

# The Swallowcourt Group Cornwall

Cornwall's largest private provider of care for the elderly and people with learning disabilities is renowned for its attention to individual needs – and so, it says, is the college that trains its staff.

Carol Francis, Training and Development Manager for The Swallowcourt Group, praises Truro & Penwith College for its flexibility and the willingness of its tutors and assessors to fit in with the needs of the business.

“They work with us and around us,” says Carol, who is responsible for the 370 employees. “They’re very, very helpful and will do whatever they can for me – and they’re very good at sorting funding.”

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The college has trained 20 people so far in kitchen and domestic work, and has helped two of Swallowcourt’s chefs achieve their NVQ Assessor Award which enables them to do NVQ assessments for the group in-house.

Ten staff at Poldhu and Ponsodane have taken bespoke Beginners’ and Intermediate IT training courses to improve their internet, word processing, spreadsheet and database skills – and the college’s

flexibility came to the fore again when it provided laptops and mobile broadband for them to use.

“Through good training, we’re working very hard on retaining our staff,” says Carol. “We’re investing a huge amount of money in training at the moment. The training has given people the skills they need to do their job to a high level, and because it’s assessed through the college they feel they have the full educational oomph behind them. They know they’re getting quality, and it’s accredited.

“Our programme is all about identifying people’s qualities and taking them forward in the company. It’s great to see people blossoming and moving forward with their careers. We’ve had people who’ve come to us as a washer-up and are now working as trainee chefs – and one is taking a full apprenticeship with the college. He won the student of the year award last year.

“I’ve been a manager in care for a long time and I hate it when people say ‘I’m only a carer’. It’s very important to make people appreciate their own value and know how much the company values them.”



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