



Inspection Report on

Atlantic College

**Atlantic College
St Donats Castle
Llantwit Major
CF61 1WF**

26 and 27 October 2022

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2022.

*You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.*

About Atlantic College

| | |
|--|--|
| Type of care provided | Boarding School |
| Registered Provider | UWC Atlantic College |
| Registered places | 400 |
| Language of the service | English |
| Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection | 18 and 19 January 2022 |
| Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer? | UWC Atlantic College is an international college and does not provide services in Welsh. |

Summary

UWC Atlantic College is one of eighteen schools provided by the United World Colleges. It is made up of international pupils aged sixteen to nineteen years who all board at the college. The school's Principal, Naheed Bardai, started in August 2021.

During the previous inspection significant concerns were identified around the safeguarding of boarders. These concerns have since been addressed and there are now robust systems and processes in place to ensure the safety and well-being of boarders. However, there were some minor gaps in recordings and time is now required to enable these systems and processes to fully embed. There is an extended team of staff assigned to assist the designated safeguarding person (DSP) and a restructure has enabled the employment of a new DSP who now sits within the leadership team.

All boarders have a well-being plan in place within a month of residing at the college which enables any support needs to be addressed and implemented at the earliest opportunity. There is also greater supervision and oversight of boarders which most staff and boarders have welcomed.

Improvements have been made to the boarding houses and there is an ongoing action plan to continue the refurbishment. The governance arrangement of the college has tightened and there is a clear senior leadership oversight.

Well-being

Boarders continue to be empowered and supported to make decisions affecting their care needs and learning which is balanced with greater oversight and guidance from staff. This has led to boarders making decisions within clear boundaries and they are kept safe when planning student led events. Boarders have been supported to create their own risk assessments when planning activities and the leadership team has ensured action is taken when boarders' well-being could be compromised.

The senior leadership team has taken action to strengthen their response to allegations of bullying to ensure boarders are suitably supported. The reviewed anti bullying policy covers types of bullying, sanctions and how boarders can seek support. The recording of bullying incidents has improved, with enhanced oversight from the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP). Although there is a proactive response to bullying some boarders feel further information sessions are required, as not all boarders understand what can constitute as bullying.

The safety and well-being of boarders is prioritised with improved systems and processes to ensure there is a robust approach to safeguarding. Boarders report they feel safe at the college and both staff and boarders welcome the changes made. There has been an appointment of a new Designated Safeguarding Person and a team of deputies, who have the knowledge and experience to implement robust safeguarding procedures. The reviewed safeguarding policy gives clear guidance on safeguarding processes and how to report a concern against a member of staff regardless of their level of seniority. The recording of safeguarding has improved via the use of an online computer system; however, we saw some recordings remain inconsistent. When appropriate, safeguarding reports are made in a timely manner to the Local Authority safeguarding team or other external agencies for extra support.

There is greater scrutiny of patterns and trends relating to safeguarding incidents which enables the senior management team to put preventative actions in place to mitigate ongoing and future risks. Minutes from weekly safeguarding and well-being meetings evidence ongoing oversight of safeguarding issues from all relevant parties, including the senior management team. There is evidence of Governors having oversight of safeguarding, however, minutes of meetings do not record how the Governors scrutinise or challenge the detailed safeguarding reports they are provided.

A suitable complaints policy is in place which has been reviewed and updated since the previous inspection. The process for recording, responding and monitoring complaints has improved, and more serious complaints are reviewed by the principal and board of governors. Records demonstrate the nature of the complaint and the outcome, though care should be taken to ensure all recordings/actions relating to a complaint are fully recorded.

A qualified nurse remains based at the college and a second nurse has been recruited. The nurse facilitates two clinics a week at the college where the local General Practitioner attends to undertake one to one appointments with boarders. There are two counsellors based at the college who are effectively supporting boarders with their emotional well-being needs. A psychologist is currently being recruited. The well-being of boarders who have additional support needs are regularly discussed as part of ongoing meetings between the DSP, nurse, counsellors, English as additional language co-ordinator and addition learning needs co-ordinator, which ensures a cohesive approach to support boarders.

