

# Monkwear Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112170
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	337858
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Heap

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	114
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Allen Banks
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pamela Telford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Monkwear Brow Whitehaven Cumbria CA28 9DT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents such as the minutes of governors meetings and curriculum, assessment and monitoring documents. The tracking of pupils' achievements and examples of their work were examined in detail. Questionnaire returns were received from pupils and 51 from parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in writing
- the progress and provision for higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils
- the main aspects of leadership and management that have led to the recent improvements in attainment.

## Information about the school

This small junior school serves a mainly White British population and has a very small group of pupils from other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Very few pupils move in and out of the school during the year. About a half of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school is part of the West Cumbria Learning Innovation Partnership which is focused on raising pupils' attainment. Extended provision includes before- and after-school clubs. The school has gained Healthy School status and accreditation for Activemark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Monkway is a satisfactory and improving school. A typical parent view is, 'The best endorsement I can give to this school is that my child is very happy and enjoys all school activities.' The way the school cares for and supports the pupils is a strength, particularly the successful work done in the Nurture Group, which effectively lowers the barriers to learning experienced by some pupils. As a result, pupils feel safe and say so. Since the last inspection, the staff have shown a strong commitment to raising pupils' attainment while, at the same time, pursuing the important goals of fostering a good nurturing atmosphere in the school. This includes the effective way the school engages parents in helping their children and learning more themselves.

Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning from their broadly average attainment on entry to the school. Attainment is average. Year 6 test results have risen gradually in recent years, particularly in mathematics and science. However, in 2009, unvalidated test results rose markedly to above average with an exceptionally strong showing in science. Boys do a little better than girls. Standards in mathematics are much better than at the time of the previous inspection. This improvement has much to do with teachers making more accurate checks on pupils' progress and the school's management keeping a close watch on how pupils are doing. As a result, effective modifications have been made to the teaching and curriculum, such as grouping pupils in lessons according to their prior attainment and increasing the practical work in mathematics and science.

Outcomes in writing have been slower to improve, but pupils' progress is broadly satisfactory. The school has recognised this and it has become a main priority for development. However, the school's foci for development are too narrow, namely punctuation and sentence structure. There is too little focus on improving spelling and providing pupils with more opportunities to write. Scrutinies of pupils' books showed clearly that teachers are not ambitious enough in the writing tasks they set for pupils, particularly the more able.

In several areas, the school is better than it was at the time of the last inspection. This is due largely to the effective leadership and ambition of the headteacher and the strong support she receives from staff. However, much of the monitoring work is done by the headteacher and does not involve others sufficiently, for example, the governing body. Self-evaluation is accurate, but not sufficiently thorough to identify sharply-focused priorities that will lead to rapid improvements in writing and for the more able in English and mathematics. Consequently, the capacity to improve is satisfactory, rather than good at this stage.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
  - making subject matter much more relevant to the age and level of ability of the pupils
  - matching work more precisely and ambitiously to the needs of individual pupils
  - providing opportunities for more writing particularly in other subjects
  - improving the consistency of the link between assessment, planning and marking.
- Accelerate the progress of higher attaining pupils, particularly in English and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that work is challenging and enjoyable
  - using data more precisely to provide work for individuals that is challenging, relevant and interesting.
- Make self-evaluation more rigorous and sharp by:
  - ensuring that the governing body does more independent monitoring and evaluating of the school's work
  - increasing the focus on pupils' learning when doing lesson observations.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Overall, progress in learning is satisfactory and attainment is average. This is confirmed by the results in national tests and in the gains pupils make in lessons. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and show respect and concern for their peers and staff. These good attitudes to learning play a full part in their much improved acquisition of basic skills, particularly in mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT). Consequently, pupils have a satisfactory basis for their future learning and life outside school. Moreover, there is an upward trend in national test results since 2007. Early indications from the 2009 results are that more able pupils did very well in science, but a lower than average proportion reached higher levels in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very few from minority groups, such as the gifted and talented, make satisfactory progress towards their targets. They benefit from satisfactory support and from the improving procedures for tracking pupils' achievements.

Moral and social development is particularly strong. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and this enables them to behave well in assemblies and on the playground. Pupils are confident that they can approach a member of staff if they have a problem. Pupils have good knowledge of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle

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and so they get enthusiastically involved in sporting activities. The older pupils make a good contribution to the day-to-day working of the school, for example, through the roles of Playleader. Pupils say they enjoy school and the majority of parents agree with them. Attendance is above average.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Overall, the school judges correctly the quality of teaching as satisfactory. The positive atmosphere in all classrooms fosters a healthy interest in work for many pupils. Teachers are mostly well organised, present new learning clearly and use resources adeptly, such as interactive whiteboards, to reinforce and strengthen learning. However, on the very few occasions when teaching was weak, explanations lacked clarity and pupils became confused. Most staff ask searching questions that challenge pupils' thinking and use praise well to raise their self-esteem. Teaching assistants do a sound job in their support of pupils with specific needs. In the best lessons, teachers have strong subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils based on a knowledge of their skills and abilities. Where lessons have a brisk pace, there is good learning going on. For

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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example, in a Year 3 personal, social and health education lesson, the 'rules' ensured that all pupils had ample opportunity to listen, reflect and contribute.

