

Monkseaton Middle School

Vernon Drive, Monkseaton, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear NE25 8JN

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' and governors' actions have not yet brought about a consistently good quality of teaching and learning. Pupils' progress is too variable across subjects and year groups.
- Senior leaders have not embedded a shared, easily understood assessment system. As a result, not all staff make good use of available information to shape their planning for pupils.
- Leaders have not improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, particularly in reading, writing and English. Disadvantaged pupils' progress in key stage 2 is weak over time.
- Not all subject leaders monitor their areas of responsibility effectively. Specific action plans lack detail and fail to focus on key priorities. Leaders' understanding of pupils' reading habits and choices, for example, are too vague.
- Too few teachers plan learning and tasks that accurately match pupils' needs and interests. The most able pupils are not stretched in their thinking or challenged effectively. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are not suitably supported in their learning.
- Some staff have low expectations of pupils. This limits the pace and scope of learning and at times negatively affects pupils' behaviour. A significant minority of pupils do not conduct themselves well without adult supervision.
- Pupils' learning attitudes and behaviour are not consistently positive. Low-level disruption too often interrupts the pace of pupils' progress.
- Not all staff use time effectively. Entry and exit points to lessons, especially, are lax.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance. Their improvement planning is now focused on the right issues.
- Leaders and governors have tightened safeguarding arrangements. Pupils' safety and well-being are rightly prioritised.
- Governors bring a wide range of skills to the school. Their increased challenge and support to leaders are beginning to shape improvements.
- Pupils are friendly, kind and polite to visitors. They are lively, inquisitive and keen to please.
- Staff have made a positive difference with regards to pupils' attendance. Overall attendance is broadly in line with the national average.
- Local authority partners have brokered wide-ranging support for leaders and staff. In mathematics specifically, improvements in teaching and learning are emerging.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - raising adults' expectations of what all groups of pupils can do and achieve
 - securing consistently good or better teaching and learning across subjects and year groups
 - embedding an easily understood, shared system of assessment that successfully supports teachers in their planning for pupils' learning
 - raising disadvantaged pupils' outcomes across year groups, especially with regards to reading, writing and English
 - ensuring that subject leaders are supported and challenged effectively to monitor their subjects well and so improve pupils' progress and outcomes across the curriculum
 - monitoring pupils' reading choices, opportunities and frequency, meticulously
 - sharpening subject-specific action plans by making sure that they focus precisely on improving teaching and learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - honing adults' skills of positive behaviour management and effective use of time
 - matching learning opportunities and tasks accurately to pupils' needs and interests across subjects
 - reading frequently with all groups of pupils and in particular disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2
 - offering the most able pupils sufficient challenge and stretch in their learning
 - facilitating more rapid progress from their different starting points for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - eliminating low-level disruption by fostering a love of learning among pupils and raising awareness of the benefits of good conduct and behaviour.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet fully effective. There has been considerable turbulence in terms of staffing since the previous inspection. The large majority of governors and senior and subject leaders are relatively new to post, including the chair of governors, the acting head of school and the executive headteacher. Substantial changes have reduced stability and effectiveness and have slowed the pace of improvement over time.
- Senior leaders and governors have an honest and accurate view of the school's current effectiveness and performance. They have identified the correct priorities for improvement and are steadily tackling these. Due to historical and lingering weaknesses, however, teaching, learning and assessment are not consistently good across subjects or year groups. Pupils' progress currently and over time is too variable.
- Senior leaders have put in place an assessment system that captures pupils' achievement across subjects. A wealth of information has been accrued. This said, various systems of recording and different formats of assessment exist, which lead to confusion. Subject leaders do not use the collated information effectively to shape their actions to improve teaching and learning. Teaching staff do not use the findings in a consistent, coherent manner to inform their planning for pupils' learning.
- In English, leaders have an imprecise grasp of teaching and learning practices. Their understanding of individual teachers' approaches to reading with pupils is incomplete. Furthermore, leaders' knowledge of pupils' reading capabilities, hindrances or preferences is too vague. The extent to which Year 7 catch-up funding has made a difference for pupils in reading, particularly, is unclear. These issues limit leaders' ability to improve the teaching of reading and so raise pupils' achievements.
- Leaders and governors direct the pupil premium funding with clear intent to raise achievement and widen disadvantaged pupils' experiences. Nonetheless, weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment mean that pupils' outcomes remain weak over time. In particular, too few disadvantaged pupils reach the expected standards in reading, writing and English across year groups compared to other pupils nationally from similar starting points.
- Leaders and governors use the additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities carefully. Using research to inform their decisions, leaders have ensured that support staff have had good-quality training and development opportunities. Additional support staff offer pupils suitable pastoral guidance and care. Support plans are bespoke and reviewed regularly for impact. However, due to historical and lingering weakness in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, not all pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities currently make the good progress that should be expected of them across subjects or year groups.
- Subject leaders are able to share information about pupils' achievements in their areas of responsibility. Not all, however, can explain how they use this information to inform their actions. While some leaders can pinpoint where strengths and weaknesses lie in their subjects, not all can do so confidently. Too often, therefore, subject improvement plans lack accuracy and fail to focus sufficiently on improving the quality of teaching

and raising pupils' achievement.

