

Hadlow College

Tonbridge road, Hadlow, Tonbridge TN11 0AL

Inspection of residential provision

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this further education college with residential accommodation

Hadlow College is a specialist land-based college, located on the edge of the village of Hadlow in Kent. It provides a range of vocational further education and higher education courses. The college is part of The Hadlow Group which includes other further education colleges, a rural community school and a community pre-school. All residential accommodation for students under the age of 18 is on the main site. Currently, there are 108 residential students.

Inspection dates: 14 to 16 November 2017

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: 4 February 2015

Key findings from this inspection

This college is outstanding because:

- Highly competent, ambitious and visionary leaders and managers have created an inspirational and dynamic culture of high aspiration and high expectation.
- The residential students live in a supportive community, which helps them thrive and move forward to achieve their goals in their chosen careers. Working collaboratively, all the staff in the college share a common purpose of helping each residential student to make excellent progress and achieve to the best of their ability.
- The support given by the staff applies to all aspects of the residential students' lives. The staff recognise and respond effectively to the students' individual needs. They recognise the importance of emotional well-being and provide exceptionally sensitive, tailored support.
- The staff are passionate about providing a positive experience for all of the residential students. They continuously look to develop the support for the residential students in their drive to help them achieve to the best of their ability, gain employability skills and enjoy their time living away from home.
- The staff and the residential students have a shared sense of responsibility for everyone's safety and welfare. Safeguarding the residential students is at the heart of the staff's support. Proactive safeguarding practice helps the students to develop personal strategies to keep themselves safe, and ensures that they receive specific assistance when necessary.
- The views of the residential students are central to new initiatives and developments. They contribute meaningfully, knowing that their views are important to the leaders and managers in their decision making.

The college's area for development:

- Consider providing the staff with a concise summary of the support needs for students who have an education, health and care plan.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of young people: outstanding

The residential students live in a vibrant and stimulating environment that enriches their experiences and positively influences their academic and personal development. They feel valued, and know they are part of a supportive community that helps them thrive and move forward to achieve their goals in their chosen careers.

The residential students benefit from high levels of support from the dedicated staff, who recognise and respond to their individual needs. Working collaboratively, all the staff in the college share a common purpose of helping each residential student make excellent progress and achieve to the best of their ability. The residential students are confident learners who acknowledge that living at the college helps them succeed in their courses and make outstanding progress.

Friendly but professional relationships between the staff and the residential students are the foundation of effective, holistic support. The residential students are comfortable in approaching the staff and seeking help, advice and guidance, knowing that they will receive a response to help them move forward.

The support given by the staff applies to all aspects of the residential students' lives. They encourage the residential students to maintain healthy lifestyles, providing guidance on such matters as smoking cessation, sexual health and healthy eating. They recognise the importance of emotional well-being, and provide exceptionally sensitive support tailored to the needs of individuals. A parent commented in a recent Ofsted survey that their son 'feels reassured by the support of the staff and knows help is at hand both practically and emotionally if and when required'. The staff undertake specific training in mental health first aid and mental health awareness, and have the required skills to refer residential students for specialist help when necessary. This strong aspect of the pastoral support helps the residential students develop resilience and coping strategies to manage their difficulties.

A wide range of enrichment activities and social events are available for the residential students, encouraging them to be active and responsible participants in residential community life. Helping the residential students to develop new friendships, widen their social experiences and learn new skills enhances their experience and develops their confidence, their self-esteem and their appreciation of a healthy work-life balance.

Consultation with the residential students is integral to the successful management of the provision. Their views are central to new initiatives and developments. Information from surveys, requests to improve facilities from the residential student representatives through the Learner Voice forum and discussions in annual student conferences influence management development plans. The managers are decisive in their feedback to the residential students and, through experience, the residential students know that their views are important and significant. Currently, the residential students are putting

forward their views on the plans to refurbish the common room.

The staff are passionate about providing a positive experience for all the residential students. They continuously look to develop the support for the residential students in their drive to help them achieve to the best of their ability, gain employability skills and enjoy their time living away from home. A residential student echoed many comments from the residential students during the inspection, stating that being resident at the college 'is like coming home. We're like a family.'

How well young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Safeguarding the residential students is at the heart of all practice. The residential students have confidence that the staff will respond robustly to any concerns. One residential student commented that the staff 'are on it like a bonnet', demonstrating their faith in the staff's abilities to protect them. High numbers of residential students who responded in a recent Ofsted survey reported that they feel safe. The residential students who were spoken to were unanimous in their views that they feel safe living in the residential community.

