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Mr John Craig
Headteacher
The Lady Jane Franklin School
Partney Road
Spilsby
Lincolnshire
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Dear Mr Craig

Ofsted monitoring inspection following a complaint about a school

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 15 and 16 June 2010 and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please thank the pupils to whom we spoke, the governor who came in to meet with us and the representative from the local authority.

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors in response to a complaint made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. The complaint was deemed to be a qualifying complaint that warranted further consideration under Ofsted's powers to investigate complaints about schools. As a result of the investigation Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish if safeguarding procedures are adequate, whether serious incidents are addressed effectively and whether staff are able to seek advice and support.

Following the complaint, the local authority identified some minor weaknesses in some aspects of safeguarding policies and the procedures for dealing with incidents. These were mainly concerned with formalising and refining some of

the school's systems and practice. The school has made satisfactory progress in remedying these issues. Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the procedures and policies to safeguard children and young people are satisfactory. Pupils' well-being is seen as a priority by staff. Incidents are dealt with appropriately and record keeping is thorough. Staff are able to seek advice and support within school and from other agencies, and know how to do so.

During the inspection a range of planned activities were taking place, which meant that fewer pupils than usual were in school. No Year 11 pupils were present and all but two of Year 10 were away on a residential visit, with four staff, including two of the senior leadership team, accompanying them. Other pupils were in school for the first hour of each day before going out on educational visits, leaving one class plus a few individuals in school for each day of the inspection. Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the home-school liaison worker, a range of other staff, a representative from the local authority, three parents, and a worker from the child and adolescent mental health service. Inspectors spoke with pupils, visited lessons and observed a range of other activities, such as break times and the pupils' arrival at school. Extensive scrutiny of documents, including three case studies, was carried out.

Following a visit from the local authority at the end of April, a senior member of staff has been given the responsibility for the oversight of safeguarding and child protection matters, to complement the work of the home-school liaison worker. He completed the local authority's approved training course on 20 May. Following this training, he has already identified areas of the school's work which could be further strengthened and has begun to take suitable actions to achieve this. The senior leadership team has begun to refine their respective roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication and to ensure that there is a clear flow of information, combined with robust action and record keeping. Cases examined during the inspection showed a clear evidence trail, indicating that appropriate action had been taken following any incidents or concerns.

The school has recently revised its safeguarding policy in line with the local authority's exemplar. This is a suitable first step, but inspectors support the school's views that some aspects need to be more tailored to the school's specific context and pupils' special needs. Sensibly, the deputy headteacher in charge of safeguarding has distilled the procedures for referral and action into a flow diagram. The changes to the policy and procedures are too new for their impact to be evaluated. The revision of this policy has highlighted to the school that they have tended to review their policies in isolation which leads to some of the links between them being missed.

Staff are clear about the basic protocols and procedures for safeguarding and child protection, and there was evidence during the inspection of these being followed. Staff have received suitable child protection training, which is complemented by extended training on behaviour management and physical intervention. Staff felt confident that they are able to raise any issues or concerns, particularly with the headteacher, and that these will be acted upon. They spoke about the improvements that had been made in the school over the past few years, leading to a sharp decrease in behavioural incidents, exclusion and physical intervention. This positive picture was corroborated by records, the views of parents, and the behaviour observed during the inspection.

Day-to-day procedures to keep pupils safe are appropriate. For example, the school has a clear and suitable procedure for checking if pupils are present at the start of the day and following up any absence promptly.

The single central register of checks for staff employed or regularly working in the school meets requirements. In line with requirements, a consultant who has worked in the school in the past needs to have an enhanced Central Records Bureau (CRB) check if his future work is to be regular and to include classroom visits, as do any governors who plan to visit regularly.

Behaviour observed during the inspection was generally calm and sensible. Pupils demonstrated positive attitudes towards their lessons and activities. Relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils were positive and appropriate. Pupils said that there was always an adult in school with whom they were happy to talk, even about difficult or sensitive issues. The school works closely with outside agencies to offer further tailored support. Records of pupils' behaviour, including the improvements they make over time, are thorough. However, analysis is not always systematic enough to maximise the wide range of data to be able to notice and act upon any whole-school or group patterns.

The school environment is bright and vibrant, with a range of good quality displays of pupils' work. Displays also reflect the wide selection of activities in which they take part, and their achievements through doing so. The environment is well maintained and pupils treat it with respect.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Morris-King

Her Majesty's Inspector