

City College Norwich, Paston College and Easton College

Easton, Norwich, Norfolk NR9 5DX

Inspection of residential provision

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this further education college with residential accommodation

Norwich City College is a large general further education college based in Norfolk, which now has over 9,000 students. Over the last three years it has merged twice, first with Paston Sixth Form College (2017) and most recently with the Easton College campus of Easton and Otley College (2020). The Easton campus includes residential accommodation. This is the first inspection of the residential accommodation since the merger. The Easton campus has 28 residential places for students aged 16-18. At the time of the inspection, 10 residential students were in accommodation.

Inspection dates: 16 to 18 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The college provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of young people: good

Young people are positive about their experiences at this college. They feel that the staff care about them and know them well. Young people said that they are well looked after and that the staff understand them and know their interests. Young people have a sense of pride about being a residential student.

Young people said that there are many benefits to staying in residence. They have made progress with their social skills and confidence and they have become more independent.

Good systems are in place for young people to discuss their experiences at the college and share their views. Managers make changes because of listening to the views of the young people.

The young people enjoy good-quality food. They hold the chef in high regard. The catering staff teach the young people to cook. Individual dietary requirements are well catered for.

Some of the accommodation for young people lacks homeliness. Some fixtures and furnishings are broken, paintwork is marked and carpets in communal areas are worn. These shortfalls reduce young people's positive experience of living at the college. Managers recognise this and have begun a process of improvement. However, the impact of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic and the need to prioritise immediate large-scale repairs mean that there is yet to be significant improvement to the living spaces.

How well young people are helped and protected: good

The young people say they feel safe and that they can talk to staff if they have worries or concerns.

Skilled and confident safeguarding lead staff are available to the young people. When necessary, safeguarding staff work well with external professionals such as social workers.

The staff escalate concerns appropriately. Managers maintain good safeguarding records. These are easy to navigate and provide a clear picture of actions taken.

Senior managers and leaders respond strongly to incidents of poor behaviour. They use a combination of guidance and reprimand. This leads to improvements in young people's behaviour. It also results in increased understanding of issues and concerns that the young people have.

Incidents of bullying are infrequent. The staff are alert to the potential for such incidents to take place. Young people have confidence in the way in which staff support them and respond to any incidents.

Generally, safeguarding staff share good-quality information with the relevant people. Designated officers have a high level of confidence in the safeguarding staff. However, on one occasion, information was not shared as promptly as it should have been. This did not result in any harm to a young person. Nevertheless, delays in raising concerns can delay the implementation of appropriate safeguards.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The new leadership team is ambitious. Leaders have high expectations of the young people and the staff.

The staff have a good understanding of the progress that young people make. Clear systems are in place. These enable the identification of young people who may be struggling academically. This has enabled successful interventions to take place.

No complaints have been received. All the young people spoken with felt able to raise concerns and were confident that staff would act on them. Managers have ensured that staff continued to meet with families during periods of lockdown due to COVID-19. These have enabled good relationships to improve further.

The staff have a good understanding of equality and diversity issues. Education staff explore equality issues relevant to the courses that the young people are completing.

The staff have access to and undertake appropriate training. However, some staff had not completed first-aid training. This resulted in occasions when no first-aid trained staff were working. Senior managers took immediate action during the inspection to address this.

Senior managers monitor the residential service and provide reports for governors. Governors have a balanced and proportionate view of the quality of the residential service. However, monitoring of the residential accommodation has not been effective. As a result, some issues identified during this inspection had not been identified by managers.

What does the college need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the residential accommodation is appropriately monitored, cleaned and maintained.
- The registered person should ensure that all potential safeguarding concerns about staff are discussed promptly with the designated officer in the local authority.

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: 2576569

Principal/CEO: Corrienne Peasgood

Inspectors

Ashley Hinson, Social Care Inspector
Lianne Bradford, Social Care Inspector

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