

Inspection of an outstanding school: Monkchester Road Nursery School

Monkchester Road, Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE6 2LJ

Inspection date:

22 September 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children at Monkchester Road Nursery School are happy and settled. Leaders and staff know their children very well. Leaders' understanding of the community they work in is comprehensive. Staff ensure that children feel welcome and there is a strong caring ethos across the nursery school. Parents value the nurturing environment the school has created.

Leaders, staff and stakeholders have high expectations for the children they care for, including children with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. Some areas of the curriculum are well planned and embedded. Leaders know that some areas need further development. This will help all children to learn and remember more.

Around school, children behave well and show interest in the range of activities planned for them. Children show high levels of engagement in the clearly defined and well-equipped outdoor areas. They delight in using the on-site forest school and the workshop area. There are clear and consistent routines for children. For example, children walk in pairs around the school. Leaders plan carefully for further opportunities for children. Children care for the environment by recycling every day.

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

Leaders, staff and governors are committed to the school's high ambitions for the children's care and development. The school has carefully thought about and sequenced the milestones that children will make in several areas of the curriculum. In communication and language, what children will achieve, and when, are clearly defined. This includes key vocabulary that children must know and use correctly. Skilled staff use a range of strategies to develop children's communication in different ways. Children

develop new vocabulary and use it accurately. Leaders have planned other areas of learning in the same detail. For example, in understanding the world, leaders have mapped out how children will know more as they encounter different types of festivals over time. This careful planning now needs to be used consistently across all areas of learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is a priority for leaders. This can be seen in the use of well-established routines for children. For example, in the dining hall, children eat in a family setting with their key staff alongside them. Staff embed good manners and model the use of cutlery with children well. Leaders know the needs of the children in school are changing.

Recent changes to how children are grouped support children to make stronger attachments to key staff. This is seen in how quickly children settle into the morning routine when they arrive each day. Children accessing the two-year-old provision skip into their afternoon sessions eager to start. Children show high levels of care and support for their peers. In one session observed during this inspection, a nervous child held a worm for the first time. The other children were calm and supportive and key to making this happen. They celebrated the child's success together with staff.

Children with SEND benefit from leaders who understand their needs and development well. Children with SEND are identified quickly. The school uses a range of support to meet children's needs, including the advice of other professionals. There is some variation as to how well some children are supported in classrooms. Some children need consistently high-quality interactions with the adults to help them to remember key language.

Children show high levels of focus and engagement in the outdoor provision. The use of clearly defined spaces and skilled staff means all children, including children with SEND, fully participate in this offer. Children enjoy the different areas of learning. They talk excitedly about the different activities they are doing, including growing potatoes or using the herbs they have grown. The school carefully plans children's wider development. School visits involve children and their parents. Children experience travelling on public transport and visiting the city when they go to museums. The school works with parents on termly themes such as daffodils. This creates good home and school links.

Staff are proud to work here. They recognise the way in which leaders support their well-being. Leaders reflect regularly about how workload can be improved, including the use of assessment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some areas of learning are not planned as fully as others. This means that some children learn more knowledge in some areas of the curriculum than other areas. The school must ensure that all curriculum areas are planned progressively so that the progress children make is more balanced to match the schools' ambitions.
- There is an increasing complex range of children with SEND within the nursery school. There is variation in the quality of support some children with SEND receive compared to other children with SEND, including children with SEND linked to communication and language. The school must ensure that all staff have appropriate subject knowledge and use this effectively to meet the range of SEND needs in provision effectively.

Background

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

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged, the school to be outstanding in November 2013.

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.

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years,

looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	108431
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10242050
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	131
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Darren Kidger
Headteacher	Anne Humble
Website	www.monkchesterroad.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Monkchester Road Nursery School provides education and care for children aged two to five years. At the time of the inspection, the age of children on roll was two to four years.
- The nursery school is in a federation with two other nursery schools in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
- The headteacher is a co-headteacher at one of the other nurseries in the federation.
- The federation of nursery schools shares one governing body.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school’s website, as well as published information about the school’s performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and understanding the world. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited provision where they observed children at different times of the day, and spoke to teachers and teaching assistants. They looked at examples of children’s learning from books and extracts from online learning journeys.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke with leaders, staff and a range of stakeholders including governors. Safeguarding documentation was scrutinised, including the safeguarding policies, and the single central record of recruitment checks.
- Inspectors gathered views of parents informally in person and formally through responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text responses. The views of staff were considered through meetings with them.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the governing body and the local authority.

Inspection team

Emily Stevens, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Mary Cook

His Majesty’s Inspector

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