

Eastleigh College (College House)

Shepherds Lane, Compton, Winchester, Hampshire SO21 2AB

Inspection of residential provision

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this further education college with residential accommodation

College House is a 14-bedded residential facility operated by Eastleigh Further Education College, offering an extended curriculum for students aged 16 to 18 who have learning disabilities. It is open from Monday to Thursday, term-time only, and is located approximately six miles from the main college site. All College House residents are students at the college.

Inspection dates 4 to 6 June 2019

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.

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2017

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of young people: outstanding

Residential students make exceptional progress while accessing the residential provision. At the beginning of their stay they are often anxious and struggle in social situations, but through their time in the residential provision, students flourish and become confident young adults. The experience means that some students will be able to live independently, something their parents had previously never thought possible.

Staff form strong relationships with students and their parents to ensure that all are in agreement with the arrangements and that students are well cared for. Staff support students to make decisions on all day-to-day aspects of their stays, including deciding their own targets for their social- and life-skills development. The regular review of plans and targets evidences the significant progress all students are making and the positive outcomes of accessing the residential provision. Parents are consistently impressed with the progress their child has made, and they praise the work done to help children gain independence skills and make friends.

Staff ensure that residential students can share their views through various means such as 'coffee and catch up', the steering group, the independent visitor, and group and individual sessions with their allocated member of staff. Responses to ideas are fed back clearly to students, including an explanation when it is not possible to make the changes they would like. One example of students' wishes being taken into consideration is that, through the support of the independent visitor, later bedtimes have been agreed.

Residential students' independence and confidence grow significantly through the dedicated work from the staff team. This was evident through how well the students communicated with the inspector throughout the inspection. Students supported each other when they could not put into words what they wanted to share. There was a real sense of community in the group, and when a student said something that could be seen as unfair, this was challenged sensitively by the others.

Students enjoy the social aspect of the residential provision, which enables them to practise and develop their newfound social skills. Activities include going out for meals and to various offsite activities, including a climbing wall and ice-skating. Overwhelmingly, students said they enjoyed the residential provision as they were able to be with their friends and to learn to do things for themselves they never thought they would be able to do.

Residential students all attend the main college, and were seen to be up, ready and enthusiastic to attend. Staff support them to travel to the main college campus by using the college minibus, or by training programmes so they can access college by public transport. In addition, some students are currently having driving lessons. Close working with the course leader ensures excellent communication between the residential

provision and college. This means there is consistency in the approaches to learning life and social skills, and support for those who may be struggling. Many students said they wanted to stay on at the college when their current course has finished.

Staff promote healthy lifestyles and support students to understand what this means for them. The residential manager has introduced tech-free sessions, where students go to the park using the gym equipment or playing games such as football. This has proved extremely popular, despite some students' initial reluctance. Emotional well-being is supported through the college counsellor visiting the provision weekly for drop-in and programmed sessions with students. She helps the staff to make referrals to child and adolescent mental health services when needed, ensuring a holistic approach to care and support for all students.

How well young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Residential students said they feel safe and their actions and demeanour show they are confident as individuals and as part of the group. Staff have an excellent understanding of each student's vulnerabilities and of their responsibility in providing students with skills to keep safe. Staff support students to understand what a real friend is, and how to recognise if someone is taking advantage of them. Exploitation in all forms is openly discussed, including 'mate crime', and students genuinely appear to have a strong sense of what is right and wrong.

The residential manager is knowledgeable about the local risks and works effectively with the main campus safeguarding team to ensure that any concerns are reported to partner agencies as required. She is consistently championing students' needs and will challenge when she does not feel a placing authority is responding effectively to concerns. This has included escalating issues with poor practice and lack of response to the director of children's services. Thoughtful joint working with families further supports students' safety through education and support for parents, as needed. There are also strong links with the designated officer in the local authority.

Staff recognise all behaviour as a communication. There is little need for staff to intervene, as students accept each other's differences. Staff effectively teach and support students to manage conflicts in the group, providing vital skills for adulthood. Students do not raise bullying as a concern, but know that staff will always support them. The students work well with each other to sort out any disagreements and there is a keen sense of fairness within the group.

Staff protect students from avoidable risk. Recruitment processes are effective. The physical environment is safe, but would benefit from modernisation in some areas. The residential manager recognises the need to reconsider the location of the cooker in the independent living flat, due to the confined space. Students are engaged in regular fire evacuation drills and know what to do in an emergency or if there is a stranger on-site.

The college's use of the local authority risk assessment tool for activities has led to some

unpopular decisions. This includes residential students not being able to go swimming or to a trampolining centre. The students' time in residential is usually the only time they see their friends and have the opportunity to access these types of activity.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers of the residential provision have an informed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. They are inspirational in their approach to the care and support of students. They are continually seeking to develop and improve the service provided. The development plans are clear on how the service will continue to move forward, taking into account new national directives and research. Regular visits by the governor linked to the service and safeguarding provide a thoughtful challenge to the managers.

Staff are incredibly confident in their roles in meeting the statement of principles. Many have worked in the service for several years, but are still keen to learn new skills and approaches. They are extremely knowledgeable about the students they care for and their role in helping them progress emotionally and socially. Staff said they are very well supported by leaders and managers. They have completed wide and varied training, which is frequently monitored and evaluated so that it continues to meet the students' changing needs. Staff said their monthly supervision and regular reviews of their performance are supportive and rewarding in addition to identifying further training and development opportunities.

The manager diligently monitors the residential students' progress through regular reviews of their goals and targets. She is moving towards a care plan style of support rather than an accredited life skills programme, in recognition of the changing social and emotional needs of the students accessing the service. Her continued close working with partner agencies and parents ensures that all students' needs are met, no matter how complex or challenging. The service manager goes beyond her role, visiting parents to help with application forms and benefits claims, to ensure that students continue to have the financial stability they require to attend college or move on to independence. The manager actively challenges the placing authorities when needed, particularly regarding delays in evaluating and reviewing education and healthcare plans.

The college's areas for development:

- Consider reviewing the use of the local authority's activity risk assessment tool.
- Review the governor's reports to ensure that they represent the depth of challenge during her visits.
- Review the location of the cooker in the independence flat.

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: SC061273

Principal: Dr Janet Edrich

Inspector

Jennie Christopher, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019