



# Monkseaton Middle School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 108637  
**LEA** North Tyneside  
**Inspection number** 278016  
**Inspection dates** 14 June 2006 to 15 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Brian Blake HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary	<b>School address</b>	Vernon Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		Monkseaton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9 to 13		Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2008715
<b>Number on roll</b>	452	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 2008716
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Neville Cowey
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 March 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Anne Wilson

<b>Age group</b> 9 to 13	<b>Inspection dates</b> 14 June 2006 - 15 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278016
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Monkseaton Middle School serves a varied socio-economic catchment area. The school takes pupils from Years 5 to 8; two years after the start of Key Stage 2, and the first two years of Key Stage 3. There are more girls than boys on roll, and a lower than average number of pupils is entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. There are very few minority ethnic pupils, including those whose first language is not English, and a very small number of looked after children.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Monkseaton Middle School provides a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils are happy at school because they enjoy their learning; they make new friends; they do lots of different and interesting things in lessons; they feel safe; and, most teachers are helpful and value what they say.

Although the school achieves above average standards in all three core subjects at the end of Key Stage 2, the rate of progress that higher and middle attaining pupils make from Key Stage 1 is too slow in both English and mathematics. The attainment of pupils on entry to school, based on their prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, suggests that is just above the national average expected for Year 5 pupils. However, the school's own analyses from optional tests at the end of Year 4 show that standards are closer to the national averages in both English and mathematics. This is confirmed through detailed examination by inspectors of pupils' knowledge and understanding in discussion, and in their work books in English and mathematics. By the time pupils transfer to local high schools they are making satisfactory progress in their learning.

When asked 'what is it like to be a pupil at Monkseaton Middle School?' the pupils responded very positively and enthusiastically. The overall welfare of pupils is a high priority, and pupils, their parents and carers appreciate fully the school's work in this area. All reasonable efforts are taken to protect pupils from harm, so they feel safe and secure at school. Any form of anti-social behaviour, including bullying and racist behaviour, is tackled promptly and effectively; pupils have confidence that teachers will listen to their concerns and deal with any incidents that cause unnecessary stress. One pupil said: 'If you are getting bullied, you go to the head of year and they will sort it out'. Another pupil relayed a story of a friend who was being bullied: 'The teacher has told the pupils off, and it has sort of settled now.' Pupils make a positive contribution to the school. For example, the school council plays an important part in ensuring that pupils' views influence some of the decision-making in the school, such as recent changes and improvements in school meals which have occurred as a direct result of pupils' comments about the quality of food on offer at lunch time. Vulnerable pupils, such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those new to the school, are well cared for. Adults and the vast majority of pupils show sensitivity to the needs of others.

Although the majority of teaching is satisfactory, some is good or outstanding. The differences that this better quality teaching has on pupils' learning were very clear in the lessons observed; levels of interest were high, concentration very good and discussions were of high quality. In these lessons, pupils of all abilities make the progress they should. Teachers make consistent use of learning targets across the school, but pupils do not always understand what they need to do to improve their work to reach the targets set.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. Recent changes to the management structure, including the appointment of two assistant headteachers, are helping to bring about greater improvements across the school. Middle managers,

such as subject leaders, are also developing more robust procedures for quality assuring pupils' standards and teaching in their subject areas, but this work is relatively new and has yet to be implemented fully across the school. The capacity of the school to improve further, and address the areas identified for improvement, is good.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that pupils better understand what they have to do to achieve their personal targets in order to reach higher standards.
- Ensure that all curricular areas quality assure pupils' standards and teaching.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

