

Monkton Junior School

Dame Flora Robson Avenue, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE34 9RD

Inspection dates

31 March–1 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Monkton Junior School is a happy, exciting and nurturing school of which pupils, staff, parents and governors are rightly proud.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. He is ably supported by a talented staff and leadership team. Together they are determined to provide the best possible learning experience for all pupils.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to boost pupils' learning.
- Pupils of all abilities, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and the most able achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers have high expectations and ensure that pupils enjoy their learning. The curriculum engages pupils and promotes their interests and curiosity.
- Behaviour in school is outstanding. Attitudes to learning are excellent and pupils are determined to achieve as well as they can. They take pride in their work and show care for one another.
- Procedures to ensure pupils safety are outstanding. As a result, pupils feel very safe and believe they are very well looked after by staff.
- A strong family atmosphere pervades the school. Pupils and parents value the high level of care, support and guidance the school provides.
- Attendance is improving and is now broadly average. Good progress has been made in reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent.
- School leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be improved further. Governors know the school exceptionally well and are ambitious for further improvement. They successfully hold the school to account for its performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking does not always give precise enough guidance on how pupils can improve their work.
- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to consider the cultural diversity found at both a national and global level.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector observed 7 lessons; all lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector talked to pupils about their work, looked at books, listened to some pupils read and observed pupils at break and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and staff with key leadership responsibilities. The inspector had discussions with pupils, governors and the school's local authority school improvement partner.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents including: the school's own checks on the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; information on pupils' progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Response to the parent on line questionnaire (Parent View) was too small to count as only 4 responses were recorded. The inspector used the opportunity provided by the well-attended whole-school open morning to gauge the views of parents.

Inspection team

David Wilson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized junior school.
- Virtually all pupils are of White British heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is well above average and is more than twice that seen nationally. (The pupil premium is additional government funding given to the school to provide support for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average.
- In 2014, the school met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- Monkton Junior School converted to become an academy school in March 2012. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' achievement so that they are consistently outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers' marking and feedback helps pupils to know how to improve their work.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the diversity of humanity by creating more opportunities to explore and learn about different cultures found at a national and global level.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The purposeful leadership of the headteacher is central to the school's success. Staff share the headteacher's ambition and are committed to raising pupils' achievement and progress and, as a result, improve their life chances.
- The strong leadership of teaching has been a key part of the school's improvement. Staff have clear targets as part of the performance cycle. These include priorities for raising achievement and increasing pupil progress. Professional development opportunities relate to these targets and staff say they find the management of their performance helpful and supportive.
- Subject leadership is strong. Subject leaders are highly skilled and willingly share their experience and expertise. This is having a positive impact in terms of improving the quality of teaching. The lead practitioners for literacy, numeracy and the coordinator for special educational needs are driving forward initiatives to raise standards of achievement and rates of pupils' progress.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Leaders ensure that additional funding is used effectively to address the needs of disadvantaged pupils. As a result the gap between their progress and that of their classmates is closing rapidly. Similarly the use of additional primary school sport funding is used to benefit all pupils through:
 - additional opportunities to engage in a range of sporting activities both during and after school
 - taking part in a number of sporting competitions
 - increasing levels of fitness, health and well-being.
- The curriculum is mostly broad and balanced. The school has planned effectively for the introduction of the new National Curriculum. Subject leaders are monitoring teaching to ensure that it is being delivered well. In addition, senior leaders are trialling revised assessment systems in English and mathematics in response to the move away from prescribed levels. This work is being reviewed and evaluated to ensure that the revised system provides clear information about pupil progress and enables teachers to plan next steps in learning.
- Opportunities to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are mostly good. Spiritual development is promoted through assemblies, visits and themes in the curriculum. Opportunities to develop pupils' social and moral awareness are good. The school promotes equality of opportunity successfully, is committed to fostering good relations and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. During the inspection, pupils celebrated their local heritage through traditional music and drama. In addition, they exhibited some excellent art work linked to local places of interest, such as the bridges on the River Tyne and the Angel of the North. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to consider the cultural diversity found at both a national and global level.
- All safeguarding requirements are met. Policies are clear and are followed consistently. The school site is secure and effective safety arrangements are checked regularly by staff and governors.

■ The governance of the school:

