



Inspection Report on

Llysfasi College

**Llysfasi College
Ruthin
LL15 2LB**

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Description of the service

Llysfasi is a land based college specialising in agricultural subjects, countryside and forestry and animal care and management. The college is part of Coleg Cambria and is located in the Vale of Clwyd, near the town of Ruthin in Denbighshire. The accommodation at Llysfasi college is known as Llety Llysfasi, and caters for full time students from the age of 16 years, and is separated into designated areas by age and gender. At the time of this inspection, there were 23 students under the age of 18 years using the service.

The head of Student Services for Coleg Cambria is Karen Senior and she is also head of Llety Llysfasi. Greg Otto is a team leader in Student Services and is the designated manager of Llety Llysfasi.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

Students can be confident they will benefit from being cared for in a way that promotes their well-being. Students have opportunities to voice their opinions about the quality of the provision. They have access to a range of support services. Students are supported and encouraged to participate in a range of activities of their choosing. Staff are inducted, supported and trained in a way that assists progress for students and improves outcomes, however safer recruitment practices were not always followed. Students live in accommodation, which is safe, clean and secure; however, the students' comfort had been affected because of noisy radiators and an unreliable hot water supply. Students cannot always receive a service through their first language.

2. Improvements

- New furniture had been purchased for the games room.
- A new fitness suite had been installed.
- Individual development plans (IDPs) had been introduced. Staff had met with students to discuss how they were settling into the accommodation.
- An accommodation policy had been introduced giving information and sign pointing students and their parents to other, relevant policies.

3. Requirements and recommendations

Section 5.1 of this report lists the recommendations to improve practice.

1. Well-being

Summary

Students can be confident they will benefit from being cared for in a way that promotes their well-being. The college has generally been able to get appropriate information about their needs before they arrive. Students have opportunities to voice their opinions about the quality of the provision. There are suitable and effective systems in place to support students' educational, physical and emotional well-being. Students cannot always receive a service through their first language.

Our findings

Students feel safe. We spoke with 17 students as a group and they told us they felt safe and were aware of whom to go speak to should they need support, guidance or to share any concerns. There are a wide range of policies implemented to support the wellbeing of students including the safeguarding children and vulnerable adults policy, and the bullying and harassment policy. The safeguarding committee meet four times per year to discuss issues within the college and the residential facility was included on the agenda. Llysfasi implemented an equality and diversity policy to prevent oppressive behaviour and as a result, a culture of mutual respect was promoted. However, in order to ensure students are supported in all areas of their lives, we recommend that Llysfasi seek additional information within the students' details form. This would allow them to choose to self-declare any further information they feel staff should know about to best care and support them whilst staying at the college. Young people can be confident that there are policies, practices and procedures in place to ensure their wellbeing, health and safety is promoted.

Students have a voice. We established they had a strong voice as a group and were able to express their views confidently in this manner. We saw minutes of the campus council meetings and the residential meetings which had taken place every half term. Items on the agenda for the residential meetings included catering, maintenance, rules and regulations and activities. The students we spoke with told us they felt confident to raise issues and felt listened to, but not all the issues raised had been resolved to their satisfaction. The majority of the students we spoke with expressed dissatisfaction with the food provided. The head of service told us the cost of lunch was no longer included in accommodation fees, but students were still being charged for the breakfast and tea time meal. Students told us they would frequently avoid the food served in the canteen and instead would travel to the town to purchase their own meals. We inspected the menu and found it based on a four week rotation. We were told by the head of service that because of the limited number of students, there was little scope to provide an extensive choice of meals. Staff told us that as students select the food in advance, if the menu did not appeal, the catering staff would provide an alternative if given sufficient notice, but students reported that it was the quality of the food that was the issue not the selection. The head of service confirmed they were aware of the students' views and were in negotiations to review the menus; however, we

noted that this was raised as an issue at the last inspection, and has still not been resolved to the students' satisfaction. Students have a voice and have opportunities to express their opinions, but they are not always able to influence the way the service is delivered.

