

Monkfield Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131996
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	381433
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Emma Aylesbury

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	401
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Withers
Headteacher	Sarah Porter
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2006
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited two assemblies and observed 23 lessons taught by 14 teachers. They held meetings with the headteacher, senior leadership team, members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation documentation, safeguarding procedures, monitoring and assessment information, lesson plans and school policies. They analysed questionnaires from 105 pupils and 74 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Are all groups making sustained progress?
- What is the impact of actions taken to improve the quality of teaching?
- How well do teachers plan for different groups of pupils?
- What is the impact of leaders and managers, including governors, on driving improvements since the previous inspection?

Information about the school

Monkfield School is larger than most primary schools. The largest group of pupils is of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average as are those who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. A below-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. An extended school facility with a pre-school nursery which provides facilities for parents and carers is run by the governing body.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Monkfield Park Primary is a good school. The headteacher's vision is well supported by the deputy headteacher and all staff. The school is a harmonious and secure environment, where pupils say they feel safe. Pastoral care is good and the school works well with external agencies to provide additional support for pupils, especially for those whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. The overall outcomes for pupils are good, including their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Attendance is high.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose who are new to learning English, make good progress, By the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average. The school has introduced many new strategies for raising achievement, for example, the grouping of pupils by ability for learning the sounds of letters and words. This enables them to receive the individual support they need to succeed.

The quality of teaching is good and there is an effective focus on improving teaching and learning. Lessons are well planned and relationships between adults and pupils are good. Teachers provide clear explanations and lessons proceed at a quick pace. Questioning is well developed and is used well to check understanding and challenge pupils' thinking. However, these techniques are not a consistent feature of lessons throughout the school. In a small number of lessons, work was not sufficiently challenging for all pupils, in part because assessment information was not well used for planning. In a few lessons, the deployment of teaching assistants is not well planned for.

Self-evaluation is accurate and identifies strengths and areas for development. Leaders and managers use assessment systems well to monitor performance. Although there is still some inconsistency in practice across the school, it is being rapidly addressed through staff development and support. The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is currently a focus of the leadership team, because the new curriculum has not yet had time to be fully embedded and there are weaknesses in aspects of the teaching of letter and word sounds. The school's good track record in sustaining pupils' outcomes over time and improving attendance significantly, demonstrate good capacity to make further improvements. The opening of the pre-school is already beginning to have an impact on children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage in improving their social skills.

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Strong links have been made with the community, such as the choir singing in the locality. Pupils make a strong contribution through taking on leadership roles and responsibilities such as, for example, helping to pack bags in a supermarket to support trips and visits. Provision to promote community cohesion is outstanding because leaders have a very good understanding of their own community and the different faiths, ethnicities and cultures within it as well as national and global dimensions. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of provision in Reception to accelerate children's progress by:
 - strengthening the teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that all children make better progress in communication, language and literacy, and especially early writing skills
 - increasing opportunities in the outdoor area to promote their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Raise attainment by:
 - ensuring that work set consistently presents pupils with a high level of challenge, especially for higher attaining pupils
 - ensuring teaching assistants are deployed more effectively in lessons to support different groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enter the school with well-below-expected levels of knowledge and skills for their age. By Year 6, they reach average levels of attainment. All pupils, including the more able, make good progress. For example, in a Year 6 lesson all pupils were able to improve their creative writing skills through work which was well matched to their needs and good peer assessment.

Pupils' behaviour is good both in and out of lessons, ensuring that all can learn and enjoy school. Parents and carers commented that the school 'provides a safe and encouraging environment. Pupils said they feel safe and that rare cases of bullying are dealt with effectively by adults. The school has worked very effectively with pupils, parents and carers on the importance of regular attendance and being punctual; as a result, attendance is high.

Pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being because of the progress they make in developing their basic skills from low starting points, and through good personal guidance. They make a good contribution to their own community through the school council and taking on roles such as lunch leaders and 'friendship stop buddies'. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The impressive range of cultural activities, such as meeting holocaust survivors and a combined carnival and 'last night of the proms' event help pupils to appreciate the

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values and views of people from different faiths and cultures.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Pupils benefit from good teaching. During the inspection some outstanding teaching was observed. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and teachers’ subject knowledge is good. Nevertheless, in some lessons the use of success criteria is not always fully developed so that pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language have access to the full curriculum through good one-to-one support.

