

Monkfield Park Primary School

School Lane, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 5AX

Inspection dates 10–11 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have a positive impact on driving up achievement and improving teaching.
- Leaders are clear about what needs to be done next to make the school even better. The school is improving rapidly.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe at school because members of staff make learning interesting and are caring.
- Teaching is good because teachers explain clearly what pupils are to learn and make good use of questioning to check on their progress.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports pupils well in working and playing together amicably. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education and life in modern Britain.
- Children learn quickly in the early years provision. They do especially well in learning about sounds and letters.
- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress from their differing starting points and attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not make sure that all pupils, especially the most able, move on to more difficult work as soon as they can during a lesson.
- Teachers do not consistently expect pupils to follow up advice given in marking.
- Opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their writing when learning in subjects, such as science, and in their topic work.
- Some pupils make frequent errors in their spelling and do not ensure that their handwriting and presentation of work are tidy.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons, of which six were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with leaders, teachers, pupils and members of the governing body. A discussion was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took into account the 50 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and a letter from a parent, and held informal discussions with a number of parents.
- The inspection team considered the views expressed in the survey responses from 31 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maneer Samad	Additional Inspector
Cynthia Ashford	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Monkfield Park Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There has been a significant change in teaching staff since the previous inspection. There have been recent changes in senior leadership.
- There are two full-time Reception classes in the early years provision.
- The large majority of pupils are White British or of other White background. A below average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The pre-school nursery on the same site is run by the governing body but is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers always have high enough expectations for the pupils, by:
 - making sure that the most able in particular move on to more difficult work as soon as they can
 - ensuring that pupils follow up straight away advice given through marking.
- Develop pupils' writing by:
 - providing greater opportunities for them to extend their skills when learning in science and topic work
 - improving the pupils' spelling and ensuring that they always take care with their handwriting and presentation of work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together effectively and have secured a clear vision for the future of the school. Despite a high turnover of teachers, they are ensuring that new staff share their vision and are being trained and supported effectively.
- Leaders ensure that the school runs smoothly and has a culture that is conducive towards good teaching and learning.
- Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. Consequently, leaders and other members of staff are clear about the school's strengths and the remaining areas for development.
- There is strong leadership of teaching. Systems to help teachers to improve their work are robust and consequently the impact of teaching has been improving rapidly over the last two years and is good. Leaders frequently check on teachers' work and make clear to them what they need to do to improve further.
- Equal opportunities have been strengthened over the last two years and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Good relationships are fostered between staff and the pupils. British values such as respect and politeness are given a high profile.
- The learning of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for additional funding has been boosted considerably over the last two years. They receive specific teaching in very small groups so that any gaps in their knowledge and skills are identified and filled quickly. Parents are being encouraged to attend workshops so that they can help their children more at home.
- The new curriculum is well established and includes a strong emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy. There is a good breadth of topics designed to interest the pupils. Information on what pupils are learning is shared with parents. Pupils learn about differing cultures and beliefs and the curriculum prepares them well for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils in Year 5 recently took part in a democracy workshop.
- The special funding to improve sport and physical education is being used well to provide specialist teaching, training for teachers and resources. As a result, there has been an increase in sporting clubs and competitions. Pupils make good use of facilities at playtimes, such as netball and the climbing wall.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic about improving provision and progress in the areas they manage. They are clear about how this will be achieved and have already made a positive difference over the last two years. For example, progress in mathematics is now good and attainment is rising in phonics (letters and their sounds).
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Pupils learn the importance of being responsible and why they should respect others and treat them well. For example, the school council recently led an assembly about how to recognise and deal with bullying. Pupils learn about social issues such as how to be a good friend and not to hurt the feelings of others.
- The local authority intensified its support for the school following the dip in achievement in 2013. Leaders have appreciated the positive impact of the local authority in providing advice and training. As a result, the school has improved rapidly and demonstrates the capacity to continue to improve.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are effective. Leaders are very clear about the importance of keeping pupils safe and ensure that all those working in school are checked for suitability and are trained in caring for pupils. There are rigorous systems for making sure that vulnerable pupils are looked after properly, including the allocation of adult mentors.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is effective. Governors are well informed and consequently know the school's strengths and next steps for development. They know how well achievement at the school compares with that in other schools. Governors understand that teaching is good and know how the overall quality of teaching is being checked to ensure it is effective. They know how good teaching is being rewarded and less strong aspects are being challenged and supported. They have clearly defined responsibilities so that they can influence all aspects of the school's work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are sociable, polite and friendly. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. Attendance has been rising in recent years and is now above average.
- Pupils are proud that they come to this school and are keen to do things the 'Monkfield Way'. There are few instances of low level disruption and pupils come to school smartly dressed and prepared to work. Pupils understand what they are to learn next and appreciate the information supplied in the new 'learning ladders'. They work well with their talk partners. For example, in Year 6 pupils discussed the properties of two-dimensional shapes and benefitted from sharing their knowledge.
- Pupils, parents and members of staff agree that behaviour at the school is good. Pupils concentrate well and complete tasks sensibly. For example, in Year 2, pupils enjoyed discussing the vehicles they had made and evaluated how well they had followed their instructions.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are positive about the way they are kept safe at school and know how to stay safe, including when using the internet. Parents are pleased with the way that members of staff care for the pupils and procedures for keeping pupils safe are thorough.
- There are few instances of bullying or unkind behaviour and pupils are happy that they know what to do if they have any concerns. They know that they can speak to an adult or use the 'worry boxes'. They say that there are fewer instances of unkind behaviour than in the past.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is having a positive impact on learning and achievement, including in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers provide pupils with clear explanations about what they are learning. Consequently, pupils know what they are to do and can start working quickly. For example, in Year 5, pupils were given clear instructions for their task using an atlas, enabling them to locate continents, countries and cities quickly.
- Teachers share new vocabulary well with the pupils and make good use of the displays on 'working walls' to remind them about what they have learned previously.
- The teaching of phonics has improved dramatically over the past year. A clear and systematic structure has been put in place so that nothing is missed out. Pupils are taught in smaller groups according to their levels of ability. These changes have promoted a rise in progress and pupils are much further ahead this year than in the past.
- Teaching assistants support the learning of small groups of pupils well and this is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection. For example, in Year 1, there was good support for a group of pupils who were using counters to help them learn how to subtract numbers from 20.
- Teachers manage the pupils' behaviour well through the use of praise. They make use of a wide range of

