

Monkseaton Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108637
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	377789
Inspection dates	18–19 April 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Johnson HMI

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

Type of school	Middle Deemed Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	328
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jason Pia
Headteacher	Karen Charlton
Date of previous school inspection	31 March 2009
School address	Vernon Drive Monkseaton Whitley Bay NE25 8JN
Telephone number	0191 200 8715
Fax number	0191 200 8716
Email address	monkseaton.middle@northtyneside.gov.uk



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Johnson
Jacqueline Rothery
Jim Bennetts

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional Inspector - Ofsted Seconded
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 19 teachers, as well as visiting lessons for shorter periods, observing assemblies and registration periods. In total, they spent approximately 18 hours observing teaching. Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, other staff, members of the governing body, and representatives from the local authority. They talked to groups of pupils from each year group. Documents were examined, including those related to improvement planning, the quality of teaching, and records of current achievement and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors considered the views of the 155 parents and carers, 99 pupils and the 24 staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaires.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized middle school, although smaller than an average-sized secondary school. It serves a socially and economically diverse area. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or are disabled is around average. The school hosts an additional resource provision for pupils with physical disabilities. An average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school met the national floor standards for Primary Schools last year, which set the minimum standards expected for attainment and progress at the end of Year 6. The school has maintained a number of awards since the last inspection, including Healthy School status, Artsmark Gold and the Sportsmark.

A new headteacher took up her post during the week of the inspection.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- The school provides a good standard of education. Crucially, the achievement of pupils, the quality of teaching and the impact of leadership and management have improved since the previous inspection and are now good. To become outstanding it would need to address the areas for improvement identified below.
- Most pupils join the school with average levels of ability in English and mathematics, by the time they leave, their attainment is above average. Groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Attainment in mathematics is very good. Overall achievement is not outstanding because pupils' progress in writing, particularly amongst boys, is slower in Year 5 and 6.
- Teaching is good because pupils develop good knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of subjects. In the best lessons, learning is carefully tailored to challenge pupils of different abilities and there are excellent opportunities for them to develop their independent study skills. The curriculum is good because it provides academic and extra-curricular activities that are carefully matched to pupils needs.
- Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. Inspectors observed pupils behaving well in lessons and around the school. There is compelling evidence that this is a typical picture. The development of good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. Pupils say they feel safe and incidents of bullying are very rare. The great majority of parents or carers are happy with the education their children, however, a small number indicated that they had difficulty communicating concerns regarding their children's support needs and were unhappy with responses they had received.
- Good leadership has resulted in many improvements and a good quality of provision. The management of teachers' performance is very effective,

however, the analysis of data to report on overall pupils' achievement and set targets for improvement is not sharp enough.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that all pupils, particularly boys, make good progress in writing, particularly in Year 5 and 6 by ensuring that:
 - support given to pupils to develop writing is equally effective across all subjects and that work is not only corrected, but pupils are offered effective ways to improve spelling, handwriting and grammar
 - all teachers have high expectations of the quality of pupils' writing.

- Improve communication with parents and carers, particularly in relation to the support of their children by:
 - improving the contact information available to parents and carers, including that found on the school website and in its prospectus
 - analysing the school's own parental questionnaire results more rigorously
 - reviewing the impact of parents' evenings in the light of feedback from parents and carers
 - reviewing the use of pupil planners as a means of communication between home and school
 - focussing on developing more effective methods of communicating with the small number of parents and carers who have expressed their dissatisfaction.

- Improve the use of data to evaluate and report on success and areas for improvement by:
 - ensuring that data are made easier to understand through clear analysis
 - ensuring that targets are always ambitious and measurable with clear success criteria
 - sharing the results of data analysis more widely amongst governors, staff, parents and carers.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Inspectors saw pupils making good progress in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in the large majority of lessons they visited. All groups of pupils make good progress, including pupils with special educational needs and disabled pupils supported by the additional resource provision. Pupils' positive attitudes mean that learning is rarely disrupted by inattention or poor behaviour. Pupils enjoy reading and develop good comprehension and understanding. The development of good writing is less consistent across different subjects and groups. Boys' writing is significantly weaker than girls. Although marking is generally effective, pupils are not always given enough support to improve their spelling, grammar and presentation.

Pupils make the best progress in lessons when they are challenged by their work and have the opportunity to learn independently.