Care and Support

The Behaviour Policy has been reviewed and updated, to ensure unacceptable behaviours are defined and a clear process is available in response to serious behaviours. Staff and boarders report the response to unacceptable behaviours is now consistent. Records of sanctions are maintained and reviewed by the principal.

All students are now provided with a 'well-being plan' which is co-produced with their house mentor or the nurse within their first month at the college. There are plans for these to be formally reviewed every six months to ensure boarders are supported with their care and learning needs. Well-being plans include information on the boarder's background, special educational needs, including language requirements, and focus on strategies and areas where more support is required. Boarders are supported to create actions to best enhance their learning and care and they told us these plans help boarding staff understand their needs better. Well-being plans are shared appropriately with various staff members and further advice is sought when required. Referrals are made to external specialist support agencies as and when necessary and there are two councillors based at the college. In addition, the college are currently recruiting a second nurse and a psychologist who will be able to offer boarders more specific support around their emotional and mental well-being.

Reasonable action is taken to reduce risks identified for individual boarders. We saw evidence of detailed risk assessments in place which were shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know basis. However, older risk assessments addressing serious risk to self still lacked detail of how risks were to be mitigated. The college has informed this is one area they are taking immediate action to address, and a protocol has since been implemented for suicide related risks.

Steps have been taken since the previous inspection to ensure rules and boundaries are in place to enable boarders to exhibit a level of choice and control over their day-to-day lives whilst also ensuring their safety. Students are no longer able to leave the parameters of their boarding houses after evening check-in, so all boarders are accounted for. The number of night staff providing supervision to boarders has increased and there is greater communication between the nurse, house mentors and night staff/welcome team to ensure any vital information about a boarders' welfare is shared. Boarders generally feel the rules made them feel safe, though would like more support and encouragement on making "*right choices*" rather than following rules for fear of consequences.

Boarders can be confident their health needs are met. A secondary registered nurse has been appointed to ensure boarders have further access to health support when required. The medication policy has been updated and processes have been developed to ensure boarders can safely administer and store medication. A self-administration of medicines

assessment is now completed with all students who have prescribed medication. A medication spreadsheet is used to ensure house mentors have sufficient oversight as to what medication is being stored and administered within the boarding house. Boarders who are assessed to need further support with their medication can visit the health centre more frequently. Boarders have access to lockable storage within their dormitory and house mentors have a lockable cabinet to store paracetamol. Training records show house mentors have completed training in administration of medication and using an EpiPen.

Improvements have been made regarding the supervision of boarders who are unwell or isolating. An increase in night staff has ensured boarders staying within the health centre have a delegated staff member to supervise and support them over night.

Environment

Boarding Houses are equipped to provide boarders with a suitable place to live. Boarders told us they have everything they need and are happy with the storage and space they are provided. Newer accommodation is of a good standard with a clean and modern living space.

Furniture within boarding houses are to a suitable standard and there is an action plan to continue refurbishing older boarding houses during the school holidays. Damp was observed in one bathroom area which will need to be addressed as part of the refurbishment.

Boarding houses are equipped with their own kitchen facilities, communal space for socialising and a study room. Boarding houses have now been equipped with laundry facilities however, these are not sufficient throughout all homes and for all boarders.

House mentors have now begun training provided by the Boarding School Association. Other training provision is provided and includes first aid, safeguarding, fire safety and medication. Some house mentors have completed specific training to best support boarders' experiences in the college and include training in child development, financial capacity, understanding of the teenage brain and information on sexual harm.

The college ensures visitors sign in and show identification before entering the college grounds. Night-time supervision has been increased and boarders are no longer able to leave their boarding house after evening check-in. Boarders have an allocated outdoor space they can use after check-in to support their wellbeing which is monitored by CCTV, house parents and night staff.

Leadership and Management

Since the last inspection changes have been made to the staff structure and organisation of the leadership team. The designated safeguarding person is now part of the leadership team, which has helped enhance and strengthen the safeguarding processes as well as an increase of the deputy safeguarding team, which creates an established and robust response to safeguarding concerns.

The board of governors continue to have oversight of the college and have enhanced their links with the leadership team. Detailed reports of safeguarding and behaviour incidents are provided to governors though there is lack of evidence of governors' scrutiny of these.

