

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



8 December 2022

Mrs P Dubas  
Executive headteacher  
Brompton Hall School  
High Street  
Brompton-by-Sawdon  
Scarborough  
North Yorkshire  
YO13 9DB

Dear Mrs Dubas

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

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection of your school that took place on 7 December 2022 on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the third monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require special measures following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in June 2021.

During the inspection, I met separately with you and with members of your senior leadership team, with leaders who oversee pupils' placements and the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), the phonics leader, staff, members of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and a representative from the local authority to discuss actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also reviewed your most recent development plans and the single central record. I visited classes, including a phonics session, and met with a group of pupils. I have considered these discussions and inspection activities in coming to my judgement.

**Brompton Hall Special School remains inadequate and requires special measures. Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the category of concern to be removed.**

**The school may appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection, in all subjects except mathematics.**

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

Since the previous inspection, the interim headteacher has left. You took up your post as executive headteacher in September 2022. You and your senior leaders are committed to improving the school. While you are determined to make improvements at pace, you recognise that many changes are new and need time to become fully embedded.

Since the previous monitoring inspection, you and your senior leaders have made a number of fundamental changes to the school. For example, you have established separate provision for primary-aged pupils and secondary-aged pupils. This has meant that primary-aged pupils are calmer. They are less influenced by the behaviour of some older pupils. You have also set up a new provision within the school, known as 'Access'. This provision caters for pupils who are transitioning into the school from another school and those who may struggle in larger classes. A number of pupils who were previously attending alternative provision have transitioned into the 'Access' provision. Pupils in the 'Access' provision receive additional support and a bespoke curriculum. For instance, targeted pupils receive therapies and take part in a specialist programme, which assists them in managing their emotions. As a result, pupils who previously became anxious and went into crisis regularly are now more settled. The organisational changes mentioned above are working well and are having a positive impact on pupils' learning and behaviour.

You have rightly prioritised developing the curriculum. You and your leaders have ensured that a broad range of subjects is taught in key stages 2 and 3. You have high ambitions for all pupils, intending that all pupils will take GCSE courses in English, science and mathematics as a minimum. You rightly evaluate that the secondary provision in English and science is currently stronger than it is in mathematics. You have also introduced a number of optional GCSE subjects into key stage 4, which pupils choose when they are in Year 9. In key stage 3, pupils also take a range of unit awards, including some in vocational subjects. However, in key stage 4, you do not offer a broad enough range of level 2 vocational qualifications to support pupils who wish to pursue vocational courses post-16. You and your leaders are aware of this and plan to broaden the key stage 4 curriculum in the future.

Senior leaders have worked alongside subject teachers to outline the topics that pupils will be taught, year by year, in all the subjects that you offer. Together, they have ensured that topics are sequenced in a logical order and enable pupils to gain subject-related concepts. Subject teachers, overseen by senior leaders, have started to detail the specific knowledge and skills that pupils need in order to master each topic. These more detailed plans are in their infancy and are underdeveloped currently. They will be reviewed regularly moving forwards. You are aware that comprehensive planning for each topic has increased teachers' workload. You have provided support for teachers by ensuring that their personal planning time is protected. Teachers appreciate this support. You recognise the ongoing need to monitor the workload of teachers as they continue this curriculum development work.

You have started to develop the role of subject leader in the secondary provision. You rightly judge this to be a priority. In order to take on the role of subject leader, subject teachers need greater expertise in curriculum development, teaching and assessment. Across all key stages, teachers have not received enough training in subject-specific teaching approaches nor in how to adapt their teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In addition, some teaching assistants have not had sufficient training to make a strong enough contribution to assisting pupils with SEND in class, such as by adapting resources so that pupils with SEND can understand them. You have strong plans in place to develop teachers' and teaching assistants' expertise in these areas over the coming months through training and support from senior leaders.

Over the autumn term, you and your leaders have been developing reading, including phonics. Some aspects of teaching for reading have progressed since the previous monitoring inspection. There is now a phonics leader in place. The new phonics leader has assessed all pupils and identified those pupils who need help with phonics. Pupils who need help now receive one-to-one, additional phonics sessions. The staff delivering these sessions have had some training in the principles of phonics from the local English hub. However, they have not had sufficient training in the specific phonics programme they are planning to deliver. Teachers also need more training in how to support older pupils who do not read fluently. There is not a strong enough focus on developing reading for pleasure across the school.

Staff have received training so that they can implement new approaches to managing pupils' behaviour. For example, teachers and teaching assistants have received training from a specialist company in how to support pupils when they are in crisis. This training includes guidance on using physical restraint. Staff are now clearer about the school's policy regarding physical restraint. Senior leaders have also trained staff on the school's own behaviour policy and how to implement it. Pupils took a while to get used to the new policy and staff's raised expectations as regard to pupils' behaviour. For the first two months in the autumn term, as new approaches were being introduced, leaders recorded a high number of behaviour incidents. This number is now declining. The number of physical restraints also increased during this period, but these too are now decreasing. Staff use physical restraint as a last resort to ensure the safety of pupils in crisis and the safety of those around them. Some staff raised concerns about pupils' behaviour in the staff survey commissioned by the interim executive board in the summer term. I spoke to pupils informally and formally during the inspection. There was strong agreement among them that behaviour had improved since last term. They also said that some pupils' behaviour in class was poor, but teachers were getting better at dealing with it. Although behaviour is improving, new approaches are not fully embedded. You have rightly identified that improving pupils' behaviour remains a sharp focus for leaders and staff.

Pupils' attendance is improving. One reason for this is that you have reduced the number of pupils using alternative provision, many of whose attendance at the alternative provision was poor. The pupil-placement officer works closely with a group of pupils who do not attend regularly, despite your efforts. Where necessary, she ensures that home

visits are made to check on their well-being and safety. This group of pupils is missing out on their education as a result of their poor attendance.

You and your leaders have improved safeguarding. You have established a strong safeguarding team, consisting of three deputy DSLs and the pupil-placement officer. The team works well together, discussing individual cases and challenging each other, where necessary. The member of the IEB with responsibility for safeguarding oversees the safeguarding team closely, attending their meetings every half term and reading minutes from weekly meetings. A member of the safeguarding team is dedicated to responding to information from your monitoring of what pupils search for online. Each incident in which inappropriate content is searched for is now carefully followed up. You have also placed greater emphasis on issues such as pornography and consent as part of your relationships and sex education programme. All the recommendations from the local authority's thorough audit of the single central record have now been implemented. The member of the IEB responsible for safeguarding makes regular checks on the single central record.

Following my previous monitoring inspection, the IEB insisted that the pace of improvement picked up. The IEB has secured additional leadership capacity from the multi-academy trust that the school is intending to join in February 2023. The chair of the IEB is clear that my last monitoring visit caused members of IEB to reflect on their approach to date. He recognises that in the past the IEB did not always insist that planned actions were carried out in a timely way. The IEB has strengthened its oversight of leaders' actions. Minutes from recent meetings show IEB members are challenging current leaders when planned actions have been delayed.

The local authority improvement partner has worked closely with the new executive headteacher, providing her with support when she initially took up her post. She has also assisted senior leaders in their work to develop the curriculum. She has started to work more closely with subject teachers, but this is in its infancy.

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  
**His Majesty's Inspector**