The overall achievement and standards of pupils are satisfactory. The standard for the combined core subjects at Key Stage 2 in 2005 was above the national average, with standards significantly above in science, just above in English, and marginally below in mathematics. Lesson observations, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their written work show that the lower standards in mathematics are due to a lower than expected level of competence in number work, especially in Year 5, when using and applying the range of computational skills necessary for all aspects of mathematical development. The progress of higher and middle attaining pupils in English and mathematics between Key Stages 1 and 2 is below the rate expected for similar aged children, but by the time they leave the school the overall rate of progress for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is satisfactory.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good, reflecting parents' views that "the school develops the whole child". Pupils understand well the importance of staying safe, being healthy and having sufficient exercise. The school council has been instrumental in bringing about changes, such as healthier meals at lunch times, but members consider the school sometimes lets them down by not completing projects such as introducing games for wet playtimes, remarking that "we never seem to get anything finished". Pupils say that they enjoy school, and this is reflected in their good attendance and the fact that exclusions are rare. They talk enthusiastically about residential visits and the new dining room arrangements, which add greatly to their social development. Throughout the school, pupils behave very well and respond positively to the reward system, which they value highly. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils respect views and beliefs of others and through assemblies, such as celebration of the different football teams in the World Cup; these are leading to the understanding of different cultures and life styles.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory, and enables pupils to make steady progress in their learning. Typically, pupils say that they enjoy lessons and find the work challenging and interesting. Some targeted strategies, such as grouping pupils by ability in English and mathematics, are beginning to increase the pace of learning because work is better matched to pupils' different abilities. Most teachers use questioning skilfully to deepen pupils' understanding of subjects and pinpoint gaps in their learning. Although learning targets are used by teachers across all years, pupils do not always understand how to get to achieve them and take their work to a higher level. Looked after children and pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities get the help they need to make steady progress. Pupils who are gifted and talented say that the work they do outside of lessons is often taxing and fun.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good because the school provides a broader range of curricular opportunities than found for similar aged children in traditional primary and secondary schools, which is helping pupils to progress their learning and personal development in line with their abilities, interests and future needs. The opportunity to study several modern foreign languages is impressive, as is the range of extra-curricular activities. Overall, this provision makes for a rich and varied curriculum, which prepares the pupils very well for their transfer to high school for the final year of Key Stage 3, and Key Stage 4.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support of pupils is good. Pupils feel safe and have confidence to trust the school's procedures to assure their health and protect them from harm. Pupils are confident approaching staff about problems, both academic and personal. These positive relationships are working, and the vast majority of pupils are achieving an appropriate rate of progress in their learning. Pupils especially value the ease of access they have to the learning mentors. Pupils consider their anxieties about the transition to the next stage of their education are allayed by the fact that "as you move up you go with friends." Vulnerable pupils, such as those new to the country, are well cared for with effective links to outside support and health agencies.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory: recent additions to the senior and middle management teams, and a common sense of purpose among staff, give the school a good capacity to improve. Despite the teams not having a proven track record of making improvements, recent initiatives are beginning to pay dividends. For example, having identified why standards in mathematics have been falling for some years, teachers in Years 5 and 6 are now giving greater emphasis to developing number skills and standards are rising. Governors and staff are increasingly involved in evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses and have identified appropriate priorities for development in the coming year; they achieve satisfactory value for money.

Although senior teachers regularly observe lessons, they are right to believe that current procedures are not rigorous or focused enough on pupils' learning to give a clear view of what needs to be done to improve teaching.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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To the pupils of:

Monkseaton Middle School

Vernon Drive

Monkseaton

Whitley Bay

Tyne and Wear

NE25 8JN

28 June 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed our visit to meet with your teachers, watch some lessons, and talk with some of you about life at Monkseaton Middle School. We felt that you have a happy school, where all of you, adults and pupils, work well together. One of you that spoke with inspectors gave a very good impression of what it's like to be a pupil at the school: "When you first come to the school in Year 5 you feel nervous, but as you move through the school you make friends, feel safe, have good teachers, you feel happy in school and not nervous anymore".

Many of you do well at school, achieving standards that you and your parents should be proud about. A number of you, however, could make better progress from the standards you achieved at the end of Key Stage 1. Your teachers are aware of this and are making efforts to help all of you to improve your work at a rate that better suits your abilities. Most teaching that we saw was satisfactory, and some was good or outstanding. When you have good lessons your attitude and quality of work are really impressive. You listen well, concentrate fully on what you have to do, and work hard. Well done, and keep this up. Not all lessons consistently reach these very high standards, but you can still make good progress and work hard if you have the right attitude in your lessons.

Although the school provides you with some interesting work, we are asking your teachers to improve two areas. These are:

To ensure that you better understand the learning targets that are set for you, and what you have to do to achieve them.

That the work of the school, including your work and teaching, is checked regularly to ensure that you are doing the best that you can to achieve the highest possible standards.

I wish you well, and hope that you achieve all that you deserve in the future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Blake HMI

Lead inspector