- The school has a full complement of governors as well as three nominated Trustees as part of the Academy Trust.
- Governors share the headteacher's ambition. They support his drive to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement. They are well informed about how well the school and pupils are performing, as well as being clear about the current areas for improvement.
- Governors keep a close eye on the school's budget and have effective systems in place to ensure that pay awards are linked to teachers' and leaders' performance. Governors fully support the headteacher in tackling any underperformance because they are determined that all pupils will receive a high quality education.
- Governors assess the impact of additional pupil premium funding and the extra primary school sport funding. They ask searching questions about the impact additional funding has on pupil achievement and progress. Governors ensure that all funds are used effectively to benefit the needs of pupils.
- Safeguarding procedures are monitored regularly. Governors ensure that school policies are comprehensive, up to date and implemented efficiently.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave equally well in lessons, around the school, at break times and lunchtimes. During a well-attended parent open morning, the whole school demonstrated exemplary levels of behaviour when entering and leaving the hall and when performing a medley of traditional songs.
- Pupils are exceptionally polite, courteous and friendly towards each other, to staff and to school visitors. They were confident and articulate when talking to the inspector about their learning and the opportunities the school provides. Pupils are proud of their school and of their individual achievements. They are excellent ambassadors for their school.
- Pupils settle quickly to lessons and no time is lost. They work hard and show great resilience and determination in all that they do. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in the increased attendance rate and in the high take-up of additional after-school activities.
- Few parents responded to the online parent questionnaire. However, discussions with parents during the inspection indicated a high level of support for the school. Parents agree that their children are well taught and pupils behave very well. Instances of misbehaviour are seen as rare.
- Pupils are proud of the roles they have in school, including as members of the school council and as playground buddies. They carry out responsibilities with enthusiasm and dedication and believe they make a difference.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe in school at all times. Parents spoken to during the inspection agreed with this view.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudiced based bullying. Pupils were clear about the difference between times when friends sometimes fall out and the impact of sustained bullying. They said incidences of bullying were rare, but if it did occur they were confident their teachers would listen, take the matter seriously and sort things out quickly and fairly. One pupil summed things up by saying, 'we are friends with everyone. It's like a family.'
- Pupils are active in promoting a safe culture in school. They know how to keep themselves safe when on line, using computers and mobile phones. They are aware of potential unsafe situations and know how to stay safe, both in and out of school.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- Good quality teaching enables pupils to make good progress and to achieve well. Expectations are high and tasks and activities are matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Some teaching and learning is outstanding. For example, pupils in Year 3 made outstanding progress in their knowledge and understanding of the difference between an archaeologist and an Egyptologist, because the learning activities captured their imagination and curiosity exceptionally well.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent. As a result, pupils work hard and want to do well. Pupils are confident to ask for help if they do not understand their learning as they know their teacher will help them. One Year 5 pupil said the additional help he received in mathematics means that now, 'I get all my maths work right because I understand what I have to do step by step.'
- Literacy skills are taught effectively across the school. Writing skills are of a high standard. The development of handwriting and presentational skills is excellent. Pupils make good progress in reading, they enjoy reading and read well. Good home/school links encourage parents to be active in supporting the development of reading at all levels. Younger pupils make good use of their phonic skills (matching letters to the sounds they make) to read unfamiliar words confidently. Older pupils demonstrate good comprehension skills and are able to recap the main events of a story. They can talk about how characters in a story may be feeling when faced with a problem or difficulty. They are also knowledgeable about different authors and their particular style of writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving and pupils are now making good progress. Pupils are able to use a variety of strategies to solve problems and demonstrate an increasing mastery of mathematical skills and concepts. For example, Year 4 pupils successfully used place value formula of moving the decimal point to the left or right when faced with dividing or multiplying numbers by 10, 100 and 1000.

- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They undertake joint planning and reviews of pupils' progress. As a result they are well prepared to work with pupils of all abilities. Subject leaders provide good support and guidance to colleagues and this is particularly useful to those teachers at an early stage of their career.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly. However, teachers do not always give guidance that is precise enough to enable pupils to improve their work as well as they could.
- Teachers plan exciting and engaging lessons that capture pupils' interest. They take every opportunity to apply key skills of reading, writing and mathematics across all subject areas. For example, Year 5 science books demonstrated an excellent use of diagrams, charts, use of scales and examples of data handling.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is good. On entry the school undertakes a comprehensive baseline assessment in reading, writing and mathematics. From this starting point pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and reach national average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 are already working at standards close to the national average. Standards are slightly higher than those seen nationally in reading, writing and in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Achievement in reading is good. In 2014, performance in Year 6 in reading was slightly higher than the national average standard. Current evidence indicates an increased proportion of pupils is working at a level above the national average. Pupils develop their reading skills both at home and in school. Teachers are continually focused on improving pupils' understanding and comprehension skills. Decisive action has been taken to meet the needs of some pupils entering school with weak understanding of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and these pupils receive additional support to develop their skills.
- Pupils are given extensive opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. Standards of writing were in line with the national average in 2014 and school data for the current year indicate an increase in the proportion of pupils working towards the higher standard.
- Pupils are now achieving well in mathematics. Most pupils are currently working at standards close to the national average, with almost half working at a level above this. The school has placed a particular emphasis on improving the teaching of mathematics and meeting the needs of different ability groups. This is making a significant difference to pupils' progress. Girls' achievement in mathematics is improving significantly and evidence shows it is now in line with that for boys. The school continues to monitor progress closely across all classes and undertakes checks on pupils' work to ensure that the school makes accurate judgements about its work.
- The progress of the most able pupils is similar to that of other learners. They make good progress. Current evidence indicates that a good proportion of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are working towards the higher National Curriculum levels. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that pupils are making more rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally in mathematics was about a year and slightly less than 6 months in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils were six to eight months behind their classmates in reading and writing but this gap is narrowing. They were six to eight months ahead of their classmates in mathematics. Current evidence shows that, from their starting points, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils seen nationally continues to narrow. This reflects the well-thought-out additional learning opportunities provided.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported throughout the school and make progress comparable to that of other pupils. Individual needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate interventions and support are put in place to enable these pupils to catch up quickly and make good progress. Staff assess their progress regularly and reshape or modify support as necessary.

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	138025
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	456132

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Walter Armstrong
Headteacher	Stuart Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0191 424 0200
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Email address	stuart@monktonjuniors.co.uk

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