

Brompton Hall School

Brompton Hall School, High Street, Brompton-by-Sawdon, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO13 9DB

Inspection dates

13/02/2017 to 15/02/2017

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good **2**

The quality of care and support

Outstanding 1

How well children and young people are protected

Good 2

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Good 2

Summary of key findings

The residential provision is good because

- Pupils enjoy being at school and thrive from the excellent care and support they receive.
- Pupils make at least good progress personally, socially and academically. They make huge strides in their learning, social skills and self-esteem compared to previous placements.
- Staff are experienced, kind and caring. They are committed and motivated to supporting pupils to achieve. Pupils are well prepared for the future when they leave school.
- Pupils' lives are significantly enhanced through the variety of activities and new life experiences they enjoy at school and in the wider community.
- Safeguarding arrangements are robust and pupils feel safe.
- Leaders manage the residential provision effectively. Monitoring processes demonstrate the positive impact living at school has for these pupils.
- The school meets all the national minimum standards. A number of areas are highlighted for the school to build upon existing good practice.

Compliance with the national minimum standards for residential special schools

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the systems for tracking pupils' personal, social and emotional progress, and be more descriptive of these types of progress in school reports.
- Fully implement the trial of the serious incident briefing system and use this to explore how to reduce the number of the most restrictive physical interventions.
- Develop risk management strategies to: include an overarching written risk assessment policy; use reviews of risk assessments to show if pupils are safer; and fully demonstrate that sleeping arrangements for all pupils are safe.
- Maintain an up-to-date chronology of the referrals to children's services and any follow-up action taken by the school or other agencies.
- Make a clear distinction in records and practice between missing and unauthorised absence incidents in line with local protocols agreed between the police and the local authority.
- Ensure that the headteacher's termly reports to the governing body provide accurate and up-to-date information. Include in these reports information pertaining to allegations about staff.
- Develop the quality of the monitoring reports that are completed under national minimum standard 20. Consider broadening networks with other schools to facilitate improvements to evaluation and review systems.

Information about this inspection

Ofsted gave the school two and a half hours' notice of the inspection. The inspector spoke to residential pupils across different year groups, individually and in small groups. Time was spent observing routines at tea time and evening activities, and how residential pupils and staff interact. The inspector met with a range of staff including the headteacher, head of care, the vice-chair of governors and residential staff. Parents' views were collated from the Ofsted 'Parent View' website and from direct contact during the inspection. The inspector consulted with representatives from the local authority's safeguarding teams and examined a range of records, policies and procedures in relation to the safeguarding and care of residential pupils.

Inspection team

Simon Morley

Lead social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

Brompton Hall School is a local authority maintained residential special school for up to 65 boys, located near to Scarborough in North Yorkshire. The residential provision accommodates over 40 pupils and provides extended days to a number of pupils who do not board. All pupils have an educational and healthcare plan in respect of their emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. There are three residential units within the main building that are age-specific. The youngest pupils are accommodated in a separate house within the school grounds. The residential service operates during term time, Monday to Thursday. At the time of inspection, there were 42 boarders and another 16 with extended days. The age range of pupils was from 8 to 16 years old.

Inspection judgements

The overall experiences and progress of children and young people

Good

Leaders and managers are committed to providing pupils with excellent care so that they all have positive experiences and achieve their potential. There are good outcomes for pupils who have struggled previously in other schools and have had to cope with difficulties in their home lives.

Staff understand the needs of individual pupils very well, and the care that they receive is of high quality. Pupils generally make good progress and in some cases achieve more than is expected of them. They enjoy staying at the school, make friends with their peers and form trusting relationships with staff. Leaders consider very thoughtfully requests to board less and for pupils to go home more often. This leads to appropriate decisions that take full account of pupils' individual needs and their welfare and safety. One parent commented, 'He had got nearly two years behind at his last school and has now caught up and surpassed expectations. We have just agreed that for two days he will come home on the bus to promote his independence.'

Pupils significantly improve their life chances from developing their social and communication skills, coping strategies and independence. The whole-school approach to improving emotional well-being, behaviour and developing new skills helps prepare pupils for life after school. The school has a good track record in supporting pupils to continue with their education or training when they leave.

Leaders regularly monitor pupil progress with well-developed systems to support educational achievements. There is a new system in the residential provision that is less robust in tracking personal, social and emotional development. Links to outcomes in educational healthcare plans are not always clear. Residential reports of pupils' progress could be more informative about their personal and social achievements.

In practice, pupils, parents and staff know the difference the school makes and the strong impact it has on the lives of pupils. Pupils commented that it is a good place to learn and better than their previous schools. They make good use of aids in the classroom, such as gadgets to hold for pupils who are prone to fidgeting and special boards to help improve pupils' writing. There is extra help for pupils who struggle to concentrate. As time goes by pupils can see a big difference in their behaviours, attitudes and achievements.

