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Our ref: GNR/JCC

19 March 2002

Dear Parents and Staff

**INSPECTION OF CARE AND WELFARE OF RESIDENTIAL PUPILS AT DOLLAR
ACADEMY
FOLLOW-UP VISIT BY HM INSPECTORATE OF EDUCATION**

The report on the above school which was published in March 2000 contained a number of main points for action to be addressed by the school. The attached letter states the conclusions of HM Inspectors regarding progress made on the main points for action in the period since the publication of the report. It also indicates what further action, if any, may be required.

Yours sincerely

Dr Gill Robinson
HM Chief Inspector
Eastern Division

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19 March 2002

Dear Mr Cameron

FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF CARE AND WELFARE OF RESIDENTIAL PUPILS AT DOLLAR ACADEMY

The report on the above school was published in March 2000. HM Inspectors visited the school in January 2002 to evaluate progress made in responding to the main points for action in the report.

Overall, the school had made very good progress in following up the main points for action in the inspection report. As a result, HM Inspectors will make no further visits to the school in connection with the 1999 inspection.

I attach an evaluation and brief account of the response made by the school and the Board of Governors to the main points for action in the report.

I am sending a copy of this letter to parents of children currently in the school and the other recipients of the inspection report.

Yours sincerely

Dr Gill Robinson
HM Chief Inspector
Eastern Division



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HM Inspectorate of Education

Follow-up to the Inspection of Care and Welfare of Residential Pupils

Dollar Academy

Main points for action

1. *The school should phase out communal showers for boys and identify a programme of planned improvements to McNabb house.*

The school had met this recommendation in full.

The school had phased out communal showers in boys' boarding houses and had refurbished McNabb House to a very high standard.

2. *The school should use existing good practice to establish more systematic procedures for making, recording and monitoring complaints and suggestions at house and whole school level.*

The school had made very good progress on this recommendation.

The school had effectively built on existing good practices by placing suggestion boxes in all four boarding houses. It had established registers for recording complaints, and these were regularly monitored and followed up by senior promoted staff.

3. *School aims, rules and procedures should give further attention to boarders' personal development and should provide boarders with more opportunities to influence decisions about their care and welfare.*

The school had made very good progress on this recommendation.

Boarders had some very good opportunities to influence decisions about their welfare through regular house meetings and through meetings between house staff and the deputy rector. In addition, the school had introduced a more flexible approach to school rules to support responsible personal development. Boarders had been consulted on weekend activities and had benefited from an increased range, together with more opportunities to go on weekend leave. All boarding houses had been connected to the school's computing system, giving all boarders direct access to e-mail to support strong links with family and friends. The dining room had been redecorated in a more welcoming style and pupils' views on food issues were regularly sought and well used by caterers.

4. *A system of professional review should be put in place for house staff.*

The school had made good progress on this recommendation and further action was under way to meet the recommendation in full.

The first series of comprehensive professional reviews of house parents had taken place in May 2001 and the second was scheduled for February 2002. There were plans to extend the system of professional reviews to include other house staff. In addition, the school had introduced appropriate arrangements for the induction and mentoring of new staff.

5. *Senior promoted staff should implement systematic arrangements for monitoring boarders' experience of care and welfare.*

The school had made very good progress on this recommendation.

A clear system had been established for monitoring the quality of boarders' care and welfare. Boarding issues were carefully considered at the regular management meetings of senior promoted staff. The deputy rector had been given responsibility for monitoring boarding. He had made a very effective contribution to encouraging good communications and promoting necessary improvements. Each of the senior promoted staff had designated duties for ongoing evaluation and support in one of the four boarding houses. Overall, this co-ordinated approach had helped strengthen further the quality of pupils' boarding experience.

Overall, the school had made very good progress in following up the main points for action in the inspection report. As a result, HM Inspectors will make no further visits to the school in connection with the 1999 inspection.

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