

Inspection of Aurora Boveridge College

Inspection dates: 11 to 13 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Provision for students with high needs	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Aurora Boveridge College is a day and residential independent specialist college that provides education and training for students aged 16 to 25 years old. It offers training for young people with a range of social, emotional and mental health needs. Students often have other complex needs related to autistic spectrum disorder. Many have not attended education or training for a few years.

At the time of the inspection, 82 students attend the college; of these, 18 are residential. Students who are not able to attend college due to their high levels of anxiety, are taught at home. This helps them to take part in learning in a way that meets their requirements. The college location is in an area of outstanding natural beauty, and students have the use of the house and its gardens.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Students learn from enthusiastic, well-qualified and experienced staff who support them to develop the skills they need to live more independently. Staff use a range of strategies and resources, such as the sensory room, to help students to change and improve their behaviour over time. Students display high levels of respect for staff and their peers, show positive attitudes and are highly motivated to learn.

Students enjoy studying in a college environment that is calm, nurturing and friendly. They have high rates of attendance and are punctual to lessons. Staff celebrate student diversity, promote inclusion and encourage them to flourish. Students feel safe studying and living at the college.

The curriculum is taught to students using learning activities that help to build their confidence and develop their independence. Students recognise their own educational achievements. They articulate how the support and guidance they receive from staff help them to develop the skills and knowledge they need to make good progress towards achieving their goals and moving on to their next step.

Most students follow a curriculum that is challenging and aspirational. However, a few students do not have the opportunity to study higher level academic qualifications because the college offer is too narrow. A few students have not yet had the opportunity to participate in work experience or work-related activity.

What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have developed a range of training and qualifications that meet the needs of most students. They adapt the curriculum to take account of the long-term goals of each student. As a result of studying at the college, most students are prepared well for their next steps in education, training, employment or living independent lives.

Most teachers plan and teach the curriculum in a logical order to build on what students know and can do. Most students learn new knowledge in a context that is relevant because teachers present information clearly. For example, in functional skills mathematics lessons, students learn the method of block multiplication and when and how to use this when shopping to identify how much money they have spent. However, a few teachers do not provide students with enough time to complete learning tasks and secure their knowledge in lesson before moving on to the next activity.

Learning support practitioners (LSPs) provide students with the emotional care and support they need to enable them to attend lessons and take part in learning activities. However, a few teachers do not plan for the use of the LSPs well enough in lessons. A few LSPs intervene to help students before giving them time to complete learning tasks independently. Therapy staff support teaching staff well by

providing them with useful training on topics such as managing challenging student behaviour.

Teachers provide students with useful written and oral feedback on the quality of their work. Students use this feedback to revisit their work and identify and correct misunderstandings. This helps them to apply key concepts and know how to improve their knowledge and skills.

Tutors use questions to encourage students to build their confidence when sharing knowledge, participating in discussions, and supporting their peers in lessons. For example, in tutorial lessons, students share their knowledge of current news items and local issues, discussing the impact on the wider community.

Students make good progress in developing their knowledge and skills. For example, at the beginning of their course, students studying animal care answer the written questions posed by their teacher using only a few words. After studying for a few terms, they respond to questions by producing reports that include detailed explanations and analysis of relevant data.

Around a third of students have participated in relevant and meaningful work experience in college and community settings. For example, students studying animal care attend placements at local farms, stables and veterinary practices. Leaders have recently appointed extra staff who are tasked with increasing the range of community-based learning opportunities for all students.

Most students who undertake external examinations pass these. A minority achieve the highest grades in their academic and vocational qualifications. Students value these qualifications and are proud of their achievements.

Most students who completed their course in the previous year have increased their levels of independence and no longer need the support identified in their education, health and care plan. Over a third of the students are continuing to study at a higher level; the others are studying towards an apprenticeship or at a university. As a result of the support provided by leaders, almost all students were successful in securing their first choice of accommodation and living more independently.

Leaders have increased the amount of content in the personal development curriculum. This is in response to recent events and news about the risks and dangers associated with the use of social media. For example, students learn how to stay safe when using a wide range of technologies online. However, the content is not tailored to meet the requirements of each student. For example, when learning to travel independently, all students learn how to use one method of transport rather than learning about their preferred methods.

Leaders use their quality assurance processes well to evaluate the quality of education. They visit lessons and sample students' work frequently to help them to identify the progress that students are making in developing new knowledge and skills. Although leaders and those responsible for governance identify most of the

areas that need improvement at course level, they do not revisit their remedial actions frequently enough or measure their impact. As a result, they are not able to identify fully the improvements to the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the culture of safeguarding is developed by staff through the interweaving of health and safety topics and practices into all student activities. Staff receive extensive training in topics, such as suicide prevention, the use of a wide range of social media platforms and how to respond to and support students with complex learning needs.

Students feel safe at college because staff adopt a calm and supportive approach and respond appropriately to any minor incidents between students.

Staff record and report safeguarding incidents appropriately. Leaders deal with safeguarding referrals effectively. Students know to whom they should report their concerns and how to do this.

What does the provider need to do to improve?

- Leaders and teachers should ensure that LSPs provide students with appropriate support that enables them to take part in learning and increase their independence over time.
- Leaders should ensure that all students have the opportunity to take part in relevant and meaningful work experience or work-related activity.
- Those responsible for governance should ensure that leaders monitor closely the impact of actions taken to improve the quality of education and use the findings to inform continuous improvements.

Provider details

Unique reference number	146038
Address	Cranborne Wimborne Dorset BH21 5RU
Contact number	01725551247
Website	www.the-aurora-group.com/boveridgecollege
Principal, CEO or equivalent	Lloyd Richards
Provider type	Independent Specialist College
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Main subcontractors	None

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous monitoring visit report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising students' work, seeking the views of students, staff, and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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