There is very good communication between the school and parents, carers and social workers. Parents are happy with the school and comment positively about the levels of support for pupils, the strong impact on pupil confidence and social skills, and the management of the school. These statements are typical of parents' views: 'He has his ups and downs but he has come a lot further here and does a lot better. Staff will always listen to me and ask me what I think,' and 'The school has made a world of difference, his review was positive, he gets really good reports and I get to see plenty of photos of what he has done.'

Pupils receive excellent care and support. They commented that staff are very friendly and treat them well. Staff are kind and respectful while still addressing any concerns about pupils' behaviour. Consequently, pupils' emotional well-being improves and they feel safer. Pupils commented that they spend less time being absent, in detention or misbehaving. A parent said, 'I have got my son back, they couldn't help him at his last school, here they have the expertise and know what to do.' Staff have a very good knowledge of pupils and their individual needs. Consequently, pupils receive targeted support in a way that significantly promotes their development.

Pupils understand that staff expect them to get on well together, and they do. Staff provide pupils with a wide range of enriching opportunities that help them develop their relationship skills. Pupils receive awards for their achievements, which builds their self-esteem and develops their positive attitudes towards the school.

Admissions to the school are very well managed. Prospective pupils are able to look around the school and enjoy an orienteering day before they start so that they are well aware of what to expect. Pupils receive a warm welcome from staff and their peers. One of the youngest pupils, recently new to the school, said, 'I was a bit scared at first, but now I love it.'

Comprehensive assessment and planning arrangements ensure a strong holistic approach to meeting pupils' needs. Pupils know what their individual targets are and what they have to do to achieve them. All pupils have an individual educational and healthcare plan that clearly sets out how the school will promote their educational, health, social, emotional and personal needs. Parents retain responsibility for their children's healthcare. In support of this, the head of care meets regularly with a consultant paediatrician to inform the planning of health needs. Pupils exercise regularly, the school provides them with a nutritious diet, and they are fit and healthy.

An excellent strength is the combination of caring and nurturing staff, incentives and rewards, and the inclusion and respect for pupils. This combination empowers pupils to overcome their emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Consequently, there is a significant knock-on effect in their ability to achieve well in class and make good progress academically. Pupils made typical comments such as, 'They treat us like individuals and adults. We like the rewards and want to do well so we get to do our favourite activities.'

Pupils board in one of the four residential units, each with a distinct staff team, and all pupils have an allocated key worker. Pupils feel able to raise concerns and there are a number of adults they can talk to about any problems. They know some of the school governors and that there is an independent person who will advocate for them if needed. Consultation with pupils is fully encapsulated in their care and support. They participate in care planning and target setting, and have regular key worker sessions. Pupils frequently raise matters with the school council and they consider this a good system for influencing the running of the school.

Pupils enjoy an excellent range of facilities and activities. There is an artificial grass area

for sports, tennis courts, a games room, a full size snooker table, hobbit holes and a music studio. Recently, a group of pupils enjoyed making a music video of a popular song and were proud to show it. Each unit also has its own lounge and games areas. Staff run various clubs and activities, including football, art, music, and swimming, and in the summer there are more adventurous outdoor activities, such as mountain biking and motor biking. At the time of inspection, pupils were excited to be joining in the Chinese New Year celebrations. Pupils learn about different cultures and develop their understanding of equality and democracy.

Participation in the more popular and exciting activities is dependent on pupils' behaviour and progress and their corresponding pass level. Pupils fully engage in the daily points system that leads to their passes, based on snooker ball colours: red is the lowest and black is the highest. In addition, there are separate unit and class awards, and 'curric' bonuses that pupils can trade in for tangible material rewards. These well-developed incentive and reward systems are strong motivators for pupils and there is friendly competition between peers to be the best.

How well children and young people are protected

Good

Residential pupils feel safe and they live in a friendly environment. They commented that there is no bullying. This extends to name-calling. The school has an anti-bullying committee and pupils do not want to appear before it out of shame. There is a strong approach to tackling bullying and pupils are included in deciding any consequences. Staff and pupils work very well together in sustaining a harmonious living environment. Pupils develop their personal responsibility and they get along well together and think highly of the school.

Staff are effective at managing any challenging behaviour. A pupil commented, 'Staff are very good at helping me keep calm.' This is a notable strength of the school and pupils' behaviour is very good. The incentives and rewards systems have a very good impact on pupils' motivation to do well. Pupils report that the school rules are fair and that they understand why there are times when staff may need to physically intervene if their behaviour becomes a risk to themselves or others. Staff practice is consistent, which gives residential pupils clear boundaries and predictable responses in line with their individual behaviour plans. Pupils find it helpful that staff talk to them about any incidents and support them to find appropriate coping strategies with their emotions. One parent commented, 'Staff can foresee problems and manage them well, his behaviour is much better.'

