

Monkwick Infant and Nursery School

School Road, Monkwick, Colchester, Essex CO2 8NN

Inspection dates

25–26 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has created a culture where staff have the highest expectation of all pupils. They are proud to work at Monkwick Infant and Nursery School.
- The school now has a highly effective leadership team – including middle leaders. Leaders have identified the right priorities to continue to improve the school.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They plan work that makes pupils think hard and use assessment carefully to check pupils' understanding.
- Leaders provide high-quality support for pupils' social and emotional needs. This means that pupils are happy and feel safe in school. Their parents agree.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders adapt the curriculum to ensure that it best suits the needs of their pupils. This means they make strong progress in a range of subjects.
- In 2018, not enough pupils left the school well prepared for key stage 2. However, outcomes have improved – especially for the most able – and current pupils are now making strong progress.
- Leaders have taken action to improve the pupils' attendance. However, despite some improvement, there are still too many pupils who do not attend regularly enough.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are well looked after in a nurturing environment. Although children make good progress during their time in the early years, not enough pupils leave the Reception classes ready and well prepared for Year 1.
- Governance has improved since the previous inspection. The governing body now has a strong understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They challenge leaders to continue to improve the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. This is because leaders have a detailed knowledge of these pupils' needs and provide well-tailored support for them.
- Pupils' social and emotional needs are met very well because of the wide-ranging provision leaders have in place.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance by building on the successful work already undertaken to ensure that the small number of pupils who are still persistently absent attend well.
- Increase the proportion of children ready for Year 1 by ensuring that teachers use assessment information to plan activities which more precisely meet the learning needs of children in the early years.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, working closely with the primary executive lead from the trust and the deputy headteacher, has brought about substantial improvement since the previous inspection. She has established a culture where 'no child is left behind' and has built a highly effective leadership team whose members are taking the correct actions to bring about further improvement.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching, and therefore outcomes, through a well-structured cycle of evaluation. They meet teachers individually to look closely at the progress pupils are making and identify elements of teachers' practice that can be refined to bring further improvement. Teachers value these meetings; they provide challenge and support in equal measures.
- Staff value the professional development opportunities provided for them. The skills and knowledge of middle leaders have been well developed. This means they are now in a position to lead their subjects effectively and drive further improvement. Teachers who are new to the profession speak highly of the support they receive. One newly qualified teacher told an inspector: 'I couldn't have asked to work at a more supportive school.'
- The leaders of English and mathematics are knowledgeable; their actions have brought about improvement in their subjects.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) – who is also the deputy headteacher – has a detailed understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means that support is tailored closely to their needs and, as a result, pupils with SEND are making strong progress.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium efficiently. They accurately identify the barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils and put in place well-thought-out strategies to overcome these barriers.
- Leaders have thought hard about the curriculum and ensure that it is sequenced appropriately to meet the needs of specific groups of pupils. Regular trips, along with visitors to the school, enrich the curriculum further. For example, pupils have had recent visits from a paramedic, local police officers and gardeners, along with trips to Colchester Castle.
- The school supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strongly. Staff provide a wide range of opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences. For example, during the inspection, the school choir performed at a local concert alongside other primary and secondary schools. Singing has a high priority in school. Inspectors saw examples of pupils singing with great gusto and enjoyment during assemblies. Another group of pupils recently exhibited their art work at a local gallery as part of an exhibition called 'Our Town'.
- Parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent told an inspector: 'The school is a warm and welcoming place where the children are encouraged to explore and develop themselves as independent individuals.' Another parent said: 'This is a fantastic school that has fully supported and nurtured both of my children during their

infant school years.'

- The trust has provided strong support to the school. In particular, the primary executive lead has worked closely with the headteacher to improve the quality of teaching. The trust has ensured that the school is now well placed to continue to improve.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly effective in carrying out their duties. They now have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- They provide support for leaders, but do not shy away from holding them to account for the quality of provision. Governors ask for specific information, particularly in relation to the progress pupils are making. They will readily challenge leaders if any group of pupils appears to be underachieving.
- Governors bring a range of skills and knowledge to their roles. For example, the experienced chair of the governing body is highly experienced in child protection procedures. She uses this knowledge to ensure that the school follows all statutory safeguarding requirements.
- Governors make sure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent well. They make regular visits to the school to check the difference this spending is having on pupils' well-being and progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The welfare and safety of all pupils in school is paramount to staff.
- Staff are well trained and clear on the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a pupil. Pupils feel safe in school and their parents agree.
- The designated safeguarding leaders keep meticulous records and make timely referrals to outside agencies where needed. They are tenacious in following up these referrals if they do not receive an adequate response.
- All statutory pre-employment checks are carried out and detailed records are kept.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection. It is now consistently good across the school. This is because teachers have strong subject knowledge, have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and make accurate assessments to check pupils' understanding of new learning.
- Teachers plan sequences of lessons to ensure that new learning builds upon what pupils already know. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, pupils were able to discuss and debate the changes that happen to the body during exercise, using correct scientific vocabulary. This was because they already had a secure knowledge of the function of the heart and lungs.