Students cannot always receive an 'Active Offer' of Welsh. We recommended that management consider the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words' follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care. We ascertained there was only one member of the staff team who could speak Welsh fluently, whilst some staff had basic knowledge of Welsh and others could not understand or speak Welsh at all. Students told us they were disappointed they could only speak Welsh with one member of staff, and only when this particular member of staff was on shift. We recommended that the welcome guide to the accommodation reflects this information so that young people and their families have accurate information regarding the lack of Welsh language provision at Llysfasi for students living in the accommodation. The handbook provided to students who will be using the residential service was available in both Welsh and English; however, Llysfasi's position regarding providing a service in Welsh requires clarification.

2. Care and Support

Summary

The college has, and follows, a fair and appropriate student disciplinary policy in relation to unacceptable behaviour and breaches of student discipline, which is known to students, staff and parents. Students are protected from bullying. They have access to a range of support services. Students are supported and encouraged to participate in a range of activities of their choosing.

Our findings

The use of discipline with students is fair and appropriate. The college had a student Code of Conduct which stated the types of behaviour which would lead to consideration of sanctions and the sanctions which the college may take. We were told by staff and management that student behaviour was generally good, and sanctions were found to be reasonable and proportionate. We were told by students that the rules were fair and that they liked the staff. Students' are treated with dignity and respect and have good relationships with staff.

Students with medical conditions or disabilities, or requiring special or specific treatment because of health or welfare issues are given suitable support. We found that where a student had health or personal support needs sufficient to require awareness and monitoring by a number of staff, the college established a personal care plan for the student, in consultation with the student and that student's parents, which was communicated to staff with a need to know its content. We learned that the introduction of a new Individual Development Plan (IDP) for all students allowed staff to discuss issues regarding their well-being with each student individually, so they were aware of any additional support they may require both from the college and from specialist external agencies where appropriate. We were told by the head of service that there were plans to develop this into a key worker system, so that staff could monitor students' well-being more closely. Students' needs are understood and they have opportunities to talk to staff individually and build trusting relationships.

Students are given support regarding their physical, emotional and psychological health needs. Students had access to the local GP surgery if required and the college had a sexual health advice team. The student support service was available to provide guidance and support to students, several of the student support service team worked as staff in the residential facility including the team leader. There was also a counsellor, a chaplaincy service, personal tutors and a study skills department. Students have a range of services to support their physical and emotional needs.

Students have a choice of weekly activities. We found that students were able to participate in activities and access local facilities outside the college. Staff members were familiar with the students' interests and how they liked to spend their time, and students confirmed the range

of activities offered was good and they were consulted regarding their preferences. Activities had included bowling, Laser Quest, paintballing and go karting and they commented that they enjoyed undertaking activities together. Within the accommodation, we observed students in the communal areas, and they were either busy playing pool, chatting to each other or playing electronic devices. In order to keep young people safe, one member of staff accompanied them on activities away from Llysfasi. Students are active and can do things that matter to them.

3. Leadership and Management

Summary

Relevant information is made available for students and their parents, but further details about the service should be included. There is a management and leadership structure within the residential facility with a visible chain of accountability; however, this was not described in the handbook for students. Staff are inducted, supported and trained in a way that assists progress for students and improves outcomes, however safer recruitment practices were not always followed. Consideration should be given to reviewing the quality of care provided and formulating a development plan.

Our findings

Generally, students and their families can be clear about what the service sets out to provide. The statement of purpose and principles and student handbook provided relevant information; however, there was no information regarding the leadership and management structure, or information about staff. There was no information about Welsh language provision. Students were able to visit the accommodation prior to admission with their parents and a pre admission meeting was held. This had provided them with the opportunity to meet staff, management and other students. The meeting had also addressed rules and procedures regarding the residential facility. Students told us they had felt welcomed during this pre admission meeting. Students know and understand the care, support and opportunities that are available to them but additional information should be made available.

