



# Inspection of residential provision for students under eighteen years of age in further education colleges

Consultation document

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This is a consultation document on proposals for a revised framework for the inspection of residential provision in further education colleges. Ofsted seeks the widest possible range of views from those who have an interest in colleges, to ensure that the inspection framework takes proper account of the needs and circumstances of all interested parties.

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## Introduction

1. We are making proposals for changing and improving our inspection arrangements. We want to make sure that the changes are as effective as possible and that our consultation welcomes the views of everyone with an interest in the inspection of residential provision in colleges. The term 'learners' is used throughout to mean specifically those learners residing at the college.
2. We are revising the inspection framework to ensure that our inspections focus even more on what is important in residential provision in a college: that it is well managed, that young people are safe and well cared for, and that their experience of living away from home contributes in a positive way to their personal and social development. The new arrangements will commence in September 2012.

## Legislative background

3. Inspections of residential provision in colleges are carried out under the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000. They are based on the national minimum standards (NMS) set by government for residential provision of students under eighteen years of age, which should be met by further education colleges. The NMS apply to further education colleges as defined by section 91 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. Any amendments or changes to the standards are the responsibility of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS). This consultation does not apply to private colleges or language schools.
4. Ofsted inspects residential provision in colleges, but does not regulate it. This means that, unlike some other types of social care or welfare provision, we do not inspect residential provision in colleges against a set of regulations or raise actions where such regulations are not met.
5. Where a college is registered as a care home, the residential provision is inspected by the Care Quality Commission rather than by Ofsted.

## The benefits of change

6. We intend for our proposed changes to raise expectations, leading to improvements in outcomes for learners. We are committed to ensuring that Ofsted's inspections help to drive improvement. The changes will also mean more consistency in the inspection of residential provision across schools and colleges. Ofsted's new inspection framework for boarding in maintained, non-maintained and independent boarding and residential special schools commenced in September 2011. The proposals for colleges mirror key aspects of the recently published new approach to inspecting boarding in schools, including the key judgements. This will allow for comparison and sharing of best practice.

7. The proposals are intended to benefit colleges by providing them with better information about inspection methodology, especially about the way in which inspectors reach their judgements and report on them. The greater focus on the quality of residential provision will, we believe, promote improvement and provide clearer information to the readers of our inspection reports, particularly learners, parents and carers. Most important of all, these changes should have an impact in ultimately providing a better residential experience for young people.

### **How we inspect now**

8. Residential provision in colleges is inspected against the national minimum standards (NMS) originally developed by the Department of Health, and now the responsibility of BIS.
9. We currently inspect colleges against these standards and make graded judgements against: overall effectiveness, being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, achieving economic well-being, making a positive contribution, safeguarding and organisation. We are in the process of replacing these with frameworks and evaluation criteria specific to each type of provision that we inspect and regulate. The proposed changes are outlined in this document for your consideration.

## **What we plan to change**

### **Judgements**

10. We think it is important to establish as much common ground as possible in the way in which Ofsted inspects residential provision in all types of schools and colleges. Although the NMS for schools and colleges are different, we propose to make the same key judgements in our inspections, using similar grade descriptors where appropriate. This will enable learners, parents and carers to compare the residential provision in boarding schools and colleges when making decisions about where to study. We propose to make the following judgements for colleges:
  - overall effectivenesstaking into account:
  - outcomes for young people
  - quality of service
  - safeguarding
  - leadership and management.

## Overall effectiveness

11. We propose to make a judgement about the overall effectiveness of the residential provision. This will take into account the other four key judgements of: outcomes for young people; quality of service; safeguarding; and leadership and management. In reaching the overall judgement, inspectors will also take into account the views of learners, parents and staff, and the extent to which the NMS are met. Our new approach, therefore, proposes a tighter focus with fewer graded judgements looking at the things that we think matter most.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge overall effectiveness in residential inspections?

## Outcomes for young people

12. In reaching a judgement about outcomes for young people, inspectors will take account of the views of learners, parents and staff, and consider:
- the progress that young people make in their education, personal and social development, taking into account their starting points when they joined the college
  - the behaviour of learners and how well they respect the rights of others
  - learners' happiness and enjoyment of the residential experience
  - learners' health and fitness (including physical, emotional, and psychological health) as a result of the residential experience at the college
  - how well prepared learners are for a successful transition to independence and adult life or for the next stage of education.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge outcomes for young people in residential inspections?

