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Mr Jonathan Miller  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Miller

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to JFS**

Following my visit to your school on 1 December 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in July 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- ensure that the new policies and procedures for behaviour management are applied consistently by all members of the teaching staff and in all subjects; it is particularly important that teachers are aware of and observe the new 'ladder of consequence'
- review the range of sanctions used for students when they are sent to 'Room 17' or held in detention, making sure that the sanctions are appropriate to the misdemeanour
- ensure that all observations in lessons give due consideration to the impact of teaching on students' learning behaviour.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, a small group of Year 9 students, and the Chair and two other members of the Governing Body. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. A telephone conversation was held with the independent school improvement adviser contracted to support the school by the local authority. The school's improvement plans relating to the inspection areas for improvement were evaluated. Short visits were made to 11 lessons and I paid a visit to 'Room 17' during morning break-time.

## **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection, a deputy headteacher has retired. The senior leadership team has been restructured. Thirteen new teachers joined the school permanently in September 2014, with a further six teachers covering long-term absences on fixed contracts. Three new members of the governing body took up post in September.

## **Main findings**

Although the inspection judgement came as a surprise and disappointment to the school community, the Ofsted report was understood and accepted by senior leaders and governors. Together, they have acted professionally and resolutely to start tackling the areas for improvement. Information gathered about patterns of attendance is more detailed, and procedures for monitoring attendance have also improved. Attendance in the sixth form has risen, particularly in Year 12. After careful consultation with staff, parents and students, the school's behaviour and bullying policies have been revised and combined. The policy is soon to be put before governors for final approval. A key feature of the policy is the 'ladder of consequences', which makes expectations crystal clear to staff and students. The 'ladder' shows exactly where lines of responsibility lie for dealing with and managing inappropriate behaviour, together with the appropriate sanctions at each level.

These actions by senior managers and governors are all encouraging. However, you acknowledge that one crucial challenge remains; to ensure that these changes are realised consistently across the school before the next inspection. The effective action taken by senior leaders and governors in reshaping school policy now needs to be matched in practice by all teaching staff. My observations in lessons revealed that, while many students show good attitudes to learning, this is not always the case. We discussed the importance of considering evidence from the presentation of work in books and students' demeanour in lessons when evaluating the quality of teaching. In a small number of cases, attitudes to learning were less than good. Although these students were generally biddable, poor presentation and unfinished work together with lapses in concentration showed that they could do better. Senior

leaders have recently refreshed their training in lesson observation; we agreed that future observations could usefully focus on the impact of teaching on student behaviour and attitudes to learning.

Although you were able to demonstrate a small reduction in the number of referrals to 'Room 17', it is clear that there is still some inconsistency in the reasons for referral. Students say that 'sitting in silence' or 'lines' are commonly used sanctions. In my view, more needs to be done to ensure that the sanctions given to students are appropriate to the misdemeanours committed and age of the students.

The recommended review of governance was carried out swiftly following the section 5 inspection. Governors have responded well to the comprehensive and informative review report. They have already started to ask more searching and incisive questions of senior leaders, including about students' behaviour and behaviour management. I was left in no doubt about their determination to return the school to its 'outstanding' status, an ambition that is clearly shared in equal measure by the senior leadership team.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

An independent school improvement adviser has been contracted by the local authority to work with the school. She has provided helpful support and guidance with improvement planning and has led training for senior leaders in lesson observation. This has included a focus on observing teaching over time, rather than of single lesson episodes. It could be useful if this work were continued, to ensure that future observations in lessons give a clear focus to the impact of teaching on student attitudes to learning.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Brent and the Education Funding Agency.

Yours sincerely

Mark Phillips  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**