

Monkwick Infant and Nursery School

School Road, Monkwick, Colchester, Essex CO2 8NN

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- School leaders, including governors, have not been successful in securing good or better teaching across the school. Although there is good teaching in a number of year groups, there is too much inconsistency, which limits the progress that pupils make.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in writing or mathematics. As a result, they are not sufficiently well prepared for the next stage of their education when they move into key stage 2.
- Some teachers fail to follow the school's marking policy. This often results in errors not being corrected and pupils not receiving feedback or advice about how to improve.
- Leaders' views on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are too positive. Too often they fail to pay enough attention to the quality of work in pupils' books.
- Middle leaders who are responsible for subjects other than English and mathematics have not been effective in improving teaching and learning in their subject areas.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress that they are capable of. Too often, the work that is provided lacks challenge and fails to build on what pupils already know.
- There is a lack of challenge within the wider curriculum. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in subjects such as science and history are not high enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They make good progress from starting points which are generally below those typically found and are well prepared for the next stage of their education when they move into Year 1.
- The school is highly inclusive. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. As a result, they make good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is a great strength. A strong sense of values permeates all aspects of the school's work.
- Pupils behave very well and make a significant and positive contribution to the warm and welcoming school community.
- Reading is taught well. During their time at the school, the vast majority of pupils develop into competent and confident readers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - providing a clear policy for teachers on how they should provide feedback to pupils
 - ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to learn effectively across the wider curriculum
 - developing the role of middle leaders in monitoring, evaluating and improving their subject areas
 - ensuring that governors have an accurate view of pupils' progress across all subjects so that they can hold leaders to account.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - provide greater levels of challenge in lessons, particularly for the most able, including those who are disadvantaged
 - provide marking and feedback in line with the school's policy
 - have good subject knowledge in all national curriculum areas.
- Improve achievement in mathematics and writing by providing greater levels of challenge, particularly for the most able pupils.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- School leaders have been successful in developing a caring and welcoming school where pupils behave well and develop good attitudes to learning. However, leaders have not been as successful in creating a culture of high achievement for all groups of pupils. Although many pupils benefit from good teaching, there is too much inconsistency, particularly in key stage 1. As a result, too many pupils fail to make the progress that they are capable of during their time at the school.
- Over the past two years, the school has expanded and there have been many changes in the school's leadership structure. Many middle leaders are new to their role and have not yet had an impact on the quality of teaching or the standards being achieved in their subject areas. They have not monitored the progress of different groups of pupils or checked that pupils apply their literacy and mathematical skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- School leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching. There have been occasions where they have taken firm and effective action to support and challenge teachers when teaching has been particularly ineffective. However, the processes they use to monitor teaching, learning and assessment are not precise enough. Although regular meetings are held to consider assessment information, school leaders pay too little attention to the quality of work in pupils' books. As a result, they do not have a clear picture of the effect of teaching on pupils' progress over time; nor do they know whether or not teachers are following agreed procedures, such as the school's marking policy.
- School staff are highly effective in promoting pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. As a result, pupils are highly respectful towards each other and the adults who teach them. Regular support for charitable causes, projects on different world religions and an active school council help pupils to develop a good understanding of British values.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. The special educational needs coordinator tracks the progress of these pupils carefully and ensures that the staff who are providing support have appropriate training and guidance. The impact of the additional support is monitored carefully and this helps to ensure that these pupils generally make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Staff value the training and support that they receive. They are provided with regular opportunities to visit other schools to learn from best practice. The headteacher and other senior leaders regularly observe teaching and provide feedback to teachers about what they do well and what they could do better. Teachers welcome these professional discussions, and relationships between staff are very good. All 27 members of staff who responded to the staff questionnaire said that they were proud to work at the school and that they receive a good level of challenge and support from school leaders.
- School leaders ensure that the additional funding the school receives for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to support those pupils who are falling behind with their learning. The additional support that this funding provides has resulted in many of

these pupils making good progress, as staff have worked effectively to close gaps in their learning. However, the most able disadvantaged pupils do not benefit sufficiently from this funding and they do not make the progress that they are capable of.