There are sufficient staff, who have relevant experience and knowledge. We spoke with staff and management and saw records that confirmed staff had undergone an induction to their role. This had helped staff understand and fulfil their roles in relation to the service's aims and responsibilities. Additionally, there was a wardens' handbook, which provided the required information for staff to effectively carry out their duties and a staff intranet website to keep them abreast of developments within the college. The service was staffed from Sunday evening until Friday morning. Staffing rotas had been devised in advance. There were six members of residential staff in the team, with two members of staff on duty per evening and both members slept in the service overnight. Students were made aware of which staff was on duty and where they would be located in the building. Staff had an office where they were based, but had tea with the students, supper at 9:00 pm and walked through building to check on students during the evening shift. Students had informed staff if they were going out for the evening and filled in a form with their time of departure and arrival back at the building. Staff had checked that all students had returned to the building at the set time and were aware of the procedure to follow in the event of a missing student. Staff had completed a log of events during each shift. Each member of staff undertook two duties one week and one duty the next. Contingency staffing arrangements were in place to cover sickness or leave, with team members undertaking additional shifts or other staff, including the head of service carrying out residential duties when required. The head of service told us that this had ensured that she had 'hands on' knowledge of how the service operates and can engage with the students directly. Students benefit from a service where staff know how to carry out their roles and the best use is made of resources.

Staff receive training in specific areas in line with the statement of purpose, and show a good understanding of the range of needs of students. We inspected the training matrix and found staff had attended relevant training including First Aid; physical restraint; safeguarding; fire safety; equality and diversity and autism awareness. We saw records of team meetings which had been held every half term. Agenda items included student well-being, equality and diversity, safeguarding and health and safety. Additionally, discussions had taken place regarding the need to complete the logbook and the organisation of activities for the students. This was an opportunity for staff to collectively reflect on their practice and any issues that may have arisen. Staff had met with their line managers for an annual appraisal, which included discussions regarding performance and training needs. We were informed by management and staff that formal supervision meetings had not been held, but a staff member told us that management were approachable and supportive, and always available for individual meetings if required. Students benefit from a service where the well-being of staff is valued, and staff are well led, supported and trained.

Students and their parents cannot be assured that correct procedures are carried out in relation to obtaining the required information for staff prior to them being employed. Staff had advanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks in place and renewal reminders had been undertaken by the Human Resources (HR) department. However, we inspected the files of two newly appointed members of staff and found that only one reference had been received for each and did not include the last employer for one of them. We saw that the college had sent out a reference letter to request information regarding that member of staff but the previous employer had failed to respond. We advised management to adhere to their own safe practices and recruitment policies and practice guidance to ensure they obtain all information as stipulated. Young people cannot be confident that the vetting and the monitoring of obtaining records and documentation is effective.

The service does not have a process of regular self-assessment to analyse the quality of the provision. Students confirmed they were aware of the complaints policy and information about this was included in the handbook. Students told us they used the residents' meetings to raise issues or spoke with staff and management directly without making formal complaints. Management were aware of the students' views on some aspects of the service, however there had been no formal gathering of feedback. The head of service agreed that issuing anonymous surveys to students, their parents/carers and staff members may elicit more information, which could be used to assess quality and drive improvement. Management had used benchmarking principles and had visited other residential colleges to share good practice. We learned that the manager of the service had attended the Landex Residential Service Managers CPD event. The conference had included presentations by experts including OFSTED's specialist advisor for residential care and a tour of the host college's residential provision. Leaders are committed to quality assurance and improvement, however this needs to be developed further to ensure that an effective

assessment of quality is undertaken and stakeholders are able to contribute to the development of the service.

4. Environment

Summary

Students live in accommodation which is safe, clean and secure; however, the students' comfort had been affected on occasion because of noisy radiators and an unreliable hot water supply.

