

Stockton Riverside College

Safeguarding reinspection report

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Type of provider: General Further Education college

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Introduction

1. Stockton Riverside College, located in the Tees Valley, operates from two main sites in Thornaby and Billingham. In 2007/08 the college merged with Bede Sixth Form College, Billingham. During 2008/09 the college completed a major campus redevelopment programme.
2. The college also provides further education in outreach, employer and community settings. It works in partnership with local schools, colleges, universities, employers and voluntary sector organisations such as the Prince's Trust. Working with local schools, the college is developing a range of 14 to 19 Diplomas. In collaboration with local universities, the college provides higher education for people from the local area.
3. The college recruits the majority of its learners from the surrounding areas of Stockton, Billingham, Thornaby and Yarm. The unemployment rate across the Tees Valley is higher than the national rate. Some of the college's learners come from areas that are in the top 10% of the most deprived wards nationally.
4. The college's mission is to 'lead education for learners' success and Progression'.

Context

5. At the last full inspection of Stockton Riverside College, carried out in March 2010, the quality of provision, and equality and diversity were good. The overall effectiveness of the college, outcomes for learners, and leadership and management were satisfactory. Safeguarding was judged to be inadequate. Of the four subject areas inspected three were good and one was satisfactory.
6. The purpose of this inspection is to reinspect and report on safeguarding.

The outcome of the reinspection is as follows:

Aspect	Original grade	Reinspection grade
Safeguarding	4	3

Key findings

- Governors and senior managers have taken appropriate action to respond to the issues raised at the last inspection. A sub-committee of the corporation has been re-designated to focus on monitoring the college's progress in implementing the post-inspection plan and a safeguarding management working group has been established. The latter has successfully overseen and reported to governors and the senior executive team on the development and implementation of policies and procedures for all aspects of safeguarding.

- Governors have approved the college's revised safeguarding policies, procedures and codes of practice. The corporation has made arrangements to monitor formally the implementation of safeguarding developments annually. Arrangements for self-assessment have been revised for this year to provide increased focus on safeguarding across all college services.
- Governors receive regular reports on safeguarding and are now able to support and challenge senior managers more effectively. However, the college is aware that more work needs to be done to continue to improve the rigour of challenge in relation to performance against key targets such as those for staff training and the completion of the single register of recruitment and vetting checks.
- Senior managers have clarified the roles and responsibilities of the designated senior manager and the human resources manager. A significant amount of work has taken place to ensure that the college's register of recruitment and vetting checks complies with government requirements. For example, it now includes details of staff identity checks and training. At the time of the visit the register was being extended to record identity checks of the very small proportion of agency staff working in the college.
- Arrangements for safe recruitment have improved significantly and are satisfactory. Procedures for interviewing prospective members of staff have been strengthened through training for members of interview panels and revised selection procedures.
- Managers have developed clear protocols for carrying out Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks that are being implemented effectively. All staff appointed since 2002 have been CRB checked and a rolling programme is in place to check all other staff. At the time of the reinspection visit appropriate risk assessments had been carried out on part-time staff transferring from an agency to direct college employment and are still pending the outcomes of CRB checks. Arrangements for following up adverse disclosures were in place and are in the process of being formalised further.
- Governors and college staff benefit from safeguarding training at a level that is appropriate to their roles and responsibilities. In-depth training has been provided for designated staff and managers, and it is also a requirement for members of staff recruitment panels. All staff undertake basic safeguarding training and teachers are required to achieve further qualifications. New staff are provided with a prompt health and safety induction to the college. However, formal safeguarding training is not sufficiently early in the induction process for teachers.
- Managers have taken action to ensure that learners, staff and visitors continue to work in a secure and welcoming environment. Useful training and guidance have been provided for reception staff. Security staff are placing a higher priority on ensuring that learners and visitors wear appropriate identification badges.

- Learners informed inspectors that they feel safe at college. They know who to go to if they need help and speak very positively about how the support provided by personal tutors, teachers and youth workers helps them to be successful at college.
- Managers have enhanced the tutorial programme, building upon the strengths reported at the previous inspection. Personal tutors provide learners with good advice that helps them to make informed choices about their health, safety and well-being. Learners appreciate the college's zero tolerance of bullying and harassment. As at the last inspection, managers work well with a wide range of agencies to identify and support vulnerable learners.

What does Stockton Riverside College need to do to improve further?

- Analyse, evaluate and improve further the current developments in recording recruitment and vetting checks and for staff training, drawing on national guidance and best practice.
- Continue to improve the quality of reports to governors to ensure that they can rigorously challenge the performance of senior managers. Implement plans to improve computer software to provide more widely available management information. Improve the format, content and use of exception reports at all levels of the college.
- Ensure that all new staff receive safeguarding training as a priority early in their induction to the college.

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