- Senior leaders and governors have had some measure of success in raising adults' expectations of pupils. Leaders model high expectations diligently, treating pupils respectfully and with due consideration. Nevertheless, some staff continue to demonstrate low expectations of pupils.
- Local authority partners have supported and challenged school leaders and governors rigorously. External support from a national leader in education has been brokered. In addition, advisers have provided valuable training and guidance for staff and leaders, for example, in English and mathematics. This has resulted in recent improvements in the leadership and teaching and learning of mathematics.
- Leaders and managers have raised the profile of attendance with parents and carers and pupils. They reward good attendance and actively encourage all parties to understand the importance of good attendance for later success. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is reducing measurably. In addition, overall attendance has improved and sits broadly in line with the national average.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved considerably. The large majority of governors have taken up post since the previous inspection. They bring a wide range of expertise and valuable skills to the school. Governors now challenge as well as support leaders to improve outcomes for all groups of pupils. Leaders, therefore, feel assured that their efforts are examined, tested and valued.
- The chair of governors visits the school frequently, holding challenge meetings with senior leaders. This means that leaders maintain their focus on improvement and are held fully accountable for the extent to which their actions are making a difference.
- Other governors get into school frequently to talk with staff, pupils and parents. They attend assemblies, parent evenings and events and are also beginning to meet with subject leaders on a more focused and regular basis. Consequently, governors know for themselves what it feels like to be a pupil in this school.
- Governors are committed to self-improvement, regularly taking advantage of the local authority's governors' training and services. As a result, they speak knowledgeably about the school's performance in the national arena and understand precisely where pupils' outcomes need improving.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. On taking up post, senior leaders have rightly prioritised the protection and safety of pupils. Procedures have been tightened considerably and site safety has been heightened. Governors with health and safety expertise monitor leaders' actions and the school premises regularly. As a result, staff and pupils are appropriately protected.
- Leaders have put additional training and professional development opportunities in place with regards to child protection and safeguarding. Training is updated frequently.

Policies have been reviewed and updated. The child protection policy, for example, meets statutory requirements and adheres to the most recent guidance and advice. Such measures mean that staff are confident in their understanding of how and to whom they should report any concerns they may have.

- Leaders and managers make appropriate checks on the suitability of staff working with pupils when making appointments. Records sampled are detailed and fittingly well maintained. Consequently, any risks to staff and pupils are minimised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent across subjects and year groups. Too frequently, learning activities fail to match pupils' needs or interests. The school's own assessment information and work in pupils' books and in lessons show clearly that the pace of pupils' progress is too variable.
- The extent to which teachers read with pupils in school is inconsistent across year groups and is not based carefully enough on the needs of pupils. Not all pupils have the opportunities they need to examine texts and books. This limits pupils' chances of practising and honing their skills of decoding, inference or deduction. Without regular discussion with adults as experts and routine analyses of authors' use of language, pupils' own writing is not developed apace. Currently, too few disadvantaged pupils in key stage 2, in particular, reach expected standards in reading and writing.
- Some teaching staff demonstrate low expectations of pupils. The most able pupils, for example, cover work that they already know and can do. Tasks are not sufficiently challenging to motivate pupils to probe information and ideas, to deepen their learning. Too few adults use questioning skilfully to stretch pupils in their thinking. As a result, the most able pupils in particular do not make the progress that staff should expect of them.
- While some staff carefully tailor tasks to suit the needs of individuals and/or specific groups of pupils, others do not. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities too frequently struggle to access the learning or work provided, independently. Consequently, the progress of some pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, is hindered.
- For the most part, teachers demonstrate a strength in their own subject knowledge. They use subject-specific terminology expertly and have a strong knowledge and understanding of their subjects' content. Not all teachers, however, check carefully to ensure that pupils are keeping pace with them. This means that some pupils do not understand the vocabulary and concepts being used and so their learning stalls.
- Some teachers and support staff use time and manage pupils' behaviour effectively. Resources are well prepared, relationships are positive and productive, pupils settle quickly and lessons start promptly. This ensures that no teaching and learning time is wasted. On too many occasions, however, timing in lessons is poorly planned, low-level disruption interrupts the flow of learning or lessons end prematurely. Valuable time is lost and pupils' attitudes to learning diminish.
- Some teachers ensure that they introduce new concepts and learning in a well-thought-out, thorough and efficient manner. Their explanations and instructions are concise and clear. They focus specifically on the intended learning and are quick to

address pupils' misconceptions to maintain the pace of progress throughout. Such effective practice is not, however, a consistent picture across subjects and/or year groups.