Pupils start the school with average levels of attainment, by the time they leave Year 8 pupils' attainment is above average. They reach the highest levels and make the best progress in mathematics. In most subjects progress is good and accelerates as pupils move through the school. Girls tend to make slightly better progress than boys overall and pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals tend to leave with lower attainment. These imbalances have been recognised by the school and appropriate measures have been put in place to close the gaps. A large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires felt that their children were making good progress and a very high proportion would recommend the school to others.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is consistently good and inspectors observed nothing that was inadequate. In a minority of lessons teaching is outstanding; this was particularly the case where teachers personalised activities to match pupils' abilities and allowed them time to learn independently. In the best lessons, teachers use their expert knowledge and passion for the subject to engage pupils and promote high levels of interest. For example, pupils were fascinated by the reasons for Picasso's painting style in one lesson, and in another linked their knowledge of mythology to the development a computer generated representation of a labyrinth. In these lessons, teachers asked questions to test understanding and did not accept answers that were too superficial. In a few lessons, where teaching was only satisfactory, teachers focused on ensuring all pupils completed the same tasks at the same rate. In these lessons pupils behaved in a way that was too passive and were not sufficiently involved in developing their own learning.

Pupils are clear about their targets and their work is marked frequently. Appropriate homework is set in most subjects. Pupils develop good reading and mathematical skills. However, the marking of basic spelling and grammatical errors does not always lead to appropriate support to enable pupils to improve their writing, nor does it enable parents and carers to help their children improve. This means that pupils' progress in writing varies significantly between subjects and year groups, they are sometimes confused about the expectations of teachers and the quality of written work in a minority of exercise books is of a poor standard.

The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were convinced that their children are well taught. Pupils' good attitudes to each other and their teachers in lessons makes an effective contribution to their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development and enhances their learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Inspectors observed good behaviour and believe this to be typical of the school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and there is always someone they can approach if they have concerns or worries. The atmosphere around in corridors and social areas is calm and pupils are polite and friendly. The behaviour management

system is implemented consistently by all staff and very few pupils are removed from lessons due to poor behaviour. Exclusions from school are extremely rare.

Pupils said that bullying was rare, but when it did happen it was effectively dealt with by the learning mentor, staff and school leaders. Pupils commonly show each other respect, regardless of their gender ethnicity, disability or special need. Occasional name-calling and minor disruption in the playground is usually nipped in the bud and does not escalate. On occasions incidents that happen outside school spill over into the life of the school, but this is recognised and handled well. Appropriate use is made of specialist support agencies.

The reasons why behaviour is not outstanding are two-fold. Firstly, in lessons where learning is satisfactory, some pupils are too passive and not fully engaged by learning activities. Secondly, although the large majority of parents and carers are positive about care, guidance and support, a small number expressed concerns about communication from the school in relation to issues of individual pupil support.

Pupils show respect for their environment and the building and grounds are clean and tidy. Pupils wear their uniform with pride. Few are persistently absent and attendance rates are above average. The curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to understand how they can keep themselves safe. Assemblies and personal and social education make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Leadership and management

Good leadership has resulted in improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement. The key areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have all been successfully addressed. A robust and well-structured approach to performance management ensures that teaching is of a good standard. A broad curriculum is provided which is tailored to meet the needs of particular groups and individuals. Appropriate professional development opportunities are offered and welcomed by staff. The group of middle leaders, many of whom are new to these roles, are effective and growing in confidence.

Based on its track record the school has demonstrated it has a good capacity to improve. However leadership is not yet outstanding because key areas for improvement remain. For example, in the way data are used in evaluation and planning, to set clear ambitious targets. Also there are gaps in some aspects of the schools communication with parents and carers, to ensure that they understand the comparative success of the school in terms of achievement. Leaders, including the governing body, know the school's strengths and weaknesses but are not always successful in clearly articulating them. Reports and plans tend to lack analysis of data and contain too much detail.

Safeguarding arrangements follow government guidelines. A new partnership with a school in Africa helps pupils gain a good understanding of the diversity of world cultures, although their understanding of the nature of Britain's multicultural society is less well-developed. Staff morale is high and they are very supportive of the leadership team

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced because of the good opportunities they are given to take part in activities such as: participation in the school council, visits, trips, and charitable events. Leaders ensure that there is good promotion of equality and that policies to tackle discrimination are robustly applied.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



20 April 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Monkseaton Middle School, Whitley Bay NE25 8JN

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us and explain our findings. We think your school is a really good one. There are several reasons for this, including the above average standards most of you reach by the time you leave Year 8. The quality of teaching is good and you behave well and feel safe. The school is well led and managed.

We know that you and the vast majority of parents or carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed with us, but we still think the school could do more to explain what its strengths and areas for improvement are. The new headteacher and governors are very ambitious for the future and want the school to be outstanding by the time of the next inspection. We have left them with some suggestions we think will help, they are:

- improve pupils' writing by making sure all work is not only corrected but pupils are told about methods they can use to improve their spelling, handwriting and grammar.
- improve the communication with parents and carers so that all of them feel confident that their individual concerns are dealt with.
- simplify the way the school uses data to judge its success and make targets and plans more straight-forward.

You can continue to play your part by working hard and attending regularly. We would like to send you our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Johnson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.