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Elaine Mallen  
Interim headteacher  
Brompton Hall School  
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Scarborough  
North Yorkshire  
YO13 9DB

Dear Mrs Mallen

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

Following my visit to your school on 8 and 9 June 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 previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second 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 second routine 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:

**The school continues to be inadequate. Leaders and those responsible for governance are not taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

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

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim 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 second monitoring inspection on 8 and 9 June 2022**

### **Context**

The school is in the process of joining Venn Academy Trust.

In conjunction with the local authority, the school has commissioned a consultant leader from Venn Academy Trust to undertake the role of assistant headteacher temporarily on a part-time basis.

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

The school's progress towards the removal of special measures has slowed and some aspects have gone backwards. In part, this is due to factors beyond leaders' control which have had an adverse effect on the pupil and staff body. These include difficulties in recruiting new staff. However, the school's sluggish progress towards the removal of special measures is also due to weaknesses in leaders' approaches to improvement. Leaders have not prioritised key changes that are necessary for the school to improve. They have not ensured that staff receive the training they need to manage behaviour and develop the curriculum. Some staff with leadership responsibilities do not have the capacity to carry out their roles well.

Pupils' behaviour has declined since the previous monitoring inspection. One reason is that pupils have been unsettled by proposed changes to the provision. However, staff are not handling pupils' more challenging behaviour well. A number feel unsure about how to respond when a pupil is in crisis because they have not received adequate training. In addition, some staff have recently received training in new methods for de-escalating behaviour and are using these. This has led to confusion within the staff body, with some mixed messages about how staff should manage pupils in crisis. As a result, exclusions have risen compared with the previous term and the number of serious incidents has gone up. This includes incidents of violence and aggression in which pupils injure themselves and/or members of staff. Staff and pupils do not feel safe in school because of the increased frequency and severity of such incidents. Some pupils told the inspector that they were concerned about being injured and when pupils are in crisis.

Safeguarding has not developed since the last monitoring inspection. Some aspects are weaker now than they were at the time of the previous visit. Both the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the deputy DSL have a number of other roles. This limits the time and attention that they can give to safeguarding. As a result, some important safeguarding actions and checks have not been undertaken. For instance, important recommendations from the local authority's review of the single central record had not been put in place at the time of the inspection. Leaders had not ensured that well-being visits have been made to the small number of Year 11 pupils learning from home on a full-time basis. Information from internet monitoring shows that a number of pupils have conducted internet searches that raise safeguarding concerns. The DSL and deputy DSL

have not reviewed this information carefully enough. As a consequence, some potential safeguarding issues have yet to be followed up.

Leaders' work to develop the curriculum has stalled since the previous monitoring inspection. One major reason for this is that leaders spend most of their time dealing with behaviour issues. Since the previous monitoring visit, staff have received limited training in developing the curriculum and teaching subject-specific content. The consultant leader who is working with the school on an interim, part-time basis has recently developed a detailed action plan. This plan outlines how the curriculum and subject-related expertise will be developed over the next few months. The plan rightly focuses on developing staff's subject knowledge. Some initial actions outlined in the plan have been implemented. For example, the consultant leader has undertaken a curriculum audit. She has a clear understanding of the current picture. However, many areas for development outlined in the plan are in their infancy.

Developments in the way reading is taught have also plateaued. This, in part, is due to factors beyond the school's control, such as training in phonics by an external provider being cancelled. However, leaders have not made use of freely available resources to ensure staff have a grounding in the basic principles of phonics. There are some misconceptions in the current approaches to helping pupils learn to read, such as encouraging pupils to guess words.

The interim executive board (IEB) have assisted the interim headteacher in her efforts to recruit staff for vacant positions. Despite their best efforts, the IEB and interim headteacher have not managed to recruit permanent staff for some key roles. This has resulted in some leaders taking responsibility for too many areas. The IEB also keeps a close eye on whether actions in the improvement plan have been completed. Minutes from meetings show that, on occasion, IEB members have supported senior leaders by carrying out actions on the improvement plan. The IEB has challenged leaders regarding the impact of actions they have taken. However, leaders' actions are not always well prioritised. This has led to some crucial actions not being undertaken, such as welfare checks on Year 11 pupils who work remotely and important training for staff in managing behaviour.

### **Additional support**

The local authority is monitoring the school closely. The assistant director for education and skills attends meetings of the IEB. She has a detailed overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The local authority has supported the school by providing experts from the inclusion team who work with staff and pupils. However, staff from the local authority's specialist team who set up the pupil equalities group no longer work with the school. Work to support pupils in expressing their views about school and society using appropriate language has stalled.

The school improvement partner (SIP) from the local authority has not focused on the curriculum over this term as much as in the previous term. This area for development

needs further work. There are plans in place for the SIP to resume supporting leaders from across different subjects in developing the curriculum. Support from the SIP has had a positive impact on the English curriculum. Now greater emphasis is placed on pupils studying quality texts within the English curriculum.

## **Evidence**

The inspector observed the school's work and scrutinised documents, including behaviour records, safeguarding records and the latest improvement plan. The inspector also met, both together and separately, with the interim headteacher, the consultant leader taking the role of assistant headteacher and the part-time assistant headteacher responsible for behaviour. The inspector held meetings with the office manager and reviewed the single central record. The inspector met with the DSL and the deputy DSL. She also reviewed records of safeguarding concerns and referrals. The inspector met with the English subject lead accompanied by the primary phase teacher and, separately, with the technology subject lead. The inspector met with some staff who have undertaken training in new approaches to managing behaviour, along with a member of staff who is leading on introducing these new approaches. A meeting was held with the pupil placement coordinator, along with the consultant assistant headteacher. The inspector held online meetings with the IEB members, including the chair of the IEB. The inspector also met with small groups of pupils from different year groups and joined pupils for lunch. The inspector listened to pupils read to staff they trusted. The inspector held online meetings with the assistant directors of education and skills from North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC), along with the assistant director for inclusion from NYCC. An online meeting was also held with the school improvement partner from the local authority.