Although most teachers monitor pupils' progress well, they are not always skilful enough at using their knowledge to drive quicker progress. Sometimes the subject matter is not inspiring because it is not matched well enough to individual pupils' needs particularly the writing tasks for the more able. Part of the reason for this is a lack of consistency in marking particularly in making it clear what a pupil has achieved and what they need to do to improve further.

The satisfactory curriculum meets national and local requirements. The curriculum promotes key basic skills in reading, numeracy and ICT well and an understanding of health and safety issues. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use and develop their basic writing skills across the full range of subjects. Good enrichment of the curriculum includes a variety of clubs, activities and visits. Pupils have good opportunities to join with their parents in family learning activities. These succeed in motivating pupils and also help their parents to assist them in their learning. There is detailed provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Individual education plans are specific and support staff are sensitive and helpful in group work.

Care, guidance and support are good. The school can rightly point to effective work being done to lower barriers to learning for pupils identified as needing to be part of the Nurture Group. Strategies to monitor behaviour and attendance throughout the school are strong. Pupils say that any rare incidences of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with promptly and well. In all of these areas, the learning mentor plays a leading and good part in this work. Pupils work in a safe environment with staff effectively ensuring their well-being. Safety checks and risk assessments are regularly carried out. Pupils with extra learning needs are identified quickly and benefit from the effective partnerships that have been forged with outside agencies such as the Educational Psychology Service. These services often provide welcome advice and guidance for pupils, parents and staff. New pupils are warmly welcomed and they quickly settle to school life. Most parents are satisfied with the way their children are cared for and made to feel secure in school. Procedures and practices to track academic progress are good.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher leads this happy and improving school well. She is soundly supported

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by the key staff of the school. Together they are developing an increasingly ambitious approach to raising attainment and improving provision. For example, there have been significant improvements in attainment and results at the end of Year 6. The children and their parents are very aware of the satisfactory lengths staff go to, to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to benefit from what the school has to offer. There is no evidence of discrimination at all. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. It is stronger in relation to the local community, but a more national and global perspective is emerging. Safeguarding procedures are good. Child protection practices and risk assessments are robust. The school engages the participation and interest of the parents well with growing interest in joint training activities such as family learning and the development of ICT skills. There is also regular contact with parents about how their children are doing with written reports going home each half term. Parent questionnaire returns show the majority of parents are satisfied with the way the school takes account of their concerns. Accurate self-evaluation leads to an improvement plan that effectively sets out challenging targets and the priorities for development. Nevertheless, some monitoring and use of data is not sharp enough particularly in evaluating the quality of teaching in individual lessons and in judging pupils' progress in writing. For example, it is less strong in identifying the issues highlighted in pupil tracking information and from scrutinies of pupils' work so that lesson observations can focus more clearly on the quality of pupils' learning. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are highly supportive of the school, but are too reliant on management for evaluation rather than instituting their own procedures such as closer monitoring of how well the stated aims of the school are met. Financial management is prudent and takes into account the fact that the school roll is reducing.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>



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## **Views of parents and carers**

Around a half of the parents returned questionnaires and their opinions were largely positive in all areas. A large majority are happy with the school. Parents agree that: their children mostly like school; they make enough progress; they are safe and they receive information about their progress. Questionnaire returns confirm that pupils are helped to adopt healthy lifestyles. All respondents considered that the school is effectively led. The school works hard to include all pupils. All respondents feel that teaching is good, but the inspectors judge that teaching is satisfactory overall.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Monkway Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 114 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	59	17	33	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	71	15	29	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	69	14	27	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	63	19	37	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	67	17	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	67	17	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	65	18	35	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	31	61	20	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	63	19	37	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	61	19	37	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	63	18	35	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	34	67	17	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	67	14	27	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



3 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Monkwrays Junior School, Whitehaven, CA28 9DT

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to tell you how much we enjoyed the busy time we spent in your school recently. We particularly welcomed your warmth, courtesy and help. Here are some of the main findings from the inspection that contribute to your school being judged a satisfactory and improving school.

What I particularly liked about your school:

- the good systems for keeping you safe
- the big improvements in mathematics since the last inspection
- the above average provisional results in the 2009 national tests at the end of Year 6 and in particular the high standards attained in science
- your good behaviour and attitudes and above average attendance
- the good care, guidance and support you receive
- the hard, willing and effective work done in the Nurture Group which helps to ensure all pupils have equal chances in the school
- the way the school has developed the good links with your parents and how these help them to know how well you are doing and how to help you more at home.

To make your school even better, we have asked the staff to help you to improve the quality of your writing. They will also assist more able pupils to make quicker progress in English and mathematics. I feel sure that you will want to play a full part by continuing to do your best work and following the teachers' advice and guidance very closely.

Finally, staff and governors have been asked to check on how well the school is doing and what needs to be done to improve it further.

Very best wishes and good luck for the future

Yours sincerely

Mr John Heap

Lead inspector

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