Boarders can be assured they are supported by staff who have been subject to safe recruitment checks as outlined in the National Minimum standards. Records show new staff are subject to checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service before employment begins and only staff who have completed safe recruitment training can sit on the interview panel. There are currently no volunteers working at the college, however, safe recruitment checks have begun for those looking to begin volunteering in the new year.

The college no longer uses Guardians/host families, nor do they facilitate families to make their own host arrangements. All students leave college for the summer holidays and activities are provided during the academic half-term.

A new online system has been established to allow staff members to report concerns about other staff members. The online system is confidential, and all concerns are reported to the principal. Staff told us they feel confident in using the system and records indicate allegations about staff are responded to appropriately. The principal has acted and followed the staff disciplinary process when alerted to staff misconduct.

There are clear boundaries between staff and boarders whilst also maintaining the culture of boarders self-regulating their behaviours and learning. The employee code of conduct provides guidance to staff on relationships and communication with boarders and is clear on consequences should this code be breached. The senior management team have clear roles and functions providing a sense of accountability and authority, with improved governance and oversight of the college which has greatly improved the quality of the service for boarders.

| National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (Wales) | Summary | |
|---|--|----------|
| 2.6 | The boarders who are being bullied are suitably supported, and boarders who may bully others are also given suitable help and guidance. | Achieved |
| 3.1 | The school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on child Protection (safeguarding) and response to allegations or suspicions of abuse, which is consistent with the All Wales Guidance (replaced by the All Wales Safeguarding Procedures), and is known to staff and, as appropriate, to older boarders in positions of responsibility. | Achieved |
| 3.7 | The school must respond appropriately to any child protection (safeguarding) issue and co-operate with any statutory child protection enquiry that has taken place involving the school since the previous inspection. Contributing appropriately to the formulation and implementation of any child protection plan made. | Achieved |
| 4.9 | A record of more serious sanctions applied is kept in a bound and numbered book which contains a list of permitted sanctions. The record is made within 24 hours and legibly recorded. | Achieved |
| 4.16 | The school's records of sanctions and physical interventions are reviewed at least twice a term by a senior member of the school's staff to monitor compliance with the school's disciplinary, control and physical intervention procedures and to identify any patterns in incidents leading to sanctions or physical restraint becoming necessary. | Achieved |
| 5.5 | A written record is kept of serious complaints and their outcome, for | Achieved |

| | | |
|-------|---|----------|
| | regular review by the Head Teacher or a senior member of staff. | |
| 7.4 | Information about welfare needs and any special provision to be made for individual boarders are effectively made available to those staff with a need to know that information. | Achieved |
| 15.12 | Boarders keeping and administering their own medication are assessed by staff as sufficiently responsible to do so and are able to store their medication safely and appropriately. | Achieved |
| 16.2 | Boarders who are separated from others, in bed or otherwise, through illness are regularly checked and receive the care and attention they need by a member of staff. | Achieved |
| 17.2 | An appropriate staff member prepares and works to a written and agreed individual 'welfare plan', agreed with a parent, for any boarder with special welfare needs, significant emotional or behavioural difficulties, or who does not see his or her parent or legal guardian at least three times a year. | Achieved |
| 22.3 | Any guardians appointed by the school to look after boarders are subject to the staff recruitment procedures set out in Standard 38 and Criminal Record Bureau (replaced by Disclosure and Barring service) checks, with a satisfactory outcome before they are able to work for the school. | Achieved |
| 22.4 | The school regularly monitors the suitability of any guardian arrangements it makes. | Achieved |
| 23.3 | Reasonable action is taken to reduce risks identified by risk assessments. | Achieved |
| 33.1 | Staff should be present, and accessible to boarders as necessary, in each boarding house at night. | Achieved |
| 38.2 | The school's system for recruiting staff (including volunteers) who will be working with boarders must complete all checks | Achieved |

| | | |
|------|--|----------|
| | outlined within this NMS. | |
| 40.5 | Furnishings of boarding houses and other areas for boarders is suitable to the number, ages and needs of boarders accommodated, comfortable and in satisfactory condition. | Achieved |