

Monkwearmouth Academy

Torver Crescent, Seaburn Dene, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR6 8LG

Inspection dates

4–5 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes are not yet good. Although progress is improving in a number of areas, pupils do not make consistently strong progress in a wide range of subjects. Their progress in lessons and across subjects has been too variable.
- Outcomes in mathematics require improvement. Pupils have made significantly less progress in mathematics than is seen nationally and variability remains in the quality of teaching. New curriculum plans are not yet consistently implemented.
- Although improving, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities remains low.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils, and of the most able disadvantaged pupils, is slower than that of their peers and other pupils nationally. While the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving, their rates of progress remain slower than other pupils'.
- New assessment systems are not yet providing pupils in all year groups with a clear picture of progress. In some subjects, pupils are not clear of the actions they can take to make improved progress.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have acted decisively in the past year to improve leadership at whole-school and departmental level, and to improve the quality of teaching.
- Pupils are making much stronger progress in key subjects, such as English and science. The quality of teaching in these subjects is now much stronger and leading to better outcomes.
- Governors are committed to ongoing improvement. They know the school well and make regular visits to monitor progress and challenge leaders on progress.
- Pupils are polite, well behaved and show a pride in their school and community. Teachers are committed to pupils' well-being and their wider personal and social development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' outcomes by:
 - building on recent improvements to the quality of teaching
 - implementing new assessment systems clearly and consistently across all subjects and year groups
 - providing pupils with a clear picture of their progress and how to improve.
- Accelerate the rate of pupils' progress in mathematics by:
 - implementing new curriculum plans and assessment systems more consistently
 - addressing the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Improve the achievement and attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities by:
 - ensuring that leaders' checks on teaching, support and interventions focus more explicitly on their impact on pupils' progress and attendance
 - building stronger links with parents.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors have worked determinedly over the past year to rectify the weaknesses in whole-school and subject leadership that contributed to a decline in pupils' achievement in recent years. As a result of their actions, the overall effectiveness of leadership is stronger and pupils' progress is improving in a number of areas, although overall outcomes are not good.
- Leaders have heightened expectations such that all staff subscribe to an ambitious vision of strong progress for all pupils. Leaders have introduced more robust systems and procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and the rates of pupils' progress. The more rigorous implementation of systems, including heightened challenge from governors, is holding staff to account more effectively. Teachers are responding positively to this culture of high expectation. They value their professional development which is influencing improvements in teaching.
- Leaders and governors have a comprehensive view of the school's performance and can identify strengths and areas for improvement. They are now acting decisively to accelerate progress when previously they did not intervene swiftly enough.
- Middle leaders are working closely with senior leaders to measure quality and hold staff to account. Better professional development opportunities are building more sustained improvement where previous strategies lost momentum and focus.
- An improving quality of teaching is evident in subjects such as English and science where clear leadership, effective planning and demanding curricula are leading to much stronger rates of pupils' progress. Progress in other subjects, such as geography, has been more variable, while improvements in mathematics have remained slow.
- Leaders have designed new assessment systems to address the heightened demands of a more challenging curriculum, with regular milestone assessments to check pupils' progress. While there are emerging signs that these systems are reflecting better rates of progress, there remains variability in their implementation, and pupils do not have a consistent picture of their targets in all subjects and year groups.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. Their academic studies are complemented by subjects such as social studies where pupils develop social, moral and cultural awareness, and in addition all pupils study religious studies. In its widest sense, the school curriculum enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Widening extra-curricular provision in sport and additional activities is enriching pupils' learning and experience.
- Leaders have developed a culture where pupils feel safe and teachers have a strong understanding of their needs. Specific well-being days and actions to promote pupils' mental health show that teachers are committed to pupils' physical and emotional welfare. Pupils benefit from good-quality careers information and guidance.

- The additional funding that leaders receive to help Year 7 pupils catch up and to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used for a range of activities and interventions, including targeted interventions with dedicated learning mentors. New leadership is bringing more robust monitoring to measure the quality of this provision, but differences persist in progress and attendance for many disadvantaged pupils.
- New organisational structures are bringing coherence to the school's leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the impact of support is still not checked closely enough and leaders have not yet secured close engagement with enough parents at crucial review meetings.

Governance

- Governors are committed to the academic success and personal welfare of all pupils at the school.
- The chair of the governing body and his team have worked robustly with school leaders over the past year to secure improvements in leadership and the quality of teaching. They have supported leaders to address underperformance and in holding teachers to account through the stronger implementation of performance management procedures.
- The chair and his team are assiduous in carrying out their duties. They hold regular challenge meetings to review progress and performance with senior and middle leaders, and make regular visits to the school. Governors are committed to pupils' welfare and make weekly visits to monitor key issues, such as safeguarding and attendance.
- Governors hold leaders to account for the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium, but the collective action of governors and leaders has not enabled differences in progress and attendance for disadvantaged pupils to diminish rapidly enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders take their responsibilities to keep pupils safe extremely seriously. They check the suitability of adults working at the school and pursue any concerns about pupil welfare rigorously. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe as the school curriculum actively promotes pupils' awareness of key safeguarding issues. Staff training is up to date and they demonstrate a keen awareness of pupils' welfare. Members of the Wearmouth Learning Trust have specific safeguarding expertise and governors with safeguarding responsibilities work diligently with leaders to monitor safeguarding practices.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is improving and contributing to better progress in a number of subjects.