## Quality of service

13. In reaching a judgement about the quality of service, inspectors will talk to learners, parents and staff, and consider:
- the quality of pastoral support for learners, including effectiveness of links between pastoral and academic staff in supporting learners' development
  - the range and appropriateness of purposeful and enjoyable activities available to learners
  - the quality and effectiveness of the college's arrangements for promoting and caring for learners' health and well-being, including their emotional health
  - the quality of the residential accommodation, premises and facilities, including catering arrangements

- the appropriateness of arrangements for boarders to keep in touch with families and friends
- the impact of these factors on the experience of young people in residential provision.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge the quality of service in residential inspections?

### **Safeguarding**

14. In reaching a judgement about learners' safety, inspectors will talk to learners, parents and staff, and consider:
- the college's arrangements for ensuring that learners in their care are safe and protected from harm
  - arrangements for the safe recruitment of staff
  - health and safety arrangements
  - child protection procedures, anti-bullying strategies (including strategies to prevent bullying as a result of prejudice) and behaviour policies
  - the impact of these arrangements on whether learners feel safe and protected.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge safeguarding in residential inspections?

### **Leadership and management**

15. In reaching a judgement about the leadership and management of residential provision, inspectors will talk to learners, parents and staff, and:
- consider how effectively the residential or boarding environment is organised and managed for the benefit of the young people in the college's care
  - check that routines and procedures are clear, well established and operate consistently to provide an orderly and safe community
  - look at policies, procedures and records, and evaluate the way the college assesses its own boarding provision and develops it for the benefit of the young people it serves
  - take account of the positive impact that the leadership and management have on the quality of the provision and the overall experience of the learners.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge leadership and management in residential inspections?

## Equality and diversity

16. We recognise the vitally important duty of colleges to recognise and value diversity among their residential learners, promote equal opportunities for them and effectively tackle discrimination. Inspectors will consider equality and diversity in every aspect of the inspection and when reaching key judgements. For this reason, we propose not to make a separate judgement on equality and diversity, but to make sure that consideration of equality and diversity informs all the key judgements and sections of the report.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge equality and diversity in residential inspections?

## Grading scale

17. We will continue to use the following grades: outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate. We intend to publish grade descriptors to make our judgements clear for providers and to assist inspectors in making the key judgements. We believe that this will help to achieve consistency, openness and transparency. Inspectors will use the grade descriptors to reach an overall evaluation of the residential provision. We will test these descriptors during pilot inspections to ensure that they are suitable for all types of college.

## Self-assessment

18. Self-assessment is a key process for colleges and an important part of Ofsted's inspections. We will no longer be asking colleges to complete a prescribed self-assessment form prior to an inspection of their residential provision. Instead, in line with our approach for inspections of their education provision, we will use a college's own self-assessment in whichever format they wish to present it. This may be an assessment of the whole college with a section or specific reference to the residential provision, or it may be a separate assessment that only covers the residential provision.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to use the college's own self-assessment?

## The coordination of inspections of residential provision and education in the college

19. Residential provision in colleges is inspected at least once in each three-year period or cycle of inspection. The current cycle started in April 2011. Where Ofsted inspections of both the residential provision and the education of a college are due to take place in the same year, they are usually organised as a coordinated inspection and take place at the same time. Separate reports are produced for the residential provision and education provision. These arrangements were developed following feedback from the sector and we are not proposing any changes to this approach.



20. However, most inspections of residential provision will be standalone events, because often it is not possible to coordinate the two different types of inspections. While the government has directed Ofsted to inspect residential provision once in each three-year period, the frequency of inspections of the education provision is determined by a risk assessment process. This process includes looking at previous inspection grades and how well learners are achieving. As a result, the education provision in some colleges will only be inspected every eight years. Therefore, due to the different length of time between education and residential provision inspections, it is likely that most residential provision inspections will be conducted as standalone inspection events.

