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11 February 2022

Mrs Elaine Mallen  
Interim Headteacher  
Brompton Hall School  
High Street  
Brompton-by-Sawdon  
Scarborough  
North Yorkshire  
YO13 9DB

Dear Mrs Mallen

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Brompton Hall School**

Following my visit to your school on 12 and 13 January 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in June 2021. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

This was the third inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. I discussed the ongoing impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

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

**Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

**The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.**

**The school may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.**

I am copying this letter to the chair of the executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Hubbard  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Report on the first monitoring inspection on 12 and 13 January 2022**

### **Context**

The recently appointed temporary assistant headteacher with responsibility for curriculum development left at the end of the autumn term 2022. The business manager left in autumn 2022. A new permanent office manager has been appointed and will take up their post later on this term. A new assistant headteacher has been appointed on a part-time basis. She took up her post in January 2022. A member of staff was appointed in July 2021 to coordinate and oversee pupil placements. There have been very recent changes in staff occupying the roles of designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL. These roles are currently occupied by the interim headteacher and the pupils placement coordinator respectively.

In autumn term 2021, an interim executive board (IEB) was appointed to oversee governance of the school. IEB members are currently in discussions with a potential multi-academy trust sponsor for the school.

### **The progress made towards the removal of special measures**

Since the previous full inspection, school leaders and the IEB have rightly prioritised improving pupils' behaviour and strengthening safeguarding. Leaders' determined focus on safety and behaviour has paid off. Pupils behave better in class and around the site. Pupils are now more respectful towards each other and towards the staff. Aggressive behaviour is rarer. As a result, pupils are generally safer. However, some aspects of the quality of education have not improved to the same extent as behaviour and safeguarding. For example, reading needs improving further and plans to develop the curriculum are in their early stages.

The statement of action gives a detailed overview of how all the areas for improvement from the previous inspection report will be developed. Leaders have usefully updated this document to show the progress to date that has been made in moving the school forward. Members of the IEB carefully monitor whether leaders have carried out planned actions and how well these actions are working. Some targets for improving the curriculum will take time to implement and embed. The statement of action does not include any milestones that the IEB and school leaders could use to check whether short-term actions taken to achieve these long-term goals are effective.

Leaders have also focused on training staff in how to manage pupils' behaviour. Staff now know a number of techniques for defusing situations when pupils become agitated. Staff commented favourably to the inspector on the training and support that they have received. Due to training in managing pupils' behaviour, the number of physical restraints that staff use on pupils has vastly reduced. Leaders have also introduced a better system for sanctions and rewards. Pupils told inspectors that they liked the new system because it is fairer. It motivates pupils to behave well.

Leaders now gather useful information about pupils' behaviour, which is analysed carefully. Leaders' analysis shows that since the summer term 2021, there has been a reduction in serious incidents, notably occasions when pupils climb up onto roofs. Pupils and staff commented that improvements in behaviour have made the day-to-day experience of coming to school much better than it was. However, developments in teaching pupils about language that causes offence, such as homophobic language, are in their infancy. For example, the equalities group has only met once, and their work is not yet having an impact across the school.

The headteacher and leaders have improved many aspects of safeguarding. The safeguarding culture in the school is now better. Staff are more aware of statutory guidance and their own responsibilities. Leaders have tightened up record-keeping relating to safeguarding. For example, staff are much clearer about the procedures for recording any concerns that they may have about pupils. Staff now write up incidents in detail using appropriate language. In addition, a part-time business manager with expertise in the pre-appointment checks that staff require is working alongside the interim headteacher. Together, they are ensuring that the single central record is better managed. Individual staff files that include copies of references and other pre-appointment checks are now more systematically organised.

Lately, there has been some flux in the leadership of safeguarding. Changes in the roles of DSL and deputy DSL have not had a negative impact on pupils' safety and well-being. This is because the new DSL was previously the deputy DSL. Both leaders have detailed knowledge about the referrals made to the local authority.

Leaders are now focusing on the safety and well-being of pupils who attend alternative provision off site and also pupils who access their learning remotely. The interim headteacher has reviewed the school's use of alternative provision. She has wisely made changes where she has assessed that it is not meeting pupils' needs well enough, including keeping them safe. She has appointed a member of staff with specific responsibility for overseeing the safety and education of pupils using alternative provision, pupils educated remotely and those who do not attend. The attendance of a small number of pupils remains extremely low. The new pupil placement coordinator and the DSL work closely together to ensure that regular checks are made on the well-being and safety of these pupils. Leaders need to ensure that these checks are consistently rigorous.

The new IEB has a great deal of educational expertise within it. The board has supported the interim headteacher well in making necessary changes. The IEB carefully checks to see how well the improvements outlined on the statement of action are being implemented. Minutes from the board meetings show that they ask probing questions about the information they receive from the school. They have rightly challenged school leaders about the pace of improvements to the curriculum. They have sensibly identified that in the next phase of improvements senior leaders will need to apply a more tactical approach. However, at the moment, the interim headteacher is bearing the brunt of making key improvements. The IEB recognises that this is not sustainable long term and is working closely with the local authority to strengthen leadership in the school.

The interim headteacher is determined that pupils gain knowledge in a broad range of subjects. However, changes to the curriculum are in their early stages and patchy. In English and history, where subject leadership is stronger, the curriculum has been thoughtfully sequenced so that pupils can better build on prior learning. However, improvements in other subjects, including phonics, are in their early stages. For example, staff have not been trained in how to deliver the phonics programme chosen by the school. Primary leaders are currently carrying out assessments on primary-aged pupils to establish what support they need in reading. Some secondary-aged pupils also need additional help. Extra reading support for secondary-aged pupils is also in its infancy.

### **Additional support**

The local authority has supported the school by appointing an IEB with extensive educational experience. The local authority has also provided the school with a part-time business manager who has provided useful assistance in improving the single central record. The school is benefiting from support from the local authority's expert in behaviour and restorative justice, who is working with both staff and pupils on a part-time basis. The local authority school improvement partner has also been working closely with school leaders to make sure actions are being suitably prioritised. More recently she has been working alongside subject leaders to develop the curriculum. This support is strengthening the confidence and expertise of subject leaders in designing the curriculum in subjects they oversee. This work has not progressed as far as developments in behaviour and safeguarding.

### **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised documents, including behaviour records and the updated statement of action. The inspector met with the interim headteacher on her own and also along with members of the senior leadership team. On separate occasions she met individually with members of the senior leadership team. The inspector held meetings with the business manager and reviewed the single central record. The inspector also reviewed records of safeguarding concerns and referrals. Social care inspectors joined the inspector for the safeguarding meeting with the DSL and deputy DSL, and for an online meeting with the IEB members, including the chair of the IEB. The inspector also met with small groups of pupils on several occasions, joined pupils for lunch, and met with members of the newly formed equalities group. The inspector also met the history, English and personal, social and health education subject leaders and reviewed curriculum planning in those subjects. The inspector listened to pupils read to staff they trusted and met with the senior leader who has oversight of early reading.