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17 December 2020

Daniel Hatley  
Executive Principal  
High Weald Academy  
Angley Road  
Cranbrook  
Kent  
TN17 2PJ

Dear Mr Hatley

### **Ofsted remote visit to High Weald Academy**

Following my remote visit with Julie Sackett, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 19 November, 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. Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the school.

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, the chief executive officer of the Brook Learning Trust, the head of school and an assistant principal. We did not speak to pupils.

### **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 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:**

- A small proportion of pupils have had to study at home since the start of school in September.
- Your team has begun to find out what pupils know and can do in all subjects. Leaders are using this information to make changes to what pupils learn in some subjects. For example, in English, you have identified the need to broaden pupils' vocabulary in Year 9.
- With the exception of computing, pupils in Years 7 to 9 are studying all of the subjects that they usually would. Additional English and mathematics lessons have replaced computing because you found that pupils had fallen behind the most in these subject areas. You plan to reintroduce computing to the curriculum in Years 7 to 9 by September 2021.
- In Years 10 and 11, pupils are studying the school's normal range of exam courses, with some adjustments in some subjects. In geography, for example, pupils will be learning about coastal processes later in Year 10, to allow time to revisit the associated geographical skills that some pupils have forgotten.
- You have put plans in place to deliver the curriculum remotely if needed. Currently, if a pupil has to study at home because of issues related to COVID-19, they are provided with links to online learning. You are planning to deliver learning through a combination of virtual lessons and online activities 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 Brook Learning 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**