The curriculum is good and supports pupils’ learning effectively. It is well organised with a focus on developing pupils’ skills in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils have opportunities to experience varied and interesting subjects, such as French and Spanish and exciting practical projects, such as, ‘learning from the mantle’. The curriculum is well matched to meet the needs of all learners. There are good enrichment activities on offer to all pupils including well-attended clubs, ranging from breakfast club, girls dance, football and netball. Visits and residential trips provide good opportunities for pupils to broaden their personal, social and sporting skills.

Pastoral care is good and parents and carers say they are happy with the care and support the school offers for their children. Effective procedures are in place to

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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encourage good behaviour and regular attendance. Induction procedures and transition arrangements are effective in supporting pupils settling into new classes. The support and provision for pupils and their families whose circumstances might make them vulnerable are good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher's vision, drive and ambition are strongly supported by leaders at all levels and, as a result, good gains have been made since the last inspection in key areas, such as attendance and cultural development. The headteacher is committed to regular engagement with parents and carers. For example, many commented that the mathematics development evening was particularly successful at allaying their fears about supporting their children with homework. The school has been effective in creating an inclusive community which promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination well. For example, the school's data suggested that boys were not achieving as well as girls. Through helping boys analyse their writing skill, the gap between boys' and girls' performance has been narrowed.

Members of the governing body are fully supportive of the school. They have a range of skills and experience together with a good understanding of what needs to be done to further improve the school. They ensure statutory duties are met and there are good procedures for carrying out risk assessments. Safeguarding procedures are in place to meet requirements including the vetting of staff. There are effective partnerships with external agencies and good systems in place for child protection.

The school is a welcoming and harmonious community where children treat each other and all staff with respect. There are many strengths in the way the school promotes community cohesion at local and international levels. For example, the school is developing highly effective partnerships with other communities in the United Kingdom and schools in Uganda. As a result, community cohesion is outstanding and enjoys a high profile within the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and	2
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Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are happy and settle in well to the Early Years Foundation Stage. The coordinator has recently made some beneficial changes to the curriculum. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with below-expected levels of skill. They make satisfactory progress but are still below the goals expected for children at the end of the Reception year. Behaviour is satisfactory and children play appropriately together.

The warm and stimulating environment allows children to make sensible choices about which activities to engage in. For example, many children enjoy playing in the sand pit, listening to stories and counting to ten. They have a satisfactory understanding of keeping safe. All welfare requirements are met and there is effective support for children’s well being. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use a range of teaching techniques and resources. However, teaching assistants are not always utilised fully to support learning in focused sessions and in the teaching of phonics. As a result, not all children make the progress they are capable of. The use and the quality of the outdoor area to support learning are satisfactory. Communication between the school and parents and carers is effective and they are satisfied with the care their children receive. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

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The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who returned the Ofsted questionnaire are happy with their child’s experience of the school. Parents and carers commented, ‘We are very happy with the education our children receive’. A small number of parents and carers expressed a few concerns about safeguarding, bullying and behaviour in the school. The inspection team examined policies, risk assessments and observed behaviour in lessons and around the school. They found the school to have effective arrangements in place for the care, safety and behaviour of pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Monkfield Park Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 401 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	69	18	24	3	4	2	3
The school keeps my child safe	57	77	13	18	3	4	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	41	55	29	39	2	3	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	58	28	38	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	58	26	35	1	1	2	3
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	43	58	24	32	4	5	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	50	35	47	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	40	54	22	30	5	7	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	40	54	26	35	6	8	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	43	29	39	8	11	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	45	26	35	7	9	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	45	61	22	30	3	4	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	47	64	22	30	3	4	2	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Monkfield Park Primary School, Cambridge, CB23 5AX

Thank you for welcoming and helping us when we came to your school. We really enjoyed visiting you in your school and seeing you learning and playing well together. Monkfield Park is giving you a good education.

You say you feel well cared for and that you enjoy school. Your behaviour is good, and many of you take part in extra-curricular activities, such as, dance club and football. You told us that you enjoy school life, and that your school community is a happy one where you all get on well together. We were particularly impressed with how your attendance has improved since the previous inspection.

You make good progress at school and make a good contribution to the community. Your behaviour is good and your school is a harmonious place to learn. You enjoy your learning and lessons are good. These are the things we have asked the school to do to make it even better.

- In Reception, improve how you learn the sounds of letters and words, explain to you what you are going to learn and help you to learn better in the outdoor environment.
- Help you to do even better by using teaching assistants well and setting you work that always makes you think.

Yours sincerely

Emma Aylesbury
Lead inspector

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