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16 May 2013

Diane Rochford  
Headteacher  
John F Kennedy Special School  
Pitchford Street  
London  
E15 4RZ

Dear Ms Rochford

**No formal designation monitoring inspection of John F Kennedy Special School**

Following my visit with Janet Thompson, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 8 May 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school.

I sought to determine whether:

- safeguarding practices meet requirements
- staff are suitably trained
- behaviour management techniques and quiet areas are used appropriately
- there is thorough recording of incidents of behaviour and the school's response to the behaviour
- school leaders and the governing body are effective in monitoring and evaluating policy and practice for supporting students and improving behaviour.

## **Evidence**

We looked at the single central record used to detail the checks that are carried out when staff are employed at the school. We also looked at records of training for all staff regarding child protection and the management of behaviour. We walked around both school sites and were able to speak with staff about the use of quiet areas for improving students' behaviour. We spoke with some students and held meetings with a group of teachers and a group of teaching assistants. Discussion also took place with the headteacher and other senior leaders and with the vice-chair of the governing body. There were too few responses on Parent View to provide a summary of parental views of the school.

Having considered all of the evidence I am of the opinion that, at this time, the school's safeguarding procedures and policies meet requirements.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students said that they are happy at the school and feel safe. They did not express any concerns. This feedback is supported by observation of other students during the visit. There was a calm and relaxed atmosphere throughout the school.

There are very detailed behaviour plans for students whose behaviour is likely to require additional support to help them meet the school's expectations. These individualised plans contain clear guidance for staff and emphasise strongly a positive approach to improving behaviour. They include how to identify when a student is becoming anxious, and ways to divert or calm them down if any difficulties arise. The plans also include descriptions of the particular methods of restraint that should be used, if required. They are reviewed regularly, in light of information about any changes to a student's behaviour. External specialists work well with school staff to create and review the plans. Parents and carers are involved throughout the planning process, and when strategies for individual students are reviewed.

Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are recorded, but the use of restraint methods explained in a student's behaviour plan is not always noted. This limits the evaluation of the effectiveness of a student's plan, including considering the reduction in the use of restraint.

The use of quiet areas when a student's behaviour is deteriorating, or when they are feeling anxious, is a well-considered strategy and helps students improve the management of their own behaviour. These areas, known as 'safe spaces', can be in the corner of a classroom, a small room accessed within the main classroom or a separate room in another part of the school. There is detailed recording of the use of the areas, including how long the student was out of a lesson and whether the student was asked to go to the area by a member of staff or had made a request for

a short break themselves. This information is used effectively when reviewing the student's behaviour plan.

### **The quality of leadership in and management of the school**

Appropriate recruitment checks are carried out on all members of staff and this information is recorded on the required single central register. Training regarding child protection is undertaken by all staff and is regularly updated. Designated members of staff for child protection undertake additional training and, again, this is updated in line with national recommendations.

All staff receive training on the positive approach to behaviour management that is promoted through individual students' behaviour plans. This training is regularly updated and includes coverage of the methods of restraint that are described in students' plans. New staff receive well-developed support when joining the school focusing on key areas of support relating to the needs of the students, including their most appropriate means of communication.

Policies on the use of safe spaces and the management of extreme behaviour are approved by the governing body. There is no evidence that locked doors have been used inappropriately to restrict a student's ability to leave a 'safe space' room. The written policy about the use of these rooms, however, does not state with sufficient clarity that preventing a student from leaving a room by locking a door or otherwise can only occur in an emergency, and what constitutes 'an emergency'. Furthermore, there are no routine checks by governors that agreed policies are being implemented correctly.

There is too little whole-school evaluation of behaviour improvement strategies and their impact on students' learning and progress. There is inconsistent recording of the use of restraint and information about the use of safe space areas is not collected to spot any trends or patterns.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- All staff should record the use of restraint consistently and use this information to review individual students' behaviour plans.
- Leaders should use whole-school information about behaviour, including the use of restraint and safe space areas, together with information about students' learning, to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of behaviour management strategies and students' progress.
- The governing body should routinely check the implementation of agreed policies.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Newham. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Charlie Henry  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**