

Social Worker post at Abbey Manor College

Having a full time Social Worker onsite between the Broadoak and John Evelyn Campuses of Abbey Manor College has proven to be extremely beneficial for students and staff.

There is a high level of need amongst the students and the personal circumstances of many students places them at risk of varying degrees of harm, including, in some cases, risk of significant and immediate harm.

Previous Social Workers at the College have supported students and families with issues ranging from sexual exploitation of underage girls, neglect, physical and sexual abuse, substantial and long term mental health needs and other issues. Having a Social Worker on site has allowed these issues to be identified and dealt with rapidly with a coordinated approach between the College and Children's Social Care.

Having a Social Worker on site helps prevent some issues escalating as they can be picked up and acted on prior to reaching crisis point. Furthermore, students benefit from seeing the Social Worker as a member of the College team, this has helped them feel confident and comfortable seeking support with needs that would not yet have met thresholds for Social Care intervention, but which nevertheless required the specialist knowledge and support of a social care professional. This has been especially useful with regards to links with other partner services, such as CAMHS and Early Intervention Team.

Abbey Manor College receives new students throughout the year. Many of our current and new students are affected by a range of vulnerabilities and social disadvantage, as such serious social issues can and do present themselves at any time. In addition to dealing with these directly an onsite Social Worker has been invaluable to advise, inform and directly support teaching and other staff at Abbey Manor College.

A joint working approach between the College and Social Care, as embodied in the role of an onsite Social Worker, has proven successful in helping our students with the highest level of social need. It has added to the College's capacity to employ a systemic approach to supporting our vulnerable students, by having another qualified professional who can explore all of the factors placing a child at risk, and therefore informs the way the College as a whole supports that child.