

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Miss Gillian Mason
Headteacher
Monton Green Primary School
Pine Grove
Eccles
Manchester
M30 9JP

Dear Miss Mason

Short inspection of Monton Green Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 November 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in April 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You and your senior leaders are successful in constantly focusing on providing the best possible education for your pupils. You regularly analyse assessment information and consider ways to improve other aspects of pupils' education, such as their emotional well-being. You devise effective plans to secure improvement, which have detailed information about the actions you will take, the implications for resources, staff responsibilities and the timescales involved. However, you acknowledge that the statements about how you intend to evaluate the effectiveness of your actions do not consistently focus on their impact on pupils' achievement.

You have successfully addressed the areas for improvement that inspectors determined in the previous inspection report.

You have ensured that teaching has improved and teachers now plan work for most pupils that provides the right level of challenge to match their abilities, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge before a given topic or block of learning to make sure that the work matches their needs. Teachers then assess pupils' progress after the topic concerned and identify future work to address

any lingering misconceptions. However, this system is not fully effective in ensuring that challenge is hard enough for the most able pupils.

You now have a more rigorous programme of checks on the quality of teaching and learning. You use strategies, such as lesson observations and analysis of pupils' workbooks, to good effect, providing feedback to teachers to help them improve.

The overall effect of these actions is that pupils make good progress in their learning. However, you recognise that challenge for the most able is less consistent, with the result that the proportion of pupils achieving higher standards in English and mathematics is not as high as it could be.

You have also improved communication links with parents. You have introduced a texting service in addition to using email and the school's website to keep parents informed. You have established regular 'drop-ins' every half term, which enable parents to come into school to see the work their child is doing. You also make use of an online system to inform parents about good work their child has done during the day. Your own survey of parents indicates a good level of satisfaction with the 'drop-ins', with many saying that they give them a much clearer picture of their child's work and progress.

In a discussion with me, staff showed that they are strongly positive about the leadership of the school and the education that pupils receive. They appreciate the training that you provide, which is carefully matched both to the needs of the school and to their own professional development. This contributes substantially to the good quality of teaching and learning in the school. Staff spoke knowledgeably about the opportunities that the school provides to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These include clubs, such as street dance, chess and football, and educational visits, like residential trips to take part in adventurous activities outdoors. They also develop pupils' understanding of other faiths through lessons in religious education, which contribute well to the prevention of radicalisation.

The majority of parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, are very happy about the care, progress and safety of their children in school. A high proportion would recommend the school to others.

I spoke to a group of pupils from Year 6 during the inspection. They were polite and articulate and confidently shared their experiences of school with me. They all said that they very much enjoy coming to school. They understand fundamental British values well and told me about activities in school that reinforce them. These include devising their own 'Golden Rules', to help them understand the rule of law, and democratically electing representatives to the school council. Planned programmes of lessons in personal, social and health education also contribute well to pupils' understanding of other cultures, such the life of cocoa farmers in Ghana.

I also inspected the school's unit for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, all of whom have education, health and care plans or statements of special educational

needs. Teaching and learning are effective and pupils make good progress from their starting points, with some making progress that is even stronger. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well and have high expectations of their work

The local authority provides support at an appropriately 'light touch' level. The adviser knows the school's strengths and areas for development well. You have also commissioned extra support that is both challenging and effective.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Records are detailed and of high quality. You use an electronic system for recording concerns, which is thorough and shows that, when required, you follow up concerns with outside agencies promptly and rigorously. The school's record of checks on members of staff is compliant. The school site is secure. Staff check identities of visitors thoroughly on entry to the building.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff and governors receive effective training. You have also provided extra training for staff in recognising behaviour connected with gang culture, which you have identified as an area requiring particular vigilance. Staff know their pupils well and have a good knowledge of potential signs of abuse. Pupils feel very safe in school and know that adults will respond reassuringly and effectively to any concerns they have. Pupils understand the different types of bullying that exist and say that there are few examples of it in school. You report the rare examples of the use of racist or homophobic language appropriately and your actions are effective and there are no repeated incidents.

Inspection findings

- At the start of my visit we agreed a number of key lines of enquiry for the inspection. I have already written about how well you have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection and whether safeguarding is effective.
- Another key line of enquiry concerned how strongly children in the early years make progress. Children make good progress from their starting points. They join the early years with skills and knowledge that are below those that are typical for their age and stage of development. Teachers create a learning environment that supports learning well, with opportunities to read letters and key words and to develop number skills with, for instance, large playing cards and number displays. Children's work shows they make good progress. In writing, for example, less-able children begin to write more recognisable letters as they progress, while most-able children begin independently to attempt sentences, such as 'I can see concs (conkers).' By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is in line with the national average.

- The next focus related to results of national assessments for Year 2 pupils in 2017. There was an apparent decline in achievement compared to 2016 results, although the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with national averages. It is clear that in 2017 this year group contained a number of pupils who received their education in the school's unit for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties. This possibly resulted in attainment figures being lower than in 2016, as these pupils were understandably working below the expected level. You have taken effective action to secure good progress for most current pupils in Year 2 and you keep a close watch on the progress of the current Year 3 pupils through termly pupil progress meetings. You have, for example, reorganised the timing of lessons in writing in key stage 1 so that they follow phonics lessons. By doing this, you enable pupils to apply their phonics skills to their writing more effectively. Evidence from workbooks shows that the majority of pupils make good progress in key stage 1 in both English and mathematics. You acknowledge, however, that there are too few pupils in key stage 1 who achieve at greater depth in mathematics because teachers do not provide challenging work consistently enough.
- Another key line of enquiry focused on the progress of disadvantaged pupils in English and mathematics. Evidence from books and the school's own assessment information show that current pupils make good progress. Teachers challenge pupils effectively in mathematics. In Year 6, for example, pupils used their reasoning skills successfully to tackle calculations, like 3842×42 , using a formal written method. The effective use of assessment tasks before and after topics helps to focus work well and to enable accurate assessment of progress for most pupils. However, you recognise that the proportions of disadvantaged pupils who achieve greater depth in Year 2 or the high standard in Year 6 are still below the national average.
- Finally, governors know the school well and carry out their duties effectively. They challenge you by asking searching questions about such issues as pupils' achievement. You manage fixed-term exclusions effectively, following appropriate procedures. Those that you have had to impose have been for valid reasons. You manage pupils' return to school well, as there are few pupils who have repeat exclusions.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's action plans for improvement contain success criteria that consistently focus on the intended impact of leaders' actions on pupils' achievement
- teachers provide more consistent challenge for the most able pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, to increase the proportions of those pupils who achieve at higher levels in mathematics and, where applicable, in English.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Salford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mark Quinn
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

With you, I carried out short visits to the early years and most year groups in key stage 1 and key stage 2. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, records of incidents of bullying and misbehaviour and records connected with the safeguarding of children. I held discussions with you, senior leaders, other members of staff, governors and pupils. I had a discussion with a representative of the local authority. I analysed pupils' work and the school's own assessment information. I evaluated 73 responses received through Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. There were no other responses to surveys.