Our findings

Students and their parents can be confident that, when boarding, they are provided with satisfactory accommodation that is maintained, clean and secure from unauthorised public access. There were appropriate arrangements in place for the separation of male and female students and under and over 18 year olds. Each student had their own bedroom, which were of a good size and appropriately furnished. Many bedrooms had en-suite showers, but those that did not had adequate and private toilet and washing facilities. Students have satisfactory sleeping accommodation that was adequately furnished and age and gender separated to safeguard them.

Students have access to a range of recreational areas. We took a tour of the facilities and saw the two games rooms, the canteen and the fitness suite. One of the games rooms had a pool table and a table tennis table, and the other room had games consoles. The accommodation was painted and decorated to a satisfactory standard and it was domestically furnished. The staff had a designated office and students were informed of which bedrooms the staff would be using on each shift. In each residential block, there was a kitchen with a kettle, toaster, fridge and microwave. Students are able to do things for themselves, spend time with each other, study privately and have contact with staff.

Students can be confident that the premises are secure and equipment is safe. The students had key fobs to access their own bedrooms and communal areas and the premises were safe from unauthorised entry. We ascertained within records that health and safety practices were completed effectively, such as fire and risk assessment, fire alarm, emergency lighting and electrical checks to ensure that the environment remained safe for students and staff. We saw certificates of annual checks for the heating and portable appliances and fire drills and firefighting equipment certificates. We learned that 40 fire doors within the accommodation were being replaced in order to improve the environment and satisfy current health and safety standards. Students informed us that some of the central heating radiators had been very noisy during the night and the impact for them was that their sleep had been disturbed. They said this had been reported in October 2018 but had not been resolved. Management informed us that they had responded to the reports, but so far, the company employed to investigate had not found a cause for the noise. This had resulted in a student having to move rooms, but this had not completely solved the problem, as the noise was audible in other rooms. Students also reported that occasionally, there was insufficient hot water for showers. Management told us this was due to the type

of hot water system installed in the property, and they were hopeful that this would be addressed in the future, as more modern and environmentally friendly systems would be put in. However, there was no definite time frame for this and does not address the issues with the premises that the current students are experiencing. The students work on the land and with animals; therefore, access to suitable shower facilities is essential. Students using the service can be confident their health and safety is generally promoted, however in some areas their comfort could not always be ensured.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Recommendations for improvement

- Ensure that correct procedures are carried out in relation to obtaining the required information for staff prior to them being employed.
- Address the students' issues with the quality of the food provided, and the problems with noisy radiators and unreliable hot water supply within the accommodation blocks.
- Develop the quality assurance processes to monitor and evaluate outcomes for students, take into account the views of students, their parents/carers and staff and provide a review and development plan.
- Include details of the management structure and staff working at the service in the handbook for students.
- We recommended that management consider the Welsh Government's 'More Than Just Words' follow on strategic guidance for Welsh language in social care.

6. How we undertook this inspection

This was a full inspection undertaken in accordance with the CIW inspection framework. We made an unannounced visit on 5 February 2019 to Llety Llysfasi, and also met with staff and viewed records at the Deeside campus.

The following sources of information were used to inform this report:

- We reviewed information about the service held by CIW.
- Observations of interactions between the staff and the students.
- We spoke with 17 students in a group.
- The manager was not present; however, we spoke with the head of service; the head of Llysfasi campus; two members of staff on duty; the head of finance; the head of health and safety and a member of the HR department.
- We looked at a range of documentation including the Statement of Purpose and Students' Guide and a selection of policies and procedures.
- Examination of records relating to the safety of the premises.
- We viewed the premises including the communal areas.
- We viewed a sample of staff files and documentation relating to the admission of students to the service.

Further information about what we do can be found on our website:

www.careinspectorate.wales

About the service

Type of care provided	Further Education College
Registered Person(s)	Karen Senior
Manager	Greg Otto
Registered maximum number of places	40
Date of previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	06/05/2014 and 07/05/2014
Dates of this Inspection visit	05/02/2019
Operating Language of the service	English
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	No
Additional Information:	