- Recently, teaching and learning in mathematics have improved. Teachers are beginning to plan tasks that better match pupils' existing skills, knowledge and understanding. Adults introduce, model and explain new learning and concepts with increasing skill. Current pupils across year groups are making faster progress from their different starting points.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' skills of perseverance, resilience and application can be glimpsed at times but are inconsistent. Good learning behaviours are hampered by inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and low-level disruption during lessons. Such variability in practice impedes pupils' motivation to learn. Understanding about how to be a successful learner, therefore, is not universally well developed.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through regular assemblies and discussions with adults. Across year groups, pupils display inquisitive, compassionate attitudes when discussing sensitive and topical issues such as relationships and faith in modern-day Britain. Nonetheless, a significant minority of pupils expressed some concerns about bullying and a lack confidence in the school's approach to managing incidents of bullying. These concerns are being closely and appropriately examined by school leaders.
- Leaders have recently strengthened several aspects of the personal, social and emotional curriculum. Each pupil who has SEN and/or disabilities now has a designated key worker. A strong team of pastoral care staff work diligently with senior leaders to ensure that pupils feel safe and protected and to secure positive home-school relationships. Pupils said that they now know whom to talk with in school if they have any concerns. Many pupils expressed a positive view of the pastoral support team, finding these adults extremely willing to listen to their views. One parent's view encapsulated the views of others, finding staff at the school to be 'helpful and nurturing'.
- Staff have developed productive partnerships with additional agencies and experts, calling on them in a timely manner where needs arise. Records show that leaders are suitably persistent in making sure that pupils get the additional resources and/or external support they need. Consequently, the needs of vulnerable pupils and families are managed carefully and in a sensitive, enabling manner.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.

- Leaders have not been completely successful in equipping all staff with a range of positive behaviour management techniques. Not all pupils respond promptly to adults' requests and instructions. This means that, in some lessons and in some areas of the school, pupils engage in low-level disruption or fail to conduct themselves well.
- Leaders' logs of incidents and pupils' behaviour have improved recently in terms of detail and consistency. They are beginning to use this information more systematically to spot patterns and to identify causes. As a result, leaders are better placed to support pupils to improve their behaviour. On occasion, however, a small minority of pupils continue to lack self-discipline.
- Pupils are lively, kind and full of good humour. Their attitudes to visitors are positive. For example, during the inspection, pupils held doors open politely and without prompting, showed a keen interest in school matters during discussions and went out of their way to show inspectors around the school.
- Pupils generally get along well with each other. They reported that they have many friends and enjoy coming to school each day. Pupils are especially appreciative of the wide range of extra-curricular clubs that staff provide. Their good attendance is testament to their positive views.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress across the curriculum in both key stages is too variable. Due to weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment over time, not all pupils make the progress that adults should expect of them.
- In key stage 2, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has been in the bottom 20% of all schools for at least two years. While pupils' progress in mathematics has begun to show signs of improvement recently, the picture of progress in English and other subjects remains too variable across key stages.
- Current pupils are not making consistently good progress across subjects or year groups from their different starting points. Pupils' books, progress in lessons and the school's own assessment information confirm this. As a result, too few pupils are well prepared for the next year group or stage in their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress in key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics has been significantly below national averages for at least two years. Currently, disadvantaged pupils' progress in reading and writing in key stage 2 and in English in key stage 3, in particular, is inconsistent.
- Too few of the most able pupils, currently and historically, have reached the greater depths of learning of which they are capable across subjects. A lack of challenge and stretch in tasks and learning opportunities continues to inhibit rates of progress for the most able pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make consistently good progress in their learning compared with other pupils nationally from similar starting points. Too often, the expectations of staff are too low or pupils are not effectively supported to make accelerated progress in order to catch up with other pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	108637
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	10042160

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Welsh
Acting Head of School	Kirsty Nichols Mackay
Telephone number	01912 008715
Website	www.monkseatonmiddle.org
Email address	monkseaton.middle@northtyneside.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets the Department for Education’s definition of a coasting school, based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2015, 2016 and 2017.
- The school meets the government’s current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils’ progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- North Tyneside local authority has sourced formal support for the school and provided additional challenge to leaders since the previous inspection. English and mathematics advisers have visited the school regularly.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in terms of staff, leaders and managers, including governance. Currently, an acting head of school oversees the day-to-day running of the school with the support of an executive headteacher.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who receive additional support for SEN and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan is also slightly above the national average.
- There are few pupils compared to the national average who speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment across subjects and year groups. Several observations were conducted in partnership with the school’s senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, acting head of school, senior and subject leaders, governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a local authority representative for North Tyneside.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation and information including policy documentation, governors’ information, improvement plans, self-evaluation statements, monitoring records, performance management and assessment information. Inspectors also scrutinised behaviour, attendance and safety logs.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils informally in lessons and at breaktimes across key stages. Inspectors listened to pupils read in lessons and reviewed a range of pupils’ work across subjects and year groups. No pupils responded to Ofsted’s survey, but inspectors took the school’s own surveys of pupils’ views into consideration.
- No staff responded to Ofsted’s questionnaire. Inspectors, however, spoke with staff formally and informally across both days of the inspection. The school’s own survey of staff views was also examined.
- Parents’ views were considered via the 24 responses to Ofsted’s free-text service and the 25 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also took note of the school’s own survey of parents’ views.

Inspection team

Fiona Manuel, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Sara Roe	Ofsted Inspector
Jill Bowe	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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