### Notice period

21. Currently colleges receive five weeks' notice of an inspection of residential provision. Feedback, mainly from learners, parents and carers, tells us this is too long.
22. We propose to reduce the notice period for coordinated inspections, to be in line with the notice usually given for inspections of the education provision. This is currently two to three weeks. This means that where the education and residential provision are to be inspected at the same time, they will receive a single notification letter, which will be addressed to the Principal.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to reduce the notice that we give to colleges of an inspection to two to three weeks for coordinated inspections?

23. For standalone inspections where the residential provision is inspected on its own, we propose that no notice is given to the college. The inspector will call the college in the morning and arrive later the same day. This is in line with other Ofsted inspections of social care provision.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to give no notice to colleges for standalone residential inspections?

### Monitoring visits

24. Ofsted does not currently conduct monitoring visits to assess residential provision in colleges that have previously been judged as inadequate. However, in future for any college that is judged to be inadequate, we propose to conduct a monitoring visit six to eight months later, prior to their next full inspection. We propose that these monitoring visits would be unannounced. Results of the visits will be published on our website.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should conduct a monitoring visit between inspections where there are serious concerns about the provision, and that this visit should be unannounced?

## Letter to learners

25. We are seeking your views on our proposals to introduce a letter for learners in residential provision at the college, which would provide them with a summary of the main findings of the residential provision inspection. This will focus on strengths, weaknesses and the learner's experience of the provision. We hope that a short letter explaining what inspectors found will be of interest to learners, and increase the number of learners who read our reports. As a result, learners will be better informed, which will help to drive improvement in their provision.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should produce a letter for learners/residential learners after the inspection?

## Capturing parents' and carers' views

26. We value highly the views of learners themselves, as well as parents and carers, and staff, and we follow up the issues they raise in our inspections. We propose to continue to gather their views through questionnaires. In the longer term we intend to move towards a web-based system to do this.

## Consultation arrangements

### Additional consultation

27. As well as this online consultation, we will consult others who have an interest in residential provision by:
- carrying out pilot inspections to test our proposals
  - conducting an online survey of a sample of learners and parents
  - presenting and discussing our proposals with colleges and organisations who represent the sector
  - discussing our proposals with interested parties including the funding bodies for colleges, the Department for Education (DfE) and BIS.
28. During the autumn and spring terms, we will pilot the draft framework and inspection documents in a sample of inspections. These inspections will represent a cross-section of colleges and will test both a standalone inspection and a coordinated one. Inspectors will discuss the draft framework with the colleges to be inspected. The colleges will also complete an evaluation form of each pilot inspection. We will take account of these views in the final framework document, which we will publish in summer 2012.
29. We will publicise this consultation by writing to all colleges with residential provision. We will encourage a wide range of users and stakeholders to respond to this consultation through articles in *Ofsted News* and other education and social care publications.

## What happens next?

30. The information from the online consultation will be collated and the key findings will be published in early spring 2012. These findings, along with the output from the additional consultations that we will carry out, will be taken into consideration in the further development of the inspection judgements and grade criteria during the spring term 2011. We will publish the new framework in summer 2012. The new framework for inspection will be implemented from 1 September 2012.

## Sending back your questionnaire

There are three ways to complete and submit the questionnaire in the next section and/or to send us your comments.

### Online electronic questionnaire

Visit our website to complete and submit an electronic version of the questionnaire:

<http://85.234.135.179/index.php?sid=12455>

### Print and post

This document can be printed and completed by hand. When you have completed the questionnaire, please post it to:

Residential provision in colleges consultation  
Ofsted Learning and Skills Development Team  
Floor 7  
Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE.

### Download and email

This document can be downloaded and completed on your own computer. When you have completed the questionnaire, email it to: [lands@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:lands@ofsted.gov.uk). Please put 'Residential provision in colleges consultation' in the subject line.

The consultation runs from Tuesday 4 October to Tuesday 27 December 2011.

## Questionnaire for the residential provision in colleges consultation

### Confidentiality

The information you provide will be held by us. It will only be used for the purposes of the consultation and research and to help us to become more effective, shape policies and inform inspections and regulatory practices.

