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Mr A Abernethy  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Abernethy

Ofsted survey inspection programme – E-safety

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 15 June 2009 to look at work in e-safety.

As outlined in my initial letter, this visit looked at:

- the extent to which schools teach learners to adopt safe and responsible practices in using new technologies
- e-safety training for staff.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included interviews with staff and learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation and a tour of the school by students.

The overall effectiveness of e-safety was judged to be satisfactory.

Outcomes for learners

The outcomes for the students are satisfactory.

- The students feel safe, and are safe, when they are using new technologies in school. They have a basic knowledge and understanding of how to keep themselves safe and the vast majority of the students apply this knowledge and understanding to both inside and outside school.
- However the knowledge and understanding the students have is not age related and the older students have little knowledge of the issues which will affect them as they become older.

- Much of the students' knowledge and understanding has been obtained outside the school environment, from their peers, their parents and their own personal online experiences.
- You have kept the students safe by adopting a locked down system. This means that a large number of websites are blocked and students do not have access. This contrasts with the more open access many of the students have available outside the school. The locked down system is impacting on the students' learning, particularly in the sixth form.

## Quality of provision

The quality of provision is inadequate.

- The curriculum provided is limited in both its range and depth. The students are taught at the beginning of each academic year the basics of staying safe when using new technologies. However the work the students complete is not age related. This means that it does not meet the needs and interests of the older students.
- The work the students complete on e-safety also depends on the options they have chosen. This means that some students are less equipped to deal with the more open access to new technologies that they come across outside the school environment.

## Leadership and management

The leadership and management of e-safety are satisfactory.

- There are acceptable user policies in place. These are signed at the beginning of the year by the students and the parents. The acceptable user policy for the staff is in the process of being developed.
- During your safer internet week in February 2009 some parents attended an e-safety forum. Parents appreciated the opportunity to find out more about how they can support their children to stay safe at home.
- You are working closely with the local authority ICT consultant to develop an e-safety policy. You have recently completed an audit of school security with respect to the use of new technologies. This is a comprehensive document which highlights the areas for improvement with respect to the management of the system. It also highlights the need to develop staff training. However many of the areas for development are task orientated rather than focusing on improving the outcomes for students.
- You have dealt with the very small number of incidents efficiently and effectively. Where appropriate parents and the police have been involved to ensure that students are safe.

## Quality of training

The quality of training is inadequate.

- The key people in the school have received some training on e-safety. However the dissemination of this training to all staff is ad hoc. This means that not all the staff are aware of the issues which may arise regarding e-safety.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- bridging the gap between the locked down system the students have access to in school and the more open systems they have outside the school to develop their resilience to the risks of new technologies
- developing the curriculum to ensure that all students have a better knowledge and understanding of the issues surrounding their e-safety and that this knowledge and understanding is age related
- ensuring that all members of staff receive regular e-safety training which will enable them to support the students better.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop e-safety in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Tanya Harber Stuart  
Her Majesty's Inspector