The staff and the residential students have a shared sense of responsibility for everyone's safety and welfare. Through comprehensive and up-to-date training for the staff and ongoing education on a wide range of safeguarding matters for the residential students, everyone has an awareness of potential risks. All are vigilant in identifying and appropriately reporting concerns.

The team of designated safeguarding leads is proactive and responds effectively to all concerns raised. Appropriate referrals are made to external safeguarding agencies when necessary. Safeguarding concerns are closely analysed by managers to identify trends and to monitor the practice of staff. The designated safeguarding leads ensure that the staff implement targeted, protective strategies. A highly competent and experienced governor oversees safeguarding practice to confirm that the training of staff and the implementation of policies and procedures is successful in establishing a culture that keeps the residential students safe.

The staff have a genuine interest in the residential students' welfare. They recognise the individual needs and specific vulnerabilities of the residential students and provide the necessary level of wide-ranging support. The residential students develop positive relationships with the staff, who know them very well and are readily available to talk to them. Knowing that the staff listen and respond, the residential students accept the support that the staff offer and, as a result, make significant personal development. In a recent Ofsted survey, a parent reported very positively about the support given by the staff to their child who is experiencing anxiety problems. Another parent commented that their daughter 'feels she can approach them anytime and confide in them. She also feels really secure at the college which is really reassuring for me.' Family members spoken to during the inspection commented on how the support from the staff has helped the residential students to resolve friendship difficulties. The staff work proactively in partnership with families and highly effectively with curriculum staff to

meet the residential students' individual needs.

The staff consistently promote positive behaviour through clear boundaries and high expectations such as the residential students will take responsibility for themselves and act respectfully while living in a community. With a perceptive and sensitive approach, the staff help the residential students through potentially difficult situations. The staff receive specific training to support the residential students to manage their emotions appropriately. Bullying is closely monitored and the staff take prompt action to resolve any issues. Matters relating to behaviour and safeguarding are discussed openly in residential student group meetings to reinforce the residential students' awareness and understanding of keeping themselves safe, managing conflict and living in a community.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Ambitious and visionary leadership from senior leaders and governors is reflected in an inspirational and dynamic culture of high aspiration and high expectation. Leaders, managers and the governors are highly competent. All share the common purpose of providing an excellent residential experience for the students so that they can flourish academically, make significant progress in their personal and social development and have the self-belief and skills to enhance their future life chances.

The residential students benefit from staff who are highly competent, professional and committed to providing the residential students with high levels of support, advice and guidance. This enables the residential students to succeed, develop new skills and have confidence in their own abilities. Through performance reviews and supervision, the staff receive effective support from the managers to improve their practice and their support for the residential students. A very comprehensive training programme and the individual development targets of the staff are sharply focused on the needs of the residential students, with a particular emphasis on safeguarding them and promoting their well-being. The managers ensure that the staff are aware of current legislation and best practice as part of their drive to provide the residential students with high quality support.

The staff and the leaders demonstrate a detailed knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of the residential students. The staff share relevant information constructively with the curriculum staff to ensure that all the staff have a holistic understanding of the students. This cross-disciplinary engagement and co-operation provides the residential students with appropriate and responsive support to advance their personal development and to help them achieve their academic targets.

Leaders and managers continuously seek to develop and improve the staff's practice with the aim of enriching the experience for the residential students and promoting positive outcomes for them. Embedded in the quality assurance process is detailed self-assessment to monitor improvements and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the residential provision. Developments include widening the scope of support for the residential students through reviewing student support staff roles, increasing the numbers of designated safeguarding lead members of staff and strengthening the

delivery of personal, social and life skills for the residential students. Consequently, the residential students are benefiting from extremely high levels of pastoral support through a wide range of welfare services. Currently, managers are focusing on developing a multi-skilled student support team with a specific focus on strengthening assistance for students who have mental health difficulties.

Feedback from the residential students is integral to monitoring the level of the support provided. Leaders and managers are responsive to the views of the residential students and are not complacent. 'Learner Voice' surveys identify areas for improvement, and managers provide appropriate resources to support prompt and effective improvement.

All the staff and the residential students embrace an ethos of respect and inclusivity. Supported by robust policies, leaders and managers actively and effectively promote tolerance, equality and diversity. The students live in an environment where difference is accepted, appreciated and celebrated.

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: SC377848

Principal/CEO: Paul Hannan

Inspectors

Jan Hunnam, social care inspector

Paul Taylor, social care 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 children looked after, 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 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 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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017