



Monkwearmouth School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108859
LEA Sunderland
Inspection number 278063
Inspection dates 7 February 2006 to 8 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Brian Dower

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Torver Crescent
School category	Community		Seaburn Dene
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Sunderland, Tyne and Wear
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 5535555
Number on roll	1420	Fax number	0191 5535558
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Howard Brown
Date of previous inspection	1 October 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Philomena Marshall

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	7 February 2006 - 8 February 2006	278063

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Monkwearmouth School is on the outskirts of Sunderland in Seaburn. It has specialist status for performing arts. There are 1420 pupils on roll and they come from a wide range of family and social backgrounds. The proportions of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, who have English as an additional language, who come from ethnic minority backgrounds, or who have learning difficulties are all below average. Pupil mobility is low. Attainment on entry to the school is average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Monkwearmouth's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. This judgement is the same as the school's evaluation of its work. Standards by the end of Years 9 and 11 are average. Progress and achievement are satisfactory for boys and girls and for all groups, including high attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Measures have been introduced to raise standards but they are not being applied consistently by all teachers. The school's performing arts status has brought improved resources and closer links with primary schools. The unsatisfactory teaching seen at the last inspection has gone. Teaching is now satisfactory but it still lacks the rigour and pace to motivate pupils to exceed expectations. The personal development and well-being of pupils are satisfactory but many lack the confidence to work independently. They are positive about their school and the instances of poor behaviour which have been of concern to their parents are being addressed. Pupils feel safe and secure and they have opportunities to contribute to the local and wider community. The school gives satisfactory value for money. The capacity for improvement is good because of the strategies now in place to raise standards further. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards by raising pupils' expectations of themselves.
- Improve achievement by more rigorous and challenging teaching and by giving pupils the confidence to work independently.
- Ensure that all teachers consistently and routinely follow the policies and practices for raising standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards overall are average and progress and achievement are satisfactory.

Standards attained in 2005 at the end of Year 9 were above average in mathematics and science and were an improvement on what was attained in 2004 and at the time of the last inspection. Achievement was good in both subjects. Standards in English were below average and achievement in the subject was unsatisfactory. This was so for all boys and girls, except for those with learning difficulties or those pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Their achievement in English was satisfactory. The standards reached at the end of Year 11 in 2005 were average overall and achievement was satisfactory. This was so for boys and girls and for all groups of pupils. Standards in English were above average and reflected the good progress made in Years 10 and 11. The impact of the school's specialist status has raised standards in performing arts. The quality of the work seen during the course of the inspection is of an expected standard, apart from some underachievement in the work of average attaining pupils

in mathematics. Overall, however, pupils are meeting the attainment targets set for them and current standards confirm that achievement remains satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The personal development and well-being of pupils are satisfactory. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory. The school has responded to the concerns expressed by a few parents about behaviour by improving classroom management. Rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively and pupils feel safe in school. They enjoy being there. Attendance levels are close to the national average and new monitoring arrangements have successfully reduced truancy. The school prepares pupils well for their future economic well-being by developing their communication, numeracy and computer skills. Pupils contribute to the local and wider community through fund raising events and through the links created by the performing arts status. Pupils' views are heard through the school council. They are encouraged to make healthy choices and have opportunities to take part in a good range of sports and performing arts activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory. In drama, for example, pupils explore problems of social class, and morning assembly and a thought for the day encourage pupils to reflect on spiritual matters. There are, however, few opportunities for pupils' cultural development and their awareness of multi-cultural issues is limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, which leads to pupils making satisfactory progress over their five years in the school. This is a result of careful lesson planning and very good working relationships in the vast majority of lessons. Pupils usually work hard and behave well. Instances of inattentiveness or low level disruption are managed well. Where teaching is good, teachers have high expectations and share with pupils the lesson objectives and what they must do to reach the required standard; there is a brisk pace and appropriate challenge. However, this is not always the case and at times teaching lacks rigour. Most teachers use questioning to assess and develop understanding but frequently require only superficial answers and there are missed opportunities for pupils to discuss and explain their answers. There are few opportunities for pupils to work independently. In some lessons in-class assessment lacks rigour which results in pupils' mistakes being missed. There is insufficient emphasis on accuracy and clear setting out in some science and mathematics lessons. Assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory. Homework is marked regularly although the quality of comments to pupils is inconsistent. Pupils are given targets in each subject and their progress is tracked effectively at regular intervals against prior attainment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with many strong features. It meets statutory requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and make satisfactory progress. A programme of personal, social and health education is in place, including sex and relationships education and drugs awareness. The delivery of citizenship is satisfactory. The school provides well for pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills. There have been improvements to the curriculum for Years 10 and 11 but there is still scope for the development of vocational provision. Information and communication technology is taught across all year groups. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of their work. Participation rates are high. The school's acquisition of performing arts college status has resulted in an extensive programme of joint activities involving local primary schools, as well as enhanced resources in music, drama and media studies. There are also many other curricular links with feeder primary schools.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This aspect of the school's work is satisfactory. The school has in place appropriate and effective structures to support pupils' academic and personal development however these are not yet implemented consistently and routinely by every member of staff. Pupils receive good advice on option choices and further education opportunities. Procedures are good for child protection, first aid and safety on visits. A secure environment has been established for all pupils, particularly younger pupils. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities or at risk of exclusion or underachievement are supported well and provision is effectively supplemented by outside agencies. Parents say they are satisfied with the care their children receive and pupils acknowledge that the move from Year 6 is smooth. Visiting business personnel and work experience opportunities assist all groups of learners with career prospects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and improving. A sense of purpose now pervades the school following an unsettled period at senior level. The recently appointed headteacher and new senior team have carried out an accurate appraisal of strengths and weaknesses. They have a clear vision for the future and a realistic agenda for change and improvement. Successfully introduced new procedures are designed to empower middle managers, improve teaching and raise standards. It is too early to evaluate the full impact of these but there is evidence of improved rigour in the monitoring of lessons and the assessment of pupils' progress. Governors carry out their responsibilities well. They have quickly recognised improvements in the school since the appointment of the new headteacher. Pupils make satisfactory progress in

the school. Managers are now not satisfied with this. Led very effectively by the headteacher, most are vigorously using the school's improvement cycle to lift standards. Nevertheless, the school recognises that there are a few subjects where changes have been too slow. The result is that the new procedures to raise standards are not being applied consistently by every teacher. As developments take place, managers are careful to consider the views of staff, parents and pupils to ensure that there is a common sense of purpose. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection but the capacity for further improvement is now good.

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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>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	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	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

Mrs Philomena Marshall

Monkwearmouth School

Torver Crescent

Seaburn Dene

Sunderland

Tyne and Wear

SR6 8LG

9 February 2006

Dear Pupils

You know that we recently came to inspect your school and we would like to inform you of the outcome of our visit. First, we want to thank you for the welcome we received and the time many of you gave to talk to us.

We found that you are making satisfactory progress in your work and that your school does many things well:

you have the personal qualities which will enable you to succeed in life

you are well cared for, feel safe from any form of intimidation or bullying, and you know how important it is to adopt a healthy lifestyle

you enjoy all that the school has to offer and take part in many activities outside of lesson time

most of you work hard and show respect for each other and for adults.

Your teachers and the inspectors found three things to work on to make your education even better:

give you the confidence and belief in yourselves to attain higher standards

ensure that all teaching stretches you and makes you think for yourselves and be more independent

ensure that all your teachers apply the school policies in the same way in the classroom.

We would like to wish you and your school every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Brian Dower

Lead Inspector