

Monkway Junior School

Monkway Brow, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 9DT

Inspection dates

7–8 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- As a result of good leadership and teamwork since the previous inspection, the rate of pupils' progress has accelerated. Pupils now make good progress so that by the end of Year 6, attainment is above and sometimes significantly above average in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Teachers create many opportunities for pupils to strengthen their writing skills across other subjects. Lessons engage pupils fully and move along at a quick pace.
- Very good relationships help to create a happy atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school and feel safe.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic to attend school. They show very positive attitudes to one another as well as to their learning.
- The school provides pupils with exciting occasions, such as visits to York, to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to sustaining high standards. They keep a careful eye on teaching, which has improved since the previous inspection, and check pupils' progress rigorously in order to provide further challenge or extra support they may need. Staff are very committed and proud to be part of the team helping to move the school forward.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Opportunities are missed to practise and develop pupils' mathematical skills in meaningful contexts in a range of subjects.
- Teachers need to challenge pupils' thinking more when they ask questions during lessons.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities on their own to use information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects, including mathematics.
- The goals the school is aiming for to raise attainment and improve pupils' progress are not precise enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed four teachers and the learning mentor and visited 10 lessons which included a joint lesson observation with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, English and mathematics subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinators, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- A range of the school's documentation was examined, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, documents relating to monitoring and evaluation, systems for tracking pupils' progress, documents regarding safeguarding and key policies.
- The inspector took account of responses of the school's most recent questionnaire for parents and 14 responses from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Ten questionnaires completed by staff were analysed.

Inspection team

Sue Sharkey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Monkway Junior School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils attending the school are from White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding, is above average.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has Healthy School, Kidsafe, Artsmark and Let's Get Cooking awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop consistently outstanding features of teaching in lessons by:
 - ensuring adults consistently use questions that challenge and deepen pupils' thinking
 - making sure that pupils regularly have opportunities to use ICT skills independently in different subjects, including mathematics.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - embedding the reviewed curriculum, ensuring that mathematical skills are used and developed more frequently in other subjects
 - ensuring that the goals the school is aiming to achieve through the school's improvement plan are more precise in order to improve pupils' progress further
 - raising the profile of mathematics by displaying and sharing pupils' work throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress overall, although some make outstanding progress, in English and mathematics, from their starting points when they enter in Year 3. Better teaching since the previous inspection has helped to speed up progress and as a result, attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average and sometimes significantly above.
- Pupils develop good skills in reading. They read widely and are eager to discuss which authors they prefer or whether they like adventure or funny stories. Through using a wide range of activities and resources, the teaching of letters and sounds is good. This can be seen in the quality of pupils' reading. As pupils move through the school, they make good use of punctuation and grammar to emphasise words or use a different voice when reading. This helps to bring the story to life.
- The school has had a successful focus on improving writing so that the gap between reading and writing is closing. This can be seen not only in pupils' writing books but also as part of displays. Pupils' writing shows a wide range of different styles and pupils are usefully given time during lessons to write longer pieces of work.
- Reading and writing are used well across different subjects but there are few opportunities for pupils to use the skills they learn in mathematics lessons in other subjects.
- Pupils exhibit good skills in mathematics lessons. For example, during a Year 3 lesson, pupils used the information they had already learnt about weighing to make blueberry cakes. They worked in groups measuring the ingredients carefully, checking that what they had weighed was accurate before taking turns to mix and add the blueberries. Pupils were encouraged to count the cakes to make sure they each had an equal number.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, as well as those who are eligible for the pupil premium funding, achieve as well in English and mathematics as other groups of pupils. They concentrate well, benefiting from extra support from well-trained teaching assistants and the learning mentor. The well-targeted help they receive in school, in small groups, one-to-one or in the nurture group enables them to overcome difficulties that limit their learning.
- Pupils have opportunities to use computers, particularly to develop their writing skills. During a Year 5 lesson some pupils were using ICT, supported by an adult. They had chosen their own focus, had already gathered the information using iPads and were now including this as part of a leaflet. Pupils have opportunities to use their skills in ICT but there are not enough occasions when they can use ICT independently as part of work in other subjects, particularly in mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection so that it is now consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan exciting lessons with good use of a wide range of resources: for example, when using interactive whiteboards to make lessons interesting as well as helping to hold pupils' attention.
- Teachers' planning allows time for pupils to read and write but also to develop their speaking and listening skills during lessons. There are good opportunities for pupils to consolidate and further their learning by sharing ideas in pairs or small groups. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were planning a story using the characteristics of traditional stories from India. They talked together as notes were made and pictures developed in preparation for telling the stories aloud. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were planning and recording their presentation for a radio advert. Pupils shared their skills not only in preparing the words for the advert but also in playing brass instruments for the fanfare at the end.