We will treat your identity in confidence, if you disclose it to us. However, we may publish an organisation's views.

Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

- Yes  please complete Section 1 and the following questions.  
 No  please complete Section 2 and the following questions.

### Section 1

If you are completing the consultation on behalf of an organisation and would like us to consider publishing the views of your organisation please indicate this below.

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the below best describes you? Please tick one option.

I represent:

a GFE/tertiary college	<input type="checkbox"/>	a land-based college	<input type="checkbox"/>
an independent specialist college	<input type="checkbox"/>	a sixth form college	<input type="checkbox"/>
a local authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	a school	<input type="checkbox"/>
an inspection service provider	<input type="checkbox"/>	A not-for-profit organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Another type of organisation (please tell us)			

## Section 2

Which of the below best describes you? Please tick one option.

I am:

a learner/student	<input type="checkbox"/>	a parent or carer	<input type="checkbox"/>
a member of the public	<input type="checkbox"/>	an inspector	<input type="checkbox"/>
a teacher/trainer	<input type="checkbox"/>	another type of employee of a college	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other (please tell us)			

## Consultation questions

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge overall effectiveness plus the following four key judgements in residential inspections:

- outcomes for young people
- the quality of service
- safeguarding
- leadership and management?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge outcomes for young people in residential inspections?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge the quality of service in residential inspections?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge safeguarding in residential inspections?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q5. To what extent do you agree with our proposal to judge leadership and management in residential inspections?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to judge equality and diversity in residential inspections?

Strongly agree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know  <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to use the college's own self-assessment?

Strongly agree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know  <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?



Q8. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to reduce the notice we give to colleges of an inspection to two to three weeks for coordinated inspections?

Strongly agree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know  <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to give no notice to colleges for standalone residential inspections?

Strongly agree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree  <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know  <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q10. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should conduct a monitoring visit between inspections where there are serious concerns about the provision, and that this visit should be unannounced?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should produce a letter for learners/residential learners after the inspection?

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you have any comments or suggestions?

Q12. Are there any other comments that you would like to make about our proposals for change?

## What did you think of this consultation?

One of the commitments in our strategic plan is to monitor whether our consultations are accessible to those wishing to take part.

Please tell us what you thought of this consultation by answering the questions below.

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Don't know
I found the consultation information clear and easy to understand.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found the consultation easy to find on the Ofsted website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I had enough information about the consultation topic.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would take part in a future Ofsted consultation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## How did you hear about this consultation?

- Ofsted website
- Ofsted News*
- Ofsted conference
- Another organisation (please specify, if known)
- Other (please specify) .

Is there anything you would like us to improve on or do differently for future consultations? If so, please tell us below.

Thank you for taking part in our consultation.

## Additional questions about you

Your answers to the following questions will help us to evaluate how successfully we are communicating messages from inspection to all sections of society. We would like to assure you that all responses are confidential and you do not have to answer every question.

Please tick the appropriate box.

### 1. Gender

Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Are you living as the same gender as you were born in?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### 2. Age

Under 14 <input type="checkbox"/>	14–18 <input type="checkbox"/>	19–24 <input type="checkbox"/>	25–34 <input type="checkbox"/>	35–44 <input type="checkbox"/>	45–54 <input type="checkbox"/>	55–64 <input type="checkbox"/>	65+ <input type="checkbox"/>
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### 3. Ethnic origin

(a) How would you describe your national group?

British or mixed British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Northern Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Welsh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

(b) How would you describe your ethnic group?

<b>Asian</b>		<b>Mixed ethnic origin</b>	
Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian and White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black African and White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Caribbean and White	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other Asian background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other mixed ethnic background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Black</b>		<b>White</b>	
African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any White background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Any other ethnic background</b>	
Any other Black background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Chinese</b>			
Any Chinese background (specify if you wish)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

#### 4. Sexual orientation

Heterosexual <input type="checkbox"/>	Lesbian <input type="checkbox"/>	Gay <input type="checkbox"/>	Bisexual <input type="checkbox"/>
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#### 5. Religion/belief

Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Muslim	<input type="checkbox"/>
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sikh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu	<input type="checkbox"/>	None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jewish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other, please state:	

## 6. Disability

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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