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Our ref: WSM/AL

3 September 2002

Dear Mr Robertson

**FOLLOW-UP TO THE INSPECTION OF CAMAGHAEL HOSTEL
THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

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

The hostel, with very good support from the education authority, has made good progress towards meeting the main points for action overall. As a result, HM Inspectors will make no further visits to the hostel in relation to the October 2000 report.

I attach an evaluation and brief account of the response made by the hostel and the education authority to the main points for action in the report.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Maxwell'.

Dr Bill Maxwell
HM Chief Inspector
Northern Division

HM Inspectorate of Education

Follow-up to the Inspection of Camaghael Hostel

The Highland Council

Main points for action

1. *Review the security arrangements for entry into the hostel and the defects in accommodation.*

The hostel had made some progress with this recommendation.

A secure swipe card entry system had been installed at the main entrance to the hostel and all other doors had been alarmed. However, whilst security deficiencies had been addressed further action was needed to remedy the accommodation defects identified in the original report. Windows were still in a poor state of repair and the heating system was still unreliable.

2. *Improve arrangements for staff development and review, evaluating the work of the hostel, and planning for development.*

Good progress had been made with this main point for action.

The area education officer had reviewed the work of the hostel warden. The matron and depute matron had had their work reviewed by the warden. Formal records had been kept of these meetings. Staff had attended a useful range of in-service courses related to their areas of responsibility.

The hostel had implemented the education authority's advice on development planning. Staff had undertaken a focused audit of their work to identify key priorities for the coming session and had drawn up a good draft development plan. This plan had been discussed with the education authority and steps were being taken to implement the main points for action.

3. *Review the use and location of social areas for all pupils.*

The hostel had fully met this recommendation.

Hostel staff working with residents had reviewed the use and location of social areas within the hostel. The recreation area had been carpeted, curtained, painted and furnished to provide the main television lounge and

meeting area for pupils. In addition, a room had been set up to provide a social area for the exclusive use of senior pupils.

4. *Extend facilities for supported study to include appropriate access to ICT and library facilities.*

Good progress had been made on this main point for action.

Staff had reviewed the arrangements for supported study and had produced a revised policy statement for staff, pupils and parents. Course-related textbooks, reference manuals and additional study support materials had been purchased and made available for pupil use.

Supervised access to the school library was now available for two evenings each week. During this time pupils could use computers and printers to help with their course work. Computer provision within the hostel itself was still very poor. Pupils had no access to e-mail or Internet within the hostel.

5. *Improve facilities for making snacks outwith meal times.*

The hostel had made some progress with this recommendation.

Plans had been produced to site a snack bar within a former television area. The snack bar would enable pupils to make tea or coffee. There would also be a sink, refrigerator, microwave and toaster. Work was scheduled to begin during the 2002 summer break with planned completion for the start of the 2002/2003 session.

6. *Involve pupils more in making decisions about the running of the hostel.*

The hostel had made good progress towards meeting this recommendation.

A resident's forum comprising six pupil representatives had been set up. There had been three meetings which were used to address several key issues. Agendas had been prepared and the minutes of the meetings displayed on the hostel notice board. Hostel staff should continue to promote the forum as an effective arena in which pupils views can be aired.

The hostel, with very good support from the education authority, has made good progress towards meeting the main points for action overall. As a result, HM Inspectors will make no further visits to the hostel in relation to the October 2000 report.