- Pupils know their individual targets and like the 'ladders' in their classrooms, showing which levels they are on. They say this gives them enthusiasm, helping them to 'climb the ladder' to a higher level.
- Teachers often use questions well in lessons and pupils are expected to explain their answers clearly. However, there are occasions when questions do not challenge pupils enough or make them think harder about the work they are doing.
- Staff create a stimulating environment for learning. Throughout the school, high-quality displays often feature examples of pupils' work, including their writing, but there is little evidence of pupils' work in mathematics.
- Teachers plan homework regularly for pupils. This varies from class to class but engages pupils well, for example through reading, searching for information about topic work or practising handwriting.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils have an extremely good attitude to learning. Behaviour around the school, in lessons and at break time is outstanding and this makes an exceptional contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.
- All parents who responded through Parent View were extremely positive about pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils say they feel extremely safe and well looked after and parents agree. Pupils have an excellent understanding of what constitutes bullying. They say that bullying is rare but is dealt with swiftly. Pupils are made aware of how to deal with different kinds of bullying through 'Kidsafe' activities and regular discussions in assembly.
- Attendance is above average and this is reflected in the way that pupils say they very much enjoy school. The highly effective guidance used to encourage pupils' regular attendance, together with the learning mentor's extremely useful work with parents, has helped attendance to rise gradually and has improved punctuality successfully so that more pupils are now arriving at school on time.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. The school council plays an important role in helping to improve the school as well as organising events to raise funds for different charities. Year 6 pupils particularly like serving salad at lunchtime as well as looking after the library, where they issue books to pupils and carry out audits of books available.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, supported well by the senior leadership team, has effectively driven improvements since the previous inspection so that all aspects of the school's work are now at least good.
- Leaders have had a good impact on the quality of learning. For example, there has been a clear focus on improving writing skills, which has led to pupils making better progress in English. Leaders know the school's strengths and what the school needs to do to make further improvements. However, the goals the school is aiming for, particularly linked with improving pupils' progress, are not sharp enough.
- Monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and sometimes the local authority is effective. Along with performance management, this has led to good opportunities for teachers' professional development, often through training with other schools.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination lie at the heart of the school's work. It is an inclusive school where all pupils get on well together. Links with a wide range of partners bring considerable benefits to pupils' learning and personal development. The school has a strong sense of community. There are strong partnerships between the school and parents

who appreciate the school's provision of a well-run breakfast club.

- The curriculum has been reviewed recently. It is well organised so that pupils' skills are developed through making strong links between different subjects. A wide range of experiences takes place both inside and outside school. For example, pupils can learn to play a musical instrument, take part in the art club, the craft club or sing in the school choir and perform with other schools. These opportunities help to develop pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development through working in teams, showing initiative, developing a sense of right and wrong and improving self-confidence.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors play a vital and active role in challenging the school. They make sure that they keep themselves up to date with training, particularly when relevant to safeguarding. Governors have a good understanding of key issues, for example the performance of different groups of pupils. Safeguarding meets requirements and governors make sure that pupils are kept safe. Members of the governing body understand the school budget, checking carefully how the pupil premium funding is used and the movement of teaching staff up the salary scale in order to support pupils' good achievement fully.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	112170
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	401242

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Allen Banks
Headteacher	Pamela Telford
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2009
Telephone number	01946 696790
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