

# Inspection of a good school: Monkspath Junior and Infant School

Farmhouse Way, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands B90 4EH

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

## Outcome

Monkspath Junior and Infant School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

At Monkspath, the school values of individuality, equality and ambition clearly underpin the ethos and learning. Pupils understand these values. They listen to the opinions of others and make comments such as 'everyone has an equal right.' Staff, pupils, parents and carers are very proud of the school. They all say that it feels like one happy family.

Pupils are polite, kind, and helpful to adults and their peers. Everyone looks out for each other. Pupils do not believe that there are any bullies in school. On the rare occasions when friends fall out, pupils say that staff sort it out quickly. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe.

Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of staff. They behave well in lessons and around the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are included in all parts of school life. Pupils embrace the full range of subjects from Spanish to music. They especially enjoy the on-site swimming lessons. Teachers make lessons interesting and learning enjoyable. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the places they get to visit, and how much they love reading. Pupils learn well in most subjects.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have ensured that the school's curriculum is implemented effectively, enabling most pupils to achieve well. Leaders ensure that each aspect of the curriculum starts in the early years. Curriculum plans clearly identify the knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn and when.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They create interesting lessons that help pupils understand difficult concepts. Leaders provide effective training for teachers. This helps them know how to teach the different subjects most effectively. In some subjects, however, pupils are not always able to remember enough of what they have been taught. This is because teachers do not regularly revisit prior learning often enough. Teachers use

assessment well to find out what pupils know. They adjust their plans and teaching approach accordingly. Staff provide extra tuition to pupils to help them catch up.

The teaching of reading and phonics is a high priority in school. Phonics teaching begins in Reception. Children quickly begin to develop their fluency. Leaders use assessment information to accurately match books to the sounds that pupils already know. All staff have been trained in the new phonics programme. However, it is not yet implemented consistently. This means that a few pupils do not make fast enough progress. Leaders have identified this and have put in plans to address it.

Teachers read to pupils every day. This helps to foster pupils' curiosity and love of reading. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the texts they read, such as 'Grandpa Chatterji' and 'Stig of the Dump'.

In mathematics, leaders and teachers know what they want pupils to learn and have set ambitious goals. Pupils develop their knowledge of number in the early years through effective teaching and practical activities. Teachers make sure that knowledge and skills are taught step by step. They build on what pupils know already. Pupils practise their arithmetic and times tables regularly. Pupils say that they enjoy learning mathematics.

Pupils with SEND are identified at an early stage. Teachers work with pupils and parents to identify and provide the extra help pupils need to access the full curriculum. Teachers carefully consider the resources pupils need to work successfully alongside their peers.

Children thrive in the early years. Adults ensure that it is well organised and resourced. They look after children well and care for them. Adults know how to provide effective support and encouragement for all the children. They help them learn new things. Adults ensure that children use what they already know in their independent learning.

Governors have a clear understanding of their role. They are highly involved with the school and are well informed and evaluative. They actively drive improvements.

Opportunities in the curriculum to promote pupils' personal development are plentiful. The school takes part in many sports competitions. It has won various awards, including the Solihull School Partnership Large School of the Year. Pupils in all year groups go on at least one visit a year, for example to the Fire Service Centre for personal safety and the theatre to watch a production. Pupils have many leadership opportunities, such as being members of the school council and eco council. They recently contributed to a design for an armed forces memorial garden in the local park.

Staff say that they feel valued at work. Leaders manage staff's workload and well-being in supportive ways. Parents speak very highly of the school. They praise the inclusive culture and how staff care for pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is woven into every area of school life. Everyone is encouraged to be vigilant and report all concerns. Staff receive regular training and updates to enable them to help and support children. They know the school procedure to escalate concerns and know how to make a referral. Records kept are clear with dates and actions recorded. Leaders and staff have an awareness of local area safeguarding risks. Leaders speak knowledgeably about managing safe recruitment and allegations about adults. Pupils are taught how to keep safe and where they can access help, both within school and beyond the school.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The new phonics programme is not being implemented consistently by staff. This slows the progress for pupils at the early stages of learning to read. Leaders should support all staff to teach phonics in the agreed way so that pupils can quickly learn the sounds they need to decode and read fluently.
- In some subjects, teachers do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to recap and revise what they have been taught previously. This means that pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in these subjects is refined and organised in a way that allows pupils to retain and apply significant prior knowledge.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2010.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104084
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199751
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	672
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Lindsey
<b>Acting Headteacher</b>	Dan Wild
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.monkspathschool.co.uk">www.monkspathschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher in post at the previous inspection retired at the end of summer 2021. The deputy headteacher has been acting headteacher since September 2021.
- The school offers pre-school provision for two-year-olds.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher and the three acting deputy headteachers. They met with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator. The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the governing body and representatives of the governing body and spoke with the education improvement adviser on the telephone.

- Inspectors did deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. They held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at curriculum plans, spoke with pupils, looked at their books, and met with teachers.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at breaktime and observed their behaviour around the school. The lead inspector also met with a group of pupils for a tour of the school.
- The inspector noted 2019 external performance data about the school and looked at school documents. These included information about behaviour, the school curriculum and improvement planning. She also checked the school’s website.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school, inspectors spoke to members of staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss the school’s policies and procedures. During these meetings, records were scrutinised, including those relating to the safer recruitment of staff. Case files were sampled to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff to evaluate the school’s safeguarding culture.
- Inspectors considered the 101 responses that were submitted as part of the online Ofsted Parent View survey, including 102 free-text responses. Inspectors considered the feedback provided by 46 members of staff through the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Maneer Samad

Ofsted Inspector

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