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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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1 November 2017

Ms Sharon Young  
Headteacher  
Brompton Hall School  
High Street  
Brompton-by-Sawdon  
Scarborough  
North Yorkshire  
YO13 9DB

Dear Ms Young

### **Short inspection of Brompton Hall School**

Following my visit to the school on 18 October 2017 with Sara Roe HMI, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in March 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, with your governors and leadership team, know the strengths and areas for further development of the school very well. Your determination and vision for the future development of the school ensure that it continues to improve.

Since taking up post as the interim headteacher in September 2017, you have continued to bring about important changes to meet the needs of your pupils ever more closely. For example, with your leadership team, you are developing new, holistic approaches to respond to each pupil's education, health and care plan (EHC plan) through an individual action plan. You have set about developing ways to build pupils' skills and abilities to deal with the challenges they face in their learning and personal development.

With your governors and other leaders, you evaluate carefully the effectiveness of the school. You make effective use of detailed tracking information about how well pupils are learning and progressing, and their personal development. This enables you and your senior leaders to support and challenge staff to enable pupils to develop as well as they should. As a result, your plan for school improvement accurately identifies the most important areas for improvement.

In their work with pupils, staff show that they are committed to doing the best they

can to help pupils achieve and thrive. Staff have excellent relationships with pupils. By modelling respectful relationships and determination to do well, staff mirror the values and vision that you promote for the benefit of pupils.

Often, pupils have disrupted histories of school education, and some have records of low attendance over a significant period of time, before coming to the school. The vast majority settle quickly in the school's caring environment and begin to attend regularly. Pupils develop more positive attitudes to learning and grow in self-confidence as a consequence. However, a small number do not attend regularly enough.

Overall, pupils make good progress from their starting points across a range of subjects. You make effective use of regular checks on pupils' progress to ensure that pupils are learning well.

Very detailed records of pupils' learning and emotional needs supplement the information you gather through baseline assessments to set challenging targets. This enables you to assess accurately how quickly pupils learn. As a consequence, leaders know that a small number of pupils could be challenged further to accelerate their progress.

Teachers plan learning carefully to ensure that work meets the needs of all pupils. Classroom assistants are deployed efficiently and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils engage in lessons readily and enjoy learning as a result. Pupils value the rewards systems, which staff use consistently to recognise pupils' positive attitudes and achievement.

The extended school day provides for significant enrichment in pupils' school experiences. Alongside the rich range of educational visits and trips, the extended school day supports pupils' wider achievement well. It builds their self-confidence and promotes their personal development and well-being very effectively. Pupils themselves are clear that the opportunities and structure that this part of the day gives them are enjoyable and enriching. They say it reduces significantly the likelihood of them engaging in antisocial behaviours outside of school. As such, it contributes to their safety and safeguarding, as well as potentially reducing the burden on other public services and agencies.

The pride that staff share with pupils in their achievements reflects the school's success in re-establishing positive attitudes to learning. You and your staff are justifiably proud of pupils' attainment in a wide range of external qualifications. These help prepare pupils very well for their next steps in education and training on appropriate courses in further education. No pupils leave the school without a clear pathway for their future education and training.

**Safeguarding is effective.**

The in-depth knowledge that staff have of pupils' needs and the up-to-date training for staff are central to your work to create and sustain a positive culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff have a wide understanding of risks to pupils' welfare. They are vigilant for any signs of possible neglect or abuse. Staff know what to do when they have a concern. The school is prompt to involve other agencies and teams appropriately, whenever it has a concern.

Governors ensure that leaders for safeguarding have the training and time that they require to fulfil their roles effectively. The checks and processes to ensure that only suitable adults work with pupils are carried out and recorded thoroughly.

You ensure that pupils have opportunities to learn about how to keep themselves safe, in particular with regard to using digital technology and social networking sites. As a consequence, pupils know and understand how to keep themselves safe, including when they are out of school.

### **Inspection findings**

- During our visit, we focused on how well pupils make progress from their starting points across a range of subjects. The checks you make regularly on pupils' progress enable you to challenge staff and further personalise pupils' learning. As a result, despite some inconsistencies in a small number of cases, the vast majority of pupils make good and better progress.
- You have refined the school's systems for checking pupils' progress across all subjects. As a consequence, you are pleased with the progress that pupils make across the full range of their subjects.
- You are very pleased with the improvements that pupils make in reading since you introduced the reading programme recently. Many pupils increase their reading age quickly. As a consequence, pupils are enabled to learn more easily across all their subjects.
- Our work scrutiny showed that pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, who make up the large majority of the school's population, make the same good progress as others.
- Work in books shows that the most able pupils are challenged well to deepen their thinking. As a result, they often make very strong progress. For pupils in lower and middle prior attainment groups, while their progress is strong, there are missed opportunities for more frequent extended writing to support their learning further.
- A further key focus of our visit was the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The work we saw in pupils' books and the lessons we visited with you and colleagues confirmed your view that teaching is effective. Teachers have detailed knowledge of pupils' needs and plan learning that engages and interests them. Teachers maintain high expectations of pupils' conduct and learning. Teaching assistants are used effectively to help pupils learn. Teachers use questions very effectively to check that pupils have understood, and to help them

if they struggle. Sometimes, staff miss opportunities to use their questions to find out when pupils are ready to be moved on more quickly to more challenging work.

- The curriculum is well structured to provide pupils with the opportunities to progress across a wide range of subjects and to sit for external examinations. You ensure that pupils are helped to face the pressures of examination by beginning to complete external qualifications from Year 9 onwards. You provide a personalised pathway to increasingly challenging levels of accreditation. As a result, an increasing proportion of pupils succeed at level 1 and 2 qualifications such as GCSEs, including in English and mathematics.
- The good progress that pupils make and improving attainment are testament to the effective delivery of the curriculum. Pupils and parents agree that the school is effective in re-engaging pupils in their learning. The extended day provides important additionality that supports pupils' wider learning and further opportunities for personal development, for example by developing team-working skills and engaging in charitable works for the wider community.
- The positive attitude of pupils and the determined work of staff have led to a steady improvement in overall attendance over time. Almost all pupils attend school much better than in their previous schools. Leaders and governors are keenly aware that there remains a small number of pupils who do not attend often enough. The school works doggedly with families and appropriate agencies to enable these pupils to attend more regularly.
- Plans for further development are accurately identified. Progress towards priorities is checked carefully by governors, who find out for themselves how well the school is doing. However, plans do not always give enough detail about how much improvement is expected.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers are trained in the effective use of questioning to challenge pupils to move on more rapidly as soon as they are ready to do so, by extending their knowledge and deepening their understanding
- governors set numerical targets for improvement wherever possible, including for improvement in attendance of those who do not attend regularly enough.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Campbell  
**Ofsted Inspector**  
**Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, other senior leaders and members of the governing body. We held discussions with pupils and observed them during the course of the school day. Inspectors observed learning in lessons and looked at a wide range of pupils' work. We also evaluated the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe, and considered a range of other documents. These included records of pupils' progress, their behaviour, and the school's plans for improvement.