

Inspection of Brompton Academy

Marlborough Road, Gillingham, Kent ME7 5HT

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| Inspection dates: | 26 and 27 November 2024 |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Sixth-form provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Requires improvement |

The principal of this school is Dan Walters. This school is part of The University of Kent Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Allan Osborne, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by William Collier.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend the school. New Year 7 pupils feel welcomed and helped to settle in quickly. They remark that they were able to make new friends, and that older pupils are kind.

In class and around the school site, pupils' behaviour is positive. Older pupils reflect that, recently, behaviour has improved rapidly. They like the new, fair and well-understood expectations for behaviour. Sixth-form students are active in helping younger pupils in a range of ways, including mentoring and reading practice. Students appreciate being able to help the community and build their skills and experience.

Pupils appreciate the ambition that staff have for them, and the majority want to rise to the challenge. The school has high expectations for all pupils' achievement. Pupils recognise the recent improvements that have been made to the way that they are taught because their learning now builds more logically over time.

Pupils value the school's 'Umbrella' pastoral support because it makes it easy to find help if needed. Pupils of all ages are happy to talk to adults and are articulate in sharing their ideas. They value the school's diversity and understand the importance of respecting each other's differences.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

In the past, pupils did not achieve well enough in national tests such as GCSEs, and the curriculum for younger pupils was not sufficiently broad. This meant that pupils were not well prepared for their next steps. More recently, the school has made a series of changes which have rapidly improved the quality and breadth of education for all pupils.

The curriculum now meets the expectations of the national curriculum. The knowledge that pupils need to learn is sequenced and precisely set out. However, some subject curriculums are newer. In these, and particularly in key stage 3, teaching and the implementation of the curriculum are not yet consistently effective in helping pupils build their knowledge and understanding. This is a focus of the school's continuing development.

The school library is vibrant and welcoming. Frequent events promote the importance of reading to all pupils. However, aspects of the school's reading programmes are at an early stage. Some pupils have gaps in their reading knowledge that hinder their learning. The school is developing ways to understand pupils' reading ability more accurately, and to put support in place where it is needed.

Students in the sixth form are highly appreciative of the range of subjects on offer. They recognise that continuing in education improves future options. Students described how their subject choices were helping them work towards long-term career ambitions. The school's strong careers education helps pupils of all ages to understand their potential career paths and how best to realise their future hopes.

The school understands the diverse needs of pupils. Staff are considerate of pupils' individual needs and make adaptations where necessary. As a result, pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. The school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND, the Eliot Centre, ensures that pupils with more complex needs benefit from its ambitious curriculum.

The school has introduced classroom routines that consistently support pupils' learning. As a result, pupils understand what will be required of them in class. This builds confidence and participation, leading to a positive learning environment. Checking of pupils' knowledge is regular. Pupils value the feedback that they receive. It is precise and helps them to quickly fill gaps in their knowledge.

Recently developed behaviour systems ensure that pupils understand what is expected of them. Pupils are respectful and feel safe at school. They know who to talk to if they have concerns and are reassured that actions will be quick and effective. Where any pupils find behaving appropriately more difficult, the school provides expert targeted support.

The school is painstaking in understanding potential risks in the local area, and how best to teach pupils how to stay safe and healthy. Pupils explained to inspectors how they have found the teaching about consent and healthy relationships to be well judged and helpful. The school offers a range of clubs and activities to help pupils develop talents and interests. It is working to grow participation in these opportunities to support all pupils.

There are some pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. The school takes swift action to ensure families understand the importance of attendance. Support is provided to pupils to remove potential barriers to regular attendance. As a result, absence continues to be reduced across the school, including the sixth form.

School and trust senior leaders recognise the transformative nature of a high-quality education. They are highly ambitious for all pupils. Leaders have a clear understanding of their priorities for continued school improvement, and appropriate plans are in place to continue to strengthen identified aspects of pupils' education. Staff are proud to work at the school and consider that leaders manage their workload and well-being well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Younger pupils do not benefit as much as they could from the school's newly updated curriculums and teaching approaches. As a result, some pupils are not as well prepared for their next steps as they could be. The school should continue to strengthen the implementation of the key stage 3 curriculum to ensure pupils learn well in all subjects.

- The checking of pupils' reading ability is not sufficiently systematic to ensure that all pupils who need extra support in learning to read are identified. As a result, some pupils do not receive the help that they need to become confident, fluent readers. The school should ensure that it supports all pupils to have the reading skills they need to access the full curriculum.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 136107 |
| Local authority | Medway |
| Inspection number | 10341665 |
| Type of school | Secondary Comprehensive |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1,422 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 213 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | William Collier |
| CEO of the trust | Allan Osborne |
| Principal | Dan Walters |
| Website | www.bromptonacademy.org.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 21 and 22 September 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school's principal and other members of the senior leadership team have taken up post since the previous inspection.
- The school is part of The University of Kent Academies Trust.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties. All pupils who attend have an education, health and care plan.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the principal, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, curriculum leaders and other staff.
- The inspectors met with the chair of trustees, the CEO and other members of the governing body and trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, performing arts, modern foreign languages and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum documents, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also visited lessons from a range of other curriculum subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Ed Mather, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Debbie Brake | Ofsted Inspector |
| Ben Greene | Ofsted Inspector |
| Simon Potten | Ofsted Inspector |
| Mike Serridge | Ofsted Inspector |

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