

# Inspection of a good school: Monkway Junior School

Monkway Brow, Whitehaven, Cumbria CA28 9DT

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Inspection date: 6 July 2023

## Outcome

Monkway Junior School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well during their time at the school. They have designed a broad and engaging curriculum, which they hope will 'open a window on the world' for pupils and provide them with a good range of learning opportunities and experiences. Most pupils work hard and achieve well during their time at Monkway.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Positive relationships between staff and pupils are quickly established. Parents and carers and pupils overwhelmingly confirmed that they see the school as a happy place to come and learn.

Pupils live up to adults' high expectations of their conduct in class and around school. Leaders have put in place effective systems to promote good behaviour and learning is only rarely interrupted by off-task behaviour. Pupils said that incidents of bullying are unusual. When any bullying does occur, leaders deal with it quickly.

Leaders have ensured that pupils have chances to take on different roles and responsibilities. Pupils are proud to represent their school at different sporting and cultural events. Pupils who have been in school teams for sports such as swimming and dodgeball were proud to talk about the medals that they have won.

Pupils enjoy and appreciate the enrichment activities that are planned for them. For example, pupils were keen to talk about what they had learned on their trip to look at different places of worship.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have made reading a high priority in the school. Reading is promoted well across all year groups. Pupils enjoy taking books to read in the outdoor 'book nook' at breaktimes and also enjoy listening to their teachers read to them daily. By the time they leave the school, pupils are typically keen and confident readers. Leaders have

implemented a whole-school approach to teaching phonics for pupils who are at an earlier stage of learning to read. This builds effectively on what they have already learned at the partner infant school. The books pupils read are well matched to the sounds they have learned. This helps pupils to develop their reading skills and confidence quickly.

Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn in different subjects. They have developed a broad and interesting curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. Leaders know their subjects well. They have made sure that staff have received the training they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. Leaders have picked out the knowledge and subject-specific vocabulary that they want pupils to learn, and the order in which this is to be taught. They use assessment strategies well to confirm that pupils are building their knowledge over time. However, pupils are less secure in their recall and use of key words and phrases in different subjects. As a result, pupils' written work and verbal explanations are not as consistently accurate as they might be.

Leaders quickly identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Staff make appropriate adaptations to the work set for these pupils and make sure that they are well supported. This ensures that pupils with SEND access the same broad curriculum as their peers.

There is a warm and friendly atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and show respect for their teachers and classmates. Lessons proceed with minimal disruption. Pupils take pride in their work and listen carefully to their teachers and classmates. Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes make a highly positive contribution to learning across the school.

Leaders have recognised the important role the school plays in developing pupils' awareness of breadth and diversity in modern British society and in building their aspirations for the future. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors about the many different school trips, outdoor activity sessions and after-school clubs that they had attended. Through such opportunities, leaders support pupils to develop as kind and thoughtful citizens.

Leaders and governors know the school well and share a clear vision for its future. Staff are very positive about working at the school. They said that leaders are considerate of their well-being and take staff's workload into account when making decisions.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture across the school. Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. Staff are quick to act if they are worried about a pupil's well-being, and leaders act promptly if such concerns arise. They work well with external agencies to secure the support that pupils and families may need.

Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe through a well-thought-out curriculum. They said that they feel confident to talk to a trusted adult if they have any worries.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not ensure that pupils learn and remember the key vocabulary identified in the subject curriculums. As a result, often pupils struggle to recall this vocabulary or use it accurately. Leaders need to ensure that there is a consistent and effective approach to teaching subject-specific vocabulary across the school so that pupils remember it over time and use it accurately in their work.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2013.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 112170   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Cumberland   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10226161   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Junior   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Maintained   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 7 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 107  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Peter McQuade  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Pamela Telford   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.monkwrayschool.cumbria.sch.uk">www.monkwrayschool.cumbria.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 28 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                                 |

## Information about this school

- The school is a one-form-entry junior school.
- School leaders currently make use of one alternative provision setting.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other leaders and staff.
- An inspector spoke to governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at examples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders and looked at pupils' work in other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors made checks on leaders' records for safeguarding and staff recruitment and

spoke to staff about the procedures for safeguarding pupils.

- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including a number of free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the online surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Neil Dixon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Cleo Cunningham

Ofsted Inspector

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