- Adults have very positive relationships with pupils. Additional adults are generally used well to support pupils' learning and ask skilful questions to regularly check how much pupils understand.
- Leaders have improved the teaching of reading. This is because teachers focus on widening pupils' vocabulary, read high-quality texts aloud to pupils and help pupils who fall behind to quickly catch up. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were able to confidently discuss a text about vultures, because they had previously learned important vocabulary related to this topic.
- Teaching in the school's 'Owl provision' – a separate class base for pupils with social and emotional difficulties – is effective. There are strong relationships between adults and pupils. Adults model positive behaviour and pupils respond positively to the responsibilities they are given.
- The most able pupils have many opportunities to apply their knowledge to solve problems on their own, especially in mathematics. Work in books demonstrates that these pupils make good progress over time.
- Pupils are taught, from the start of their time in school, to be independent learners. They can reflect on their successes, along with the areas in which they need to improve. This means that when they get stuck in class, they do not give up easily.
- In a small number of cases, where teaching does not match the needs of some pupils, they become distracted and inattentive. This means they do not learn as much as they could.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders provide highly effective support for pupils' social and emotional needs. The experienced and well-qualified family support worker provides support to pupils and their families. She works closely with other agencies, which means pupils who need additional support receive it in a timely manner.
- Pupils feel safe in school. One pupil told an inspector: 'We have lessons to help us to be kind to one another.' Another went on to say: 'Adults will fix it if there are any problems in the playground.'
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe when using the internet. They know not to communicate with strangers online and are clear that they should talk to an adult if they are worried about anything they see on the internet.
- Playtimes are orderly and calm. Pupils have the opportunity to use a range of equipment which they share with one another. Where there are minor disagreements, adults help pupils to overcome these.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Pupils are polite and respectful. They readily engage in conversations with adults.
- Leaders have taken effective action to reduce the number of instances of poor behaviour in school. Pupils are supported to manage their own behaviour and emotions in a mature way.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the school's behaviour system. They know that it is 'good to be green' and strive to make the right behaviour choices in lessons and around the school.
- Leaders have taken effective steps to reduce the number of pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. However, despite their robust and rigorous actions, there are still too many pupils who miss too much school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. This decline has been halted and the work in current pupils' books shows they are making strong progress in English and mathematics.
- Inspection evidence, along with the school's own assessment information, demonstrates that a larger proportion of pupils are working at a greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics than in the past.
- Disadvantaged pupils, along with pupils with SEND, make strong progress. This is because teachers are clear about the barriers faced by these pupils and plan effective sequences of lessons to help them overcome their difficulties.
- Pupils make strong progress in reading. Over time, they develop a secure knowledge of phonics, quickly go on to read with fluency and develop an ever-widening vocabulary.
- Many pupils in Year 1 started the year with skills and knowledge below those of many other pupils nationally. However, leaders adapted the curriculum to make sure lessons met the needs of this cohort effectively. Consequently, a large proportion are now attaining at the standard the school expects of pupils by the end of Year 1, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make strong progress in a range of subjects across the curriculum, especially science. Pupils in Year 1 use scientific vocabulary with confidence and accuracy. They are taught scientific enquiry skills – to help them think like a scientist – which they go on to apply with growing independence in Year 2.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge below those typically found in children of a similar age. During their time in the Nursery and Reception classes, they go on to make good progress from their lower starting points.
- Although the early years leader is still relatively new to the role, she has quickly gained a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. She is taking the correct actions to continue to improve provision across the early years stage.

- The learning environment in the Nursery and Reception classes is stimulating and purposeful. Children show high levels of independence in the early years because routines are well established.
- Parents are well informed about their children's progress through the school's chosen 'learning journey'.
- Children behave well. There is a highly nurturing culture and all welfare requirements are met.
- Adults meet the needs of children with SEND well. They model the correct use of language and ask children thoughtful and well-timed questions to develop their ideas and thoughts.
- Although children make strong progress, over the past two years not enough of them have been ready for Year 1. This is because assessment of their specific needs has not been sufficiently sharp. Consequently, teachers do not consistently plan activities which fully develop the areas children need to improve in the most.
- The provision for two-year-olds is well planned to help children develop in all areas of learning. Adults are well trained and can adapt activities to match children's needs. They are attentive to the needs of the children and they listen and respond appropriately.

School details

Unique reference number	140735
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10088682

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

Type of school	Infant and nursery school
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	277
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Sandy Tate
Headteacher	Claire Holmes
Telephone number	01206 573 849
Website	www.monkwick-inf.essex.sch.uk
Email address	admin@monkwickinfant.school
Date of previous inspection	10–11 January 2017

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Sigma Academy Trust. The board of trustees has overall responsibility for the school. They delegate responsibilities to the local governing body.
- Children in the Nursery class attend part time and children in the Reception classes attend full time. The school also has provision for two-year-old children.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above average.
- The school has additional provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Only pupils who attend Monkwick Infant and Nursery School attend this additional provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes to check the quality of teaching. The majority of these visits were alongside senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with the senior leaders; leaders of mathematics, English, SEND and early years; the primary executive lead of the trust; four different groups of pupils; leaders of religious education, computing, art and science; the school's attendance officer; family support worker and four members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and the director of standards of the trust. He also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation including safeguarding and child protection procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning and records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. Inspectors also reviewed records of the governing body's work.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books in lessons and alongside leaders to see how well they learn over time. They also considered 69 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, along with 15 free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents in the playground.
- Inspectors considered 52 responses from the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Nutbeam	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Warboys	Ofsted Inspector

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