

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



5 November 2020

Matthew Tate
Principal
Hartsdown Academy
George V Avenue
Margate
Kent
CT9 5RE

Dear Mr Tate

Ofsted visit to Hartsdown Academy

Following my visit with Lee Selby, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 20 October 2020, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the visit's findings. Thank you for the time you made available to discuss your actions since September 2020, when the government expected all schools to open fully to all pupils.

This visit was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for visiting schools while routine inspections are temporarily suspended.

Ofsted's visits to schools during the autumn term are not inspections. We are not giving graded judgements. We did not undertake the usual range of inspection activities and were unable to check other sources of evidence, such as visits to lessons or looking at pupils' work. The content of this letter gives an overview of our discussions about what has happened in your school this term.

During the visit, we spoke to you, two deputy principals, an assistant principal and the senior leader responsible for safeguarding. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures in place.

Context

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's education system is managing the return to full

education for pupils, following an extended break in formal schooling due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

In undertaking this focused work, HMI are visiting a broad range of schools. HMI will visit a sample of:

- approximately 1,200 schools across all Ofsted grades (outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate)
- maintained schools, academies and free schools, special schools and centres of alternative provision, including those in cities, and coastal, town or rural communities.

The information from this visit will feed into Ofsted's national reporting so that the insights can be shared with the government and the education sector. We did not find any significant concerns during the visit. In such a case, an inspection report would be published on our website and available to parents and carers.

We did not consider your response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer terms 2020, when the school was not open to all pupils.

From this visit, inspectors noted that:

- You opened the school to Year 7 and Year 12 pupils on 1 September 2020. All year groups were expected to attend full time from 2 September 2020.
- Since the start of the autumn term, pupils' rates of attendance have been slightly above those in the autumn term last year.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 9 have returned to a full range of subjects. You have asked teachers to check what pupils know, understand and remember from their previous learning. Teachers are adapting what they teach based on these checks. For example, in Year 7, teachers are focusing on improving pupils' reading and mathematics.
- Pupils in Year 10 are studying a full range of subjects. You consulted with pupils and families and are now allowing pupils in Year 11 to learn one less subject this year. Leaders do not intend to continue this arrangement beyond this academic year. Teachers have assessed where pupils are in their learning and are focused on helping pupils to catch up with the work that they have missed.
- There have been no changes to the range of subjects students study in the sixth form.
- You have put plans in place to deliver the curriculum remotely if needed. These plans include online lessons delivered by staff. Learning will be delivered

through a combination of pre-recorded and virtual lessons that mirror the school's curriculum.

Thank you again for contributing to this important national work. The views and experiences you have shared will help to inform future policy.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of the Coastal Academies Trust multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Harry Ingham
Her Majesty's Inspector