

Monkhouse Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108576
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	324795
Inspection date	18 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Jim Bennetts

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	236
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Malcolm Bowie
Headteacher	Mrs Heather Westlake
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wallington Avenue North Shields Tyne and Wear NE30 3SH
Telephone number	0191 2006350
Fax number	0191 2006350

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- achievement and standards throughout school
- the quality of teaching
- leadership and management.

Evidence was collected from discussions with the headteacher, the chair of governors, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and groups of pupils from Years 2 and 6. In addition, parts of lessons were observed; school documents, samples of pupils' work and the parents' questionnaires were scrutinised. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

The school is situated amongst privately owned and social housing in the Marden estate area of North Tyneside. At the time of the last inspection, pupil numbers were falling; they have since fallen by another 70 pupils and are expected to fall further. This is due to a falling trend in the number of children living in the area. Until 2008, the school housed the local authority's Deaf Support Base. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage, though a small proportion come from homes where English is not the first language. There is a before- and after-school club on site, which is run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of a Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Monkhouse Primary is a good school. It has very strong support from parents. A typical comment is: 'I am very happy with the progress my child is making, and feel the staff work extremely hard to give her a varied and challenging education'. Though there were significant staffing difficulties in 2008, and the school is obliged to continue to make staffing changes because of falling rolls, the good education that the school provides has been sustained.

Achievement is good and standards are average. Pupils make good progress. Those joining the school have capabilities that are a little below what is normal for their age, though there is variation in standards from year-to-year. They make good progress in Reception, and by the start of Year 1, their standards are often approaching the national average. Progress in Key Stage 1 is good and by the age of seven, pupils are generally stronger relative to the national average than they were at the age of five. Data shows that for many years progress in Key Stage 2 has been good. Because of major disruption to staffing that affected older classes in 2008, results in national tests last year showed less progress than with previous year groups. Results in 2008 were also affected by the unusually severe learning disabilities of some pupils in the special unit that has now closed. Those in the present Year 6 were affected by the staffing problems of the past. They have made impressive progress during the current school year, making up for lost time. Their standards are now broadly average. In Year 5, pupils are at higher standards than average for their age; their progress has been very good. Progress is stronger in English than mathematics. Whilst pupils were making very good headway in mathematics lessons, some basic skills associated with the multiplication tables and addition and subtraction are not as secure as they could be. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress.

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils think about others during assemblies. They enjoy celebrating each other's birthdays. They behave well. Pupils value being healthy and they enthusiastically take part in the daily 'Wake up Shake up' exercise programme. They feel safe because they benefit from trusting relationships with adults and receive effective guidance on how to look after themselves in risky situations. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is excellent. They particularly enjoy the extra-curricular opportunities and practical activities, such as estimating and measuring the outdoor facilities. Pupils' contribution to the school community is good. The school council lobbies for improvement, for example, to address the issue of the dangerous parking of cars outside the school gate. Pupils have made a significant input to the exciting new garden that is developing with their care and attention. They are prepared well to cope with life ahead.

Care, support and guidance are good. Practices for safeguarding, child protection and risk assessments meet requirements. Supervision is good on a day-to-day basis and staff implement effective routines consistently. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who are at an early stage of acquiring English, benefit from the support of skilled teaching assistants. Intervention programmes and good links with agencies enhance provision.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' planning is often excellent; it is detailed and has a clear appreciation of the needs of different pupils in each class. The planning of provision in mixed-age classes enables all pupils, including the most able, to do well. Lessons are imaginative and engage pupils' enthusiasm. Initiative is encouraged and all contributions are welcomed. Pupils work well with others and respond well to the brisk pace that is set. The marking of

pupils' work is helpful. When appropriate, it is assessed reliably against national standards. Pupils know the levels at which they are working and how to improve. There are clear records of progress from which any underachievement can be identified.

There is a good curriculum, which includes a foreign language. Though the school is changing its combinations of year groups in classes on account of falling pupil numbers, the curriculum is organised to ensure proper continuity. Pupils enjoy the wealth of extra-curricular activities. The school celebrates pupils' diversity and considers that the now closed special unit for deaf pupils has added much of value to the life of the school. Good community cohesion is fostered within the school and in the locality. Pupils have an appreciation of the diversity of faiths and cultures in Britain and in the wider world.

The school is well led and managed. Despite the recent considerable staffing problems, the budget and organisational difficulties resulting from downsizing, good morale has been maintained. Staff pull together and give of their best. Senior staff have a strong vision for improvement and set challenging targets. This is exemplified in the way the present Year 6 have made up for the time lost last year. Leaders 'know how things stand' and there have been effective improvements since the last inspection. The governing body's support for the school has been strong through the recent particularly difficult time and continuing problems with a budget deficit. The school is well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. When children are admitted to the Reception Year their skills and abilities are regularly a little below what is typical in social, communication and some mathematical skills. Personal development is good. Children are happy, settled and behave well. They quickly learn daily routines. They know that the sound of the music playing at the end of the morning is the signal to tidy up. Teaching is good, so children make good progress. Good learning and development stems from effective planning. This ensures children access an appealing variety of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The classrooms are well organised and provide the experiences to which these young children are entitled. Outdoor learning provision is satisfactory but there are limited facilities to promote physical development. Indoors, in an adult-led activity, a well known story about a butterfly became more meaningful when children observed real caterpillars. Outdoors, children independently dug the soil ready to plant flowers and vegetables. By the end of Reception children have made good progress towards the expected goals. They enter Year 1 at an almost average level.

Welfare is good. Provision is managed well because staff consistently apply sensible daily routines. Adults skilfully intervene during children's independent learning experiences to provide support or ask pertinent questions. They have established good communication with parents who have been provided with the name of each child's key worker. Assessment practices are well established, with children's progress accurately recorded in individual portfolios.

Leadership is good. The leadership provides clear direction and has ambitious plans for further improvement of the outdoor facilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the outdoor learning facilities of the Early Years Foundations Stage.
- Strengthen basic skills in mathematics.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

Leadership and management

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Monkhouse Primary School, North Tyneside, NE30 3SH

Thank you for all the help you gave when Mr Sleightholme and I inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit and we think that Monkhouse Primary is a good school.

Though quite a few of your teachers were away from school last year, and there are changes because fewer children are coming to the school now, the school is continuing to provide a good education. Results for Year 6 in 2008 were a little disappointing, but this year pupils in the school have made good progress. Lessons are good. You enjoy what you do in school and attendance is excellent. You are growing up to be mature and confident and the staff look after you very well. The senior staff and the governors are working hard to make sure that everything goes as well as possible despite the changes that have to be made in the school.

Though this is a good school, there are two things that we have asked the school to improve. Reception children enjoy learning in their outside area, and a lot of worthwhile activities are provided there, but the actual facilities could be improved. We saw many pupils learning really well in mathematics lessons, but some older pupils were struggling or making slips on new tasks because they are not too sure of the times tables and the way to add and take away big numbers. We have asked the school to give some of you more practice in these things. You can help by working hard at these essential maths skills.

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

Yours faithfully

Jim Bennetts

Lead inspector