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2 February 2016

Mr Simon Decker  
Rainham Mark Grammar School  
Pump Lane  
Rainham  
Gillingham  
Kent  
ME8 7AJ

Dear Mr Decker

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Rainham Mark Grammar School**

Following my visit with Seamus Murphy, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your academy on 19 January 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of safeguarding at the academy.

### **Evidence**

We scrutinised the single central record and an extensive range of documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements, including records of staff training and academy policies. We reviewed the curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education. We met with you and other senior leaders, a representative of the governing body, groups of pupils and a group of teachers. A telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority. Together with the deputy headteacher, we toured the academy and visited a number of classes. We spoke informally to pupils around the academy at breaktimes. While there were too few responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) for us to analyse, we considered the academy's own survey of

parents', staff and pupils' views. Records of the governing body's work were scrutinised.

Having considered the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

The academy's safeguarding arrangements are effective and meet requirements.

## **Context**

This is a larger-than-average-sized secondary school, with a selective intake of pupils based on academic ability. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after) is well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and who have a statement or education, health and care plan, is below average. The academy's last full section 5 inspection was in June 2014, when it was judged to be outstanding.

## **Main Findings**

You and other leaders, including governors, put pupils' safety at the heart of the academy's work. Pupils' personal development and welfare are as important as their academic achievements. As a result, the academy's arrangements to safeguard pupils are highly effective. You make sure that the academy's policies are detailed and extensive and that they fully meet statutory requirements. Crucially, staff know, understand and follow these policies extremely well because leaders have communicated the importance of this work effectively to the academy's community. Staff know exactly what to do if they are concerned about pupils and, as a result, appropriate actions are taken. The academy's risk assessments of different activities are very comprehensive; those related to overseas trips show exemplary practice.

Checks on staff, volunteers, governors and visitors are thorough and up to date. Staff are trained well and regularly in all aspects of safeguarding, including keeping pupils safe when they are online and from the risks of radicalisation. Staff value this training and frequently draw on its themes to inform their teaching and interactions with pupils.

Governors fully discharge their duties related to safeguarding. They possess a secure understanding of the academy's work to keep pupils safe; pupils' safety is regularly discussed at governing body meetings and governors ensure they are appropriately trained in different aspects of safeguarding. Governors make a valuable contribution to the formulation and review of the academy's policies.

Pupils say they enjoy being at school and feel safe. The vast majority of parents and staff agree. Pupils know about different types of bullying but say that it occurs

very rarely. If it does happen they feel confident that staff would deal with it quickly, sensitively and effectively. Pupils value the care and support they receive from staff. They say they can openly discuss concerns with adults across the academy and know they will be listened to and helped. As one pupil explained, 'Little things don't get ignored.' Pupils are offered, and enthusiastically take up, the wide range of opportunities for extra responsibility, particularly to support and help each other, for example by being anti-bullying ambassadors or prefects. Pupils' understanding of British values is well developed through a rich and varied curriculum. Pupils have a very well-developed sense of respect and acceptance. As one pupil said, 'The worst thing you could do in this school would be to discriminate against someone for the way they are.'

Leaders have taken a robust and rigorous approach to ensure pupils are kept safe when they are online. Skilled staff have been employed to develop and support the safe use of information technology. The curriculum includes an appropriate range of topics that allow pupils to explore and develop their understanding of e-safety effectively.

Leaders ensure the academy provides comprehensive and sustained help to more vulnerable pupils and their families. Leaders draw effectively on an extensive range of internal and external support to do this. They continually review the needs and concerns of pupils to provide appropriate support, for example the academy employs its own counsellor four days a week. The academy's staff frequently show perseverance and tenacity to 'go the extra mile' to secure help that pupils need.

### **External support**

Leaders make excellent use of external support. They liaise quickly and effectively with local authority officers over any safeguarding concerns. As a result of your work representing a group of local schools at the local safeguarding children board, you have ensured that emerging issues relating to safeguarding are rapidly addressed in the academy.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Medway Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Moore  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**