- The school makes good use of the physical education and sports premium funding. It has been used to provide additional sports activities for pupils during the lunch break. Part of the funding is also being used to improve staff expertise, by enabling teachers to work alongside sports coaches during physical education lessons.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed to supporting the school and bring a range of expertise and experience to their roles. Some make regular visits to the school and are highly committed to the school's success. They meet regularly with the headteacher to discuss the school's priorities.
- Governors check that pupil premium funding and physical education and sports funding are used appropriately. As the school has expanded, they have helped to ensure that the learning environment is fit for purpose. However, there are areas that governors have not checked carefully enough. These include the way that leaders evaluate teachers' performance, particularly in relation to the rate of pupils' progress across different subjects over time.
- Governors are fully aware of their role in safeguarding pupils. They ensure that policies and procedures are up to date and reflect current guidelines.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders are highly committed to the safeguarding of children. They place a high priority on keeping pupils safe and supporting vulnerable families.
- The school premises are secure and visitors are subject to the appropriate checks. Robust checks are made on all adults who work with children at the school and these are well documented. Staff are well trained. They understand and apply the school's agreed policies and procedures. Case records show that the senior leaders with responsibility for leading on safeguarding work well with the relevant agencies to support vulnerable pupils and families.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well looked after when they are at school. They are well supervised during break and lunchtime and know who to go to if they have any concerns. Parents and staff agree that pupils are safe while at school. Parents of children who have additional needs say that staff go out of their way to make sure that their children are well looked after and thrive as a result.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across subjects and year groups is too variable. Although there is some effective teaching in all year groups, there are too many lessons in which pupils fail to make the progress that they are capable of. As a result, pupils, particularly

those who are most able, are not given sufficient challenge, and do not learn as well as they should.

- Although children get off to a good start in developing their knowledge and understanding of mathematics in the early years, progress stalls in Year 1, as there is too much repetition and not enough challenge. The work seen in books showed that even the most able pupils were often required to do simple tasks which varied little from day to day. Across Year 1 and Year 2, there was little evidence in books of pupils being asked to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to investigate or solve problems. As a result, by the end of Year 2, too few pupils reach or exceed the expected standard in mathematics.
- Attainment in writing was broadly in line with the national average in 2016. However, for too many pupils this did not represent good progress from their starting points at the end of the early years. The work seen in pupils' books showed that progress is not as good as it should be in English or in other curriculum areas. Teachers often fail to follow the school's marking policy and, too often, children make mistakes that are not corrected and are repeated in subsequent pieces of work.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not always good enough to provide high levels of challenge for pupils. As a result, their expectations of what pupils can achieve in subjects such as science, geography and history are too low. The work which they set provides insufficient challenge, particularly for the most able.
- The quality of handwriting and presentation is poor. The school's handwriting policy is not followed consistently and teachers appear to have low expectations about how well pupils are able to present their work. As a result, pupils do not demonstrate enough pride in their work or show a commitment to improving their presentation.
- Reading is taught well. There are particular strengths in the teaching of phonics and, by the time they move on to the next stage of their education, pupils are generally confident and competent readers. Pupils who struggle with the development of their early reading skills are supported well and make the progress they need to catch up. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to teaching and learning, whether supporting in class or when taking small groups. They add significant value to the learning experiences of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy attending Monkwick Infant and Nursery school. Staff have created an extremely positive climate for learning that promotes pupils' confidence and their physical and emotional well-being.
- Parents are fully supportive of the school and value highly the way in which staff support pupils' personal development and welfare. Many parents told inspectors how helpful the teachers are at resolving any concerns. Almost every parent who responded

to Parent View would recommend the school to another parent.

- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves and others safe. From a very young age, they learn how to look after themselves and each other. During this inspection, young children in the Nursery were seen helping each other, putting coats on and taking turns using the bicycles in the outside area, without adult prompting.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school because adults are always there to help them. Parents reported occasional incidents of misbehaviour and bullying but stated that the school was highly effective at dealing with these issues.
- Leaders support parents and families extremely well, often helping parents to overcome problems that impact on pupils' learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school and develop very good attitudes to learning. They show respect towards each other and the adults who teach them.
- Staff promote good behaviour and constantly look to help pupils to develop positive attitudes. A small minority of pupils exhibit some challenging behaviour but this is well managed by staff and lessons are rarely disrupted. Staff and the vast majority of parents agree that pupils are well behaved.
- The school analyses patterns of behaviour carefully. Records show that incidents of poor behaviour are rare. The number of fixed-term exclusions, which had been high in recent years, has reduced significantly. No children currently on roll have been excluded during this academic year
- School leaders are taking effective action to improve attendance. An attendance officer has been appointed to work with parents and every opportunity is taken to stress the importance of regular attendance to both parents and pupils. Current attendance is broadly in line with the national average for primary schools.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not achieve well in mathematics. Although they get off to a good start in the early years, they do not make enough progress in key stage 1, particularly in Year 1. The work seen in pupils' books shows that these pupils spend too much time repeating work that they have already covered. During their time in Year 2, they are not challenged often enough to use and apply their knowledge of mathematics to investigate and solve problems.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in writing. For example, pupils' spelling is not developed well, because there is no consistent approach to teaching this skill. Mistakes in grammar and punctuation often go unchecked as too many teachers fail to follow the school's marking policy. This restricts the quality of pupils' written work and limits achievement in English and in other subjects across the curriculum.
- Phonics teaching is effective. Although the percentage of pupils who pass the phonics check has been below the national average for the past two years, effective additional

support is provided for those pupils who need it. As a result, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected standard in the phonics check after resits at the end of Year 2 was above the national average in 2016.