resources to interest and motivate pupils to learn. For instance, in Year 6, pupils used a range of resources to learn about refraction.

- Work is adjusted to support the learning of pupils of differing ability in most lessons. For example, during the start of a mathematics lesson in Year 4, pupils were given several levels of difficulty for their mental calculations. Occasionally, this does not happen soon enough during a lesson to ensure that the most able, in particular, move on to more difficult work as soon as possible.
- Teachers mark pupils' work frequently and include valuable advice through 'top tips' on how pupils can do better next time. However, they do not always make sure that pupils take notice of this advice straight away, take care with their handwriting or correct spelling mistakes.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The attainment of children on entry to the Reception classes is higher than at the time of the previous inspection and was broadly typical for their age this year and last year.
- In 2014, pupils' attainment was below the national average in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Leaders have changed the way that phonics is being taught in the school and consequently pupils are now doing well in this subject. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 1 showed a good knowledge of phonics when writing their own sentences about a shared story.
- Following a dip in attainment in 2013, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 rose in 2014 to broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The achievement from their starting points of the pupils currently in school is now good in all year groups. A further rise in attainment is indicated from school information on how well pupils are doing and from a scrutiny of the pupils' work. Standards at the end of the current Year 6 are predicted to be higher than last year.
- Progress in writing is lagging behind that in reading and mathematics. While pupils make good use of vocabulary to make their writing interesting, there are weaknesses in their spelling and handwriting.
- The small proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for additional funding make progress that is similar to, or better than, that of others at the school and nationally. In 2014, Year 6 pupils were five terms behind their peers in mathematics and reading and four terms in writing. Compared with the standards reached by other pupils nationally, their attainment was behind by six terms in mathematics, and about four in reading and writing. Across the school these gaps in attainment have narrowed considerably, with these pupils receiving specifically planned academic support from teachers.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs now make rapid progress. They benefit from sharply focused additional activities as well as receiving extra help in class.
- The most able pupils do well over time. Occasionally they could move on to complete more difficult work sooner during a lesson.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are sufficiently well developed to support their learning in other subjects, although some opportunities to practise and extend writing are missed in science and topic work.

The early years provision is good

- Strong leadership and management ensure that children do well and teaching is good. Provision for the early years has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. There are rigorous systems for checking up on how well the children are doing and this information is used well to plan future work. Parents are involved well in their children's learning through the use of learning journals, 'come and share' afternoons and workshops.

- Children behave well and feel safe. They co-operate well with each other, share resources sensibly and concentrate well. For example, they worked well with a partner, taking turns to point to unfamiliar words and to read them.
- Good teaching ensures that children understand the clear routines and settle to tasks swiftly. For example, children know that they start the school day with their 'busy fingers' activities. They practise their threading, drawing and cutting without prompting from adults. New vocabulary is shared and explained clearly. For instance, teachers demonstrated well the meaning of 'full', 'half-full' and 'nearly empty' by using various containers with liquid or sand.
- Achievement is good in the early years provision. Children start school with levels of attainment that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress across all areas of learning and are now doing especially well at learning about the sounds letters make. For example, they were observed practising writing words in their 'phonics jotters' using their knowledge of letter sounds. Children are prepared well for the next stage of their education and their attainment was above average on entry to Year 1 this year and last year.

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	131996
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	456057

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	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Withers
Headteacher	Sarah Jarman
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2011
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