Senior staff oversee incidents and ensure that the staff response to pupils is fair and proportionate. The school is trialling a more robust and detailed recording system to enable better review and evaluation of practice. It is recommended that this system is fully implemented and used to explore opportunities to reduce the amount of the more restrictive physical interventions used.

The senior staff responsible for safeguarding pupils have developed links with the local authority's safeguarding teams. Issues raised about staff practice are managed in a comprehensive and robust way that keeps residential pupils safe. Likewise, concerns about a pupil's welfare and safety at home are referred to the appropriate agency. The

school's commitment to partnership working with the local authority is a contributing factor in promoting pupil safety. However, it is not always clear from tracking referrals what action has resulted. It is recommended that the school keep an up-to-date chronology of any follow-up action taken by the school or other agencies.

Pupils took part in the 'Safer Internet Day' and learned how to keep safe online. They learn about other personal safety issues, such as appropriate relationships, and experience how to manage risky activities, like motor biking. Pupils develop their independence and have further opportunities to manage risk by travelling independently to and from school. Pupils on the highest pass can go out into Scarborough after school. Safe decisions about these levels of independence are based on assessment of pupils' progress and achievements, and their ability to manage safely.

Individual pupil risk assessments include appropriate strategies to keep pupils safe. However, ongoing reviews of risk do not show whether risk is reducing and pupils are becoming safer. In relation to the management of sleeping accommodation, risk assessments are not fully developed to reflect all current strategies and demonstrate how all sleeping arrangements are safe for all pupils. While risk assessment is covered in a number of key policies, it would help improve the management of risk to develop an overarching written risk assessment policy.

Staff complete training around a range of safeguarding matters, including child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. They are aware of the signs that a pupil may be at risk and understand their responsibilities to report any concerns. Care practice when pupils absent themselves from school is good. Staff are committed to looking for pupils and ensuring their safe return to school or back home. It would be beneficial for evaluating this practice and work with other agencies if the school used a clearer distinction between missing and unauthorised absence.

The recruitment process for appointing new staff is robust. Consequently, only people who are suitable to work with vulnerable children work in the school.

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers

Good

School leaders are very experienced and work closely together so that the residential experience for pupils impacts strongly on their progress. Leaders have developed exceptionally strong whole-school strategies in promoting pupils' emotional and behavioural needs. The residential provision is a crucial and major part of the success in pupils achieving positive outcomes. Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and staff organise the daily life of the school very well to maximise pupils' contribution and engagement.

Leaders and staff want the best for pupils and work hard to consistently provide positive learning experiences. Use of an accelerated reading programme and the developing working memory project aims to improve educational progress. The new build-a-profile system contains visual images of pupils' achievements. This is good to show to parents and for pupils to keep when they leave the school. There is some progress with regards to the areas to develop from the last inspection. This includes improvements to risk assessment records, recruitment checks, and missing or absent from school records.

Staff complete an induction and a wide range of training. They have completed or are working towards the recommended level 3 qualification. There is regular supervision and annual appraisal of staff performance. Consequently, staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to support effectively the diverse needs of residential pupils. The good levels of staff support and robust management systems ensure that any practice issues are promptly resolved and that residential pupils benefit from high standards of care.

The governing body provides regular and challenging oversight of the school's performance. The governors have a good understanding of the school's impact on pupils and the benefits of the residential provision. The quality of reports from the headteacher are improving and enable the governors to examine more closely particular trends, such as the increase in use of physical intervention last term. One of the recent termly reports contained a discrepancy in information about the number of incidents, which can compromise the effectiveness of the review and evaluation of practice. To improve the governance role further, it is recommended that allegations about staff are reported to governors termly rather than annually. Half-termly monitoring reports about the conduct of the school completed by the governing body provide an extra level of scrutiny. For this system to be fully effective, the quality of these reports, level of detail and evaluation need to improve.

What inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools: the inspection framework'.

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A school where the experiences and progress of children and young people consistently exceeds the standard of good and results in sustained progress and achievement. The outcomes achieved by children and young people are outstanding and the impact the boarding/residential provision has had in supporting this progress and achieving these outcomes is clearly evidenced.
Good	A school providing effective services which exceed minimum requirements. Children and young people are protected and cared for and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.
Requires improvement	A school where there are no serious or widespread failures that result in children and young people's welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. However, the overall outcomes, experiences and progress of children and young people are not yet good.
Inadequate	A school where there are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded or if their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.

School details

Unique reference number	121764
Social care unique reference number	SC007923
DfE registration number	815/7000

This inspection was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Residential special school
Number of boarders on roll	61
Gender of boarders	Male
Age range of boarders	8 to 16
Headteacher	Mark Mihkelson
Date of previous boarding inspection	02/02/2016
Telephone number	01723 859 121
Email address	headteacher@bromptonhall.n-yorks.sch.uk

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