

# Wiltshire College and University Centre

Wiltshire College and University Centre, Lackham Park, 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 and University Centre has four main campuses, in Chippenham, Lackham, Salisbury and Trowbridge, with a smaller satellite centre in Corsham.

At present, residential provision for students aged under 18 is only available 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 areas such as rural environmental management, animal science and management, equine management and agricultural engineering. Lackham has a working farm that provides students with hands-on experience of the rural economy.

At the time of this inspection, the Lackham campus provided accommodation for 16 students under 18 and four apprentices who are under 18.

The college was not providing or arranging accommodation in local lodgings or with host families.

### Inspection dates: 28 to 30 March 2023

<b>Overall experiences and progress of young people,</b> taking into account	<b>requires improvement to be good</b>
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How well young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The college is not yet delivering good help and care for young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 22 May 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of young people: requires improvement to be good**

Residential students who contributed to this inspection were unanimous in their views that they recognise the benefits of staying in residence. They say they feel safe and that the staff are available and approachable if they have any worries or concerns. Residential students identified areas where their experiences could be improved. These include more variety of enrichment activities and more comfortable areas to relax in.

Leaders and managers ensure that students are provided with information about residential life before their move into the residence. Students say this information reassured them, and on arrival they felt welcomed. When allocating students to accommodation halls, leaders and managers consider what courses students are enrolled on and their personal interests. However, this process does not fully assess students' varying levels of need or any known risks. If students are not settling in well, staff carry out welfare checks. This arrangement is informal and often initiated by the student.

Students are able to personalise their bedrooms, which are spacious and well equipped. However, the physical environment is tired and worn. Communal areas such as 'chill rooms' are not inviting or used effectively. Leaders and managers recognise that the process to get maintenance tasks completed is arduous and not effective. The current system relies on students reporting to staff and staff completing an electronic form which is then reviewed by the estates team, who prioritise response times.

Students' physical and mental health needs are considered and met well. Students have access to a range of specialist services.

Students' views about the variety of enrichment activities available for them are mixed; some students say they are provided with enough social opportunities, while others said the activities offered are limited and often uninspiring.

Students' records detail their learning needs and the support that they require to achieve on their course. Despite this, daily records do not detail sufficient information about the students' engagement or progress. As a result, residential staff do not know well enough if students are meeting their educational targets or making progress. The residential manager has identified the need to improve communication between education staff and residential staff.

Feedback received from parents is mixed. Parents say that their children are happy at the college and shared examples of the progress their children have made towards living independently. They feel that the staff are in regular communication with them. Despite this positive feedback, parents identified areas that they would

like to see improved. These include improvements to the quality of residential accommodation, increased access to staff and a wider range of enrichment activities offered.

**How well young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

Child protection concerns are understood and responded to well. Leaders, managers and the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), ensure that effective links are maintained with safeguarding agencies. All potential child protection concerns are reviewed by the safeguarding team, senior leaders and governors. This ensures safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively.

When requested by safeguarding agencies, internal investigations are undertaken. Records relating to investigations are managed by two internal departments. As a result, the DSL does not have complete oversight of the records kept of all actions taken, including the outcome of an investigation and subsequent actions.

Staff receive a broad range of training opportunities that help them recognise and respond to child protection concerns effectively. The staff use the electronic reporting system effectively. Records detail the concern, the actions taken and who has been informed. The DSL and safeguarding team have effective oversight of all reported concerns.

Fire evacuation drills take place termly. Records of these do not provide sufficient information. They do not detail the names of students and residential staff who have taken part in a fire evacuation drill. As a result, it is not known if all students have participated and whether their individual needs in an emergency have been considered. Leaders and managers took immediate action to repair a broken fire door closure and removed door wedges from fire doors.

Residential students' behaviour is in the main good, and they respond well to the terms and conditions of their residential contract. There have been no reported incidents of the use of physical intervention, bullying or theft. There have been three incidents resulting in the college's disciplinary processes being used, with disciplinary actions proportionately applied. Informal reminders of rules have been used successfully.

Risks are recognised and risk assessments are in place. When behaviours that challenge staff are identified, individual support plans are not used to guide staff to respond effectively.

There are effective systems in place for students, parents, staff and others to raise a complaint. Since the last inspection, there have been four reported complaints. Appropriate action has been taken in response. However, records of the actions taken and subsequent investigations are not well maintained. They do not provide a comprehensive overview of how the investigating officers have reached their outcomes and the recommendations made.

Residential staff are recruited safely and in accordance with statutory guidance. In addition, appropriate safeguarding checks are conducted on adults who are not employed by the college but who live on site. Records relating to the recruitment and selection of staff require improvement. This includes making sure interview records are fully completed and legible.

**The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

Since the last inspection, a new leadership team has been appointed. They have developed a clear understanding of the areas for improvement and demonstrated that they are driven to improve the residential services provided.

The new residential accommodation manager has a clear understanding of the residential students' needs. She provided inspectors with detailed information about their likes and dislikes, friendship groups and family dynamics. The manager recognises that there are areas for improvement in the residential accommodation, including improving information-sharing between residential and education staff.

The induction process for new staff is effective. All residential staff are provided with a wide variety of training courses. These learning opportunities aid the development and awareness of the staff team, which helps them understand and respond to the students' needs. Leaders and managers confirmed that training for the safe management and administration of medication is not available for residential staff and have agreed to provide a training course for them.

Leaders and managers take effective action when poor practice is identified. They take swift and supportive action to address practice concerns. Good-quality records are maintained. Residential staff have their performance appraised annually. However, appraisal records do not reflect the discussions held or agreed actions.

The quality of staff supervision and frequency of team meetings have improved. Records of these meetings detail reflective discussions held and agreed actions. Despite this positive progress, the residential staff do not meet as a team. This means the staff are not collectively sharing good practice or learning from each other. The new residential accommodation manager has identified this as an area for development.

Staff spoken to identified that staffing levels, particularly at night, require improvement. They said at times they feel vulnerable. They worry that if there is a medical emergency or fire, they would not be able to respond appropriately or safely as a lone worker. Parents confirmed that they are concerned that only one member of staff is available to all the residential students overnight. Leaders and managers confirmed they will look into this.

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

- Ensure residential accommodation provided is appropriately maintained, warm and welcoming. (NMS for the 'Accommodation of students under 18 by FE colleges' 5.5)
- The records specified in Appendix 2 are maintained and monitored by the college and action taken as appropriate. (NMS for the 'Accommodation of students under 18 by FE colleges' 13.8)
- The records specified in Appendix 3 are maintained and monitored by the college and the action taken as appropriate. (NMS for the 'Accommodation of students under 18 by FE colleges' 13.9)

### **Points for improvement**

- College leaders should risk assess the appropriateness and safety of staff who lone work overnight.
- College leaders should consider providing opportunities for the residential staff to meet together regularly as a team.
- College leaders should consider improving information-sharing systems between education staff and residential staff.

## **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:** SC042852

**Principal/CEO:** Iain Hatt

### **Inspectors**

Sharron Escott, Social Care Inspector  
Martin Brown, Social Care Inspector  
Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector

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