



Monkfield Park Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131996
Local Authority CAMBRIDGESHIRE
Inspection number 293914
Inspection dates 9–10 November 2006
Reporting inspector Anne Kounnou

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | School Lane |
| School category | Community | | Great Cambourne |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 | | Cambridgeshire CB3 6AX |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01954 273377 |
| Number on roll (school) | 404 | Fax number | 01954 273379 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Miss Gill Biscomb |
| | | Headteacher | Mrs Lynne Anderson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 12 February 2001 | | |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and serves a growing housing development in a mixed economic area. An above average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic families. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language and the proportion of pupils with learning disabilities and difficulties is lower than average. When children start school the majority work at levels that are expected for their age.

There has been an exceptionally high number of staff joining the school during recent years to accommodate the rapid increase in pupil numbers.

There are extended services, managed by the governing body, in a purpose-built facility.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that children enjoy coming to and parents value highly. It has adapted well to the challenges faced by the rapid rise in the number of pupils as the local housing development has grown. One parent wrote, 'Our son enjoys school and he is being educated well in a great environment.' The great majority of parents agree with this view.

The quality of education in the Foundation Stage is good. The school has a good curriculum that ensures pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle extremely well. It has been particularly successful in encouraging children to cycle or walk to school and has gained three awards for promoting healthy lifestyles. Pupils are clear about how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Their involvement in the school community is excellent. Some pupils are trained to sort out disagreements that occur in the playground, and do this with aplomb. The school council works very effectively and shows how well pupils respond when given opportunities to make their own decisions. Several older pupils said they felt they could be more enterprising and take a lead themselves.

Leadership and management are good, and the school cares for pupils well. There are extremely rigorous systems for checking pupils' achievement that contribute very effectively to the school's good capacity for improvement. School leaders act well on information gained from this work, as seen in the very effective way they tackled weaknesses in writing standards. Standards are above average overall and achievement is good. This is a result of good teaching and learning. Pupils achieve well in English, science and information communication technology (ICT), reaching above average standards by the time they leave the school. In mathematics, however, standards are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school knows that not enough of the most able pupils reach the higher levels in mathematics, and that even more needs to be done to improve pupils' understanding of how to use mathematics to solve problems. This was an issue for improvement in Key Stage 1 at the last inspection and remains a priority.

School leaders have an accurate view of the school's overall effectiveness. When areas for further development are identified, detailed plans for improvement are drawn up. High expectations mean that the school is working on a very wide range of initiatives and has set ambitious objectives for improvement. However, the initiatives are not bringing about consistent improvements across the school. This is because there is not enough time available for staff and governors to work on them all simultaneously.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in mathematics across the school, especially for the most able pupils.
- Reduce the number of objectives in the school development plan to a manageable number of the most important priorities for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. In English, science and ICT, pupils make good progress throughout the school and reach above average standards. A good proportion of pupils are working at the higher levels in Year 2 and Year 6 in all these subjects. A very high proportion of pupils join the school in each year group as they move into the new community. The school does particularly well in ensuring that new pupils make the same good rate of progress as others, whenever they join.

Pupils do well because the leadership team keeps a very close eye on the rate of progress that all groups of children are making. When they find that children are not making as much progress as the school expects, effective action is taken to bring about improvement. Pupils who have learning difficulties do well. The school is working to ensure that the most able pupils make better progress in mathematics. It is too early, however, to see an impact on pupils' achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good and is given a very high priority. Outstanding features are pupils' involvement in their community and their remarkable understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Monkfield Park holds the impressive record of having the highest number of children or who walk or cycle to school in the county.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, look forward to meeting their friends and teachers, and get on very well with each other. The Special Day allows pupils to say something positive about all their classmates, such as, 'I like the way they are always smiling.' Attendance is good and has improved with the new rigorous policy. Behaviour is particularly good as pupils move around the school because rules are very clear and adults are extremely vigilant. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to manage themselves. In the Foundation Stage, children do not have enough opportunities to develop independence in their learning and work cooperatively with other children.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching and learning lie at the core of pupils' good achievement. Relationships are very good and help to build up pupils' confidence and self-esteem. One parent wrote, 'If the teachers of Monkfield Park could hear what my children say about them they would feel very proud.' Lessons, particularly for the older pupils, are often laced with good humour and are packed full of pace and challenge, with pupils eager to

point out, 'Teachers make learning fun but hard!' Teaching assistants across the school make a telling contribution to how well pupils learn and achieve. Very good procedures are in place to assess how well pupils are doing and to track their progress. However, the use of assessment information to inform target setting has more impact on pupils' achievement in English and science than in mathematics, where not enough is asked of the higher attaining pupils. Excellent marking initiatives such as 'Top Tips', which are really helping pupils to improve their work, are not yet fully embedded across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school goes the extra mile to provide a good curriculum. School leaders' success at developing the use of writing and computer skills across the curriculum has helped standards rise. However, there are still not enough opportunities consistently provided to develop pupils' investigative and problem solving skills in mathematics. Very good links with a local secondary school have provided exciting learning activities in science, physical education and ICT. Very good use is made of a teaching assistant's talents to enable pupils to learn French and Spanish. Good support for pupils who have learning difficulties helps them to achieve as well as their classmates. The wide variety of visits, visitors and after school clubs helps to explain why pupils enjoy school so much.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided are good. There are meticulous systems to ensure pupils are well looked after. Staff are quick to notice when pupils are not achieving as well as they should be and find appropriate ways to get them back on track. Teachers are good at involving pupils in knowing what they need to do to improve in English and science.

The school is well aware of the challenging backgrounds of some pupils and works very successfully with other professionals to give the whole family the right support. Pupils are extremely safe and secure on site. However, some parents are concerned about having to wait with their bicycles and pushchairs outside the school gates in the morning. This occurs because parents are anxious not to be late.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall and underpinned by extremely good procedures for tracking pupils' progress. The school runs very efficiently. The very high expectations of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are evident in the calm and well ordered atmosphere. Parents agree, one commenting, 'We have always had the impression that the school is well managed, equipped and run.' The school's own evaluation of its performance is good overall. In a few areas, school leaders' judgements

were more positive than inspection findings because they considered the high quality planning that is in place to bring about improvement, rather than checking the impact of these plans to date. Governance is good due to a very good level of expertise and clear procedures for checking how well the school is doing.

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Inspection judgements

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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|-----------------------|

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 |

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 |

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

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 2 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2 |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets | 2 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 2 |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

11 November, 2006

Dear Pupils,

Monkfield Park Primary School, School Lane, Great Cambourne, Cambridgeshire, CB3 6AX

Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. You help to make your school a good school because you behave well in your lessons and all around the school. You work hard and make good progress, especially in English, science and ICT, because the teaching is good and you have interesting things to do.

Here are the things that we think are best about your school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well together and make very detailed plans to improve the things they think could be even better. They keep a really close check on how well you are doing.
- You enjoy coming to school because your lessons are often fun.
- The school takes a great deal of care to make sure you are safe at school.
- You are exceptionally good at knowing how to be healthy and lots of you cycle or walk to school every day to stay fit.
- You do lots of things to get involved in the local community.

These are the things that we think could be better

- Some children who are good at mathematics are not making as much progress as they should. You can help by working with your teachers to make sure you reach your targets in mathematics.
- The teachers and governors at your school want you all to do your very best but are currently trying to improve too many things all at the same time.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours faithfully

Liz Kounnou

Lead Inspector