college. This is possible because of the breadth and quality of support that students receive from the outset.

How well young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Safeguarding arrangements are extremely effective. Staff are available 24 hours a day to make sure that students are safe and feel safe. The residential manager is a designated safeguarding lead and is highly qualified. He oversees the training that staff undertake. This ensures that they know how to identify and respond to risks appropriately. Students know that staff are very knowledgeable. They and their families value this aspect of their residential experience.

Staff take swift and highly effective action to protect any student who might be at risk. Staff prepare individualised risk assessments for those students who need this consistent approach to keeping them safe. Following any concern, staff talk to the student, to family members and to professionals. This ensures that risks are understood and shared. As a result of this input, appropriate action is taken and risks reduce. The residential manager is highly creative in his support of individual students. He ensures that those who have worries outside of the college are properly supported. This allows them to focus on their studies.

Clear rules and boundaries help students to understand behavioural expectations. Consequently, student behaviour is generally very good, and staff seldom have to intervene. On the rare occasions that students do not comply with expectations, staff talk to them about what has happened. For example, if a student's behaviour towards another is unkind, staff discuss the effects of this behaviour. Students respond well to this input, and repeated poor behaviour is exceptionally rare. Students trust and respect staff, and this influences their choices.

Students learn about being safe. They have regular tutorials when they explore risks that occur in the local community and wider society. They cover topics including domestic abuse, exploitation and knife crime. However, learning about these risks helps them to recognise danger. It also gives them useful strategies that they could use if required.

Issues relating to health and safety are taken very seriously across the college. The site manager ensures that the accommodation and facilities are well maintained. Any repairs are completed quickly. Students learn the importance of health and safety matters in their studies. They practise risk assessing different situations, so that this becomes part of their day-to-day experiences. This is a vital skill for their lives at sea.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The residential manager is a highly committed and dedicated leader. He ensures that students have an extremely positive experience in the halls of residence. He provides day-to-day support to students and staff and strategic oversight of the accommodation. The residential manager is nurturing in his approach. However, he also recognises that students need to become independent to prepare them for life at sea. Students respond very well and understand the benefits of their residential experience. Over time, many students return to stay in the halls of residence during different phases of their careers.

The residential manager leads by example. He has high standards and expects staff to offer an excellent quality of care to students. He provides detailed oversight of all processes within the accommodation. This includes written records, communication between staff and care of students. The residential manager responds to any practice issues sensitively but effectively. This brings about any required change. As a result, staff enjoy their work. They feel valued and stay in post for many years.

Staff training is prioritised throughout the college. The residential manager has a range of qualifications. These help him to understand the needs of students and his responsibilities towards the staff team. Staff do mandatory training in safeguarding, first aid and health and safety matters. Staff are encouraged to undertake additional training, such as in counselling and mental health first aid. Staff appreciate these opportunities, which enhance their skills when responding to students.

Staff are fully supported by the residential manager. Staff find him very approachable and are happy to speak to him about issues that arise. The staff team also regularly meets with the residential manager. Important information about students' well-being is shared and areas for improvement are identified. However, notes of meetings do not always demonstrate that individual staff issues, including personal matters, have been considered. This limits the ability of the residential manager to monitor staff progress.

College leaders celebrate the diversity of the student population. For example, there are active social groups for students who identify as being gay. Issues relating to discrimination are discussed in tutorials. Facilities for transgender students are discussed with the senior leadership team and any necessary adaptations made. Students who are exploring aspects of their identity talk to staff. When necessary, staff provide students with guidance on more support that might be helpful to them. Students do not feel isolated because of this support. This helps students to make progress in their wider college lives and reassures their parents.

The college is extremely well supported by its governing body. Governors with responsibility for safeguarding spend time with students. This helps them to understand the student experience. Senior leaders value the additional knowledge that governors possess. The governing body also offers challenge when required, and individual governors act as a critical friend. The oversight that governors provide helps college leaders to develop their offer to students.

The college is fully meeting its aims and objectives. It ensures that students achieve their potential. As a result of the experiences that students enjoy, they are ready for the next stages of their careers, including life at sea.

What does the college need to do to improve?

Point for improvement

- Leaders should ensure that staff have regular, individual reviews of their residential practice that consider the experiences of young people, any training needs and opportunities for professional development. (Further education colleges with residential provision: national minimum standards, page 15, paragraph 15.1)

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: SC054502

Principal: Simon Ashton

Inspectors

Jane Titley, Social Care Inspector (lead)

Jamie Richardson, Social Care Inspector

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