- The quality of teaching in English and science has shown much improvement. In English, teachers plan well and use effective questioning to probe deeper understanding. In science, teachers use strong subject knowledge to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, and explain complex concepts in interesting and accessible ways.
- Over the past year, leaders have introduced robust systems to challenge and support weaker teaching. Changes to leadership and staffing are leading to a more sustained improvement, in contrast to previous initiatives which lacked focus and lost momentum.
- Time in lessons is generally used to good effect. There was clear evidence of brisk pace and challenge in science and history lessons. Teachers develop positive attitudes to learning and relationships are purposeful. Some pupils are not always able to apply their learning without close teacher direction, however.
- In subjects where teachers use careful assessment of previous learning and thorough subject knowledge to plan well and probe pupils' understanding, pupils are thoroughly involved in their learning and make good progress. This is particularly evident in English and also apparent in subjects such as science and physical education.
- Teachers set homework in line with the school's home learning policy. Pupils respond positively to homework tasks which increasingly support and extend their learning.
- Targeted interventions are being used to support progress and attainment for disadvantaged pupils, but their impact has been limited as differences in progress have not diminished. While support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities contributed to improving progress in 2016, leaders lack a clear view of how teaching and interventions impact on their progress.
- Although improving, teaching in mathematics remains more variable. Where teaching is stronger, teachers develop pupils' understanding of processes and methods securely before moving on to more challenging concepts. Where teaching remains weaker, misconceptions are not clearly challenged and tasks set do not take sufficient notice of pupils' starting points, and this limits the progress they make.
- Teachers provide feedback in line with the school's policy. In subjects such as English and history, pupils show a clear understanding of the actions they can take to improve progress. While new assessment systems are working for some pupils, they do not give all pupils a clear understanding of progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school promotes courtesy and respect. Pupils demonstrate pride in their school uniform and frequently in the presentation of work in their books.

- Pupils demonstrate a positive approach to learning in many lessons. They are studious and attentive, although some pupils are not equipped with the skills to take full advantage of tasks without close teacher direction.
- Pupils' emotional and social welfare is supported well by the personal, social and health education, social studies programmes and guidance sessions. Pupils receive age-specific guidance to enable them to cope with social and emotional issues, and the school is active in promoting positive mental health.
- Pupils state that the school takes action to help them to stay safe in school and in the wider community. They could describe how the curriculum helps them learn how to stay safe online and in their personal relationships.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms, on corridors and around the site is consistently polite, and they show consideration for one another and other adults. Incidents of low-level disruption are extremely rare.
- Incidents of bullying are rare and there is little derogatory language. Pupils are confident that their teachers act swiftly to address any such incidents.
- Leaders have introduced coordinated approaches to improve attendance. Levels of overall attendance are rising and are now similar to those seen nationally. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has declined. Although the attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils are showing an incremental improvement, they remain more likely to be absent and regularly absent than other pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also more likely to be absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- While progress is improving in a number of areas, pupils do not make consistently strong progress in a wide range of subjects. In 2016, the significant improvements in the progress and attainment of pupils in English and science were offset by the slower progress they made in subjects such as mathematics and languages.
- New leadership and new appointments are leading to improvements in the quality of teaching in mathematics and signs of recent improving progress in books. However, the rate of improvement has been slow, with the school's own tracking information for Year 11 pupils in 2016 showing marginal improvement in expected rates of progress and a decline in the proportion of pupils making accelerated progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make less progress than their peers in a number of subjects, including English, science and humanities. Although differences are diminishing in some year groups, they are not diminishing rapidly enough.
- The most able pupils are beginning to make improving rates of progress, but the picture is not yet consistent. The strong progress evident in English and history in 2016 was balanced by slower progress than their peers in science and languages.

- There are signs that the declining progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was rectified in 2016, as they made improving progress in subjects such as English, core science and history. However, gaps remain in the systems used to measure their wider progress.
- Pupils are making impressive progress in subjects such as English and science. Thorough planning informed by high levels of subject expertise are leading to impressive rates of progress. Evidence of good progress in geography books and in language lessons suggest that teachers are now rectifying some of the dips in progress that were evident in 2016.
- Pupils are increasingly better prepared for the next stage of their education, although weaker progress in mathematics and slower progress for disadvantaged pupils limits this preparedness for some pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	140461
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10019276

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	823
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Cogdon
Headteacher	Steve Wilkinson
Telephone number	0191 553 5555
Website	www.monkwearmouth.sunderland.sch.uk
Email address	contactus@mwacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish as it does not include the date for the review of the 2015/16 use of the pupil premium.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about a review date for its use of the 2016/17 pupil premium on its website.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school converted to academy status on 1 December 2013 and is part of the Wearmouth Learning Trust, which includes Redby Academy as a sponsored academy.

- In September 2016, the school began providing post-16 education for some 65 students in vocational and academic courses under a commissioning agreement with South Tyneside College.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are both below average.
- The number on roll has fallen since the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of learning in 40 lessons or part-lessons, of which a number were jointly undertaken with senior leaders.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, lunchtimes and at playtimes.
- Inspectors examined the quality of work in books, in folders and in displays around the school.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders. Inspectors also talked to a wider group of staff. The lead inspector met the chair of the governing body and three other governors.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils in key stages 3 and 4. They also talked less formally to pupils in lessons and around the school site about aspects of their learning, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work and considered documents including the school's own evaluation of its work, the school improvement plan, curriculum plans and information relating to pupils' achievement and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 40 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 33 free-text responses. The lead inspector met one parent and talked to another on the telephone.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Karen Gammack	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Welford	Ofsted Inspector
Ashley Wood	Ofsted Inspector
Shelley Heseltine	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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