- Children develop into confident and competent readers while at the school. Attainment at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 was broadly in line with the national average. This represents good progress overall from starting points that were generally below the national average.
- The most able pupils, including those pupils who are disadvantaged, do not achieve as well as they should. Too few of these pupils make or exceed the expected progress in English, mathematics or other curriculum areas. This is because teachers do not provide them with sufficient challenge in lessons.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in subjects such as science, history and geography. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills or use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in these subjects.
- School leaders track the progress of disadvantaged pupils carefully. They often receive additional support, which is effective at closing gaps in their knowledge and understanding. As a result, the gap in attainment between them and other pupils nationally is narrowing. However, overall progress is limited by the inconsistencies in the overall quality of teaching.

Early years provision

Good

- The school provides an extremely caring and nurturing environment for young children. This is apparent from the children's first day in the early years. Parents are welcomed into the school community and staff immediately provide excellent care, guidance and support for their children. This helps children, including those who start in the Nursery as young as two years old, to develop confidence and to settle quickly into school life.
- Parents are highly appreciative of the way that the school involves them in the initial assessments that are made of their children's skills, knowledge and abilities. Staff visit children at home, or in their previous nursery, prior to them starting at the school, in order to get to know them and find out about their interests, any medical issues or concerns that parents might have.
- Those parents who spoke to the inspectors during this inspection expressed high levels of satisfaction with both the care provided for their children and the progress that their children are making in their learning. Parents appreciate the opportunity to meet regularly with staff and value the information they receive about their children's learning.
- Leadership of the early years is good. All members of staff understand their roles in supporting, teaching and assessing children. Leaders ensure that children who have additional needs are quickly identified and receive appropriate support.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make regular assessments of children's progress and record these in 'learning journeys'. These assessments are used to help staff to plan activities which engage children's interests and support children's learning. A recent development allows staff to share information with parents using an online programme.

- Leaders have taken effective action to address weaknesses in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, most children are now making good progress from starting points that are below those typically found. They are catching up quickly with other children of their age.
- Adults are highly effective at developing children's social skills. As a result, children quickly develop good learning behaviours and good interpersonal skills. Children behave sensibly and show respect towards each other.
- Safeguarding is rightly given a high priority. Adults supervise children carefully and make sure that they are kept safe in the classroom and outside. Children's behaviour is good and shows that they feel safe while in school.
- An engaging range of activities are provided both inside the classroom and outside. Children play a full part in keeping the learning areas tidy and well organised. Staff ensure that children make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well in the early years. Adults have clear plans in place and cater for these children well to ensure that their needs are met.

School details

Unique reference number	140735
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10023367

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	Infant and nursery school
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Ms Pip Gallop
Headteacher	Claire Holmes
Telephone number	01206 573 849
Website	www.monkwick-inf.essex.sch.uk
Email address	admin@monkwick-inf.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Monkwick Infant and Nursery School is larger than most primary schools.
- Over a third of the pupils are disadvantaged, which is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is around average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, supported by a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below that found nationally.
- Children in the Nursery classes attend part-time and children in the Reception classes attend full-time.
- The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language, at around 12%, is lower than the national average.
- Around a quarter of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is below the national average.

- The school has grown significantly since the last inspection and now has three classes in each year group. The Nursery has admitted two-year-old children since Easter 2016.
- The school became part of the Sigma Academy Trust in September 2016.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Several observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading and scrutinised the work that they had completed in books.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning, and behaviour and safety.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and the chief executive of the Sigma Trust.
- Inspectors met with teachers who had leadership responsibility for English, mathematics, special educational needs and the early years.
- Inspectors looked at the school's evaluation of its own performance, its development plan and a range of other school policies. They also considered documentation relating to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed the 22 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. They also met with parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff, through analysis of the 27 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Richard Hopkins	Ofsted Inspector
Jacqui Frost	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Cloke	Ofsted Inspector

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