

Inspection of a good school: Monkleigh Primary School

Monkleigh, Bideford, Devon EX39 5JY

Inspection date:

20 June 2023

Outcome

Monkleigh Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Monkleigh Primary School. They are proud to be part of the school family and community. This view is shared by parents. They speak highly of the school. Parents value the care from staff and the wider opportunities available.

Leaders are determined for all pupils to be successful. Monkleigh's values of 'smile, share, succeed' underpin the school's broad and ambitious curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are included in all aspects of school life. Most pupils learn well across the curriculum. Children in early years flourish with an impressive start to their education journey.

Leaders and staff know pupils well. Strong relationships ensure that pupils learn in a warm and nurturing environment. Leaders prioritise supporting pupils' well-being. Specialist staff provide high-quality pastoral support.

The provision for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy learning outdoors regularly. They value the wide range of clubs and trips on offer. Clubs like choir, football and art give pupils opportunities to develop their talents. One pupil shared, 'It helps me to learn new skills and to socialise with others.'

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

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils to learn well across the curriculum. Subject leaders use their expertise to develop staff's subject knowledge. As a result, teachers are clear about the knowledge they want pupils to learn to prepare them well for their next stage. Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND. Teachers think carefully about how to adapt learning to help these pupils learn well alongside their peers.

Teachers use a variety of strategies to help pupils build their knowledge across the curriculum. Pupils are given daily opportunities to revisit prior learning and embed new

knowledge. In some subjects, teachers use assessment systems to check pupils' understanding. As a result, gaps in knowledge are known and pupils are supported to build their knowledge well. However, in other subjects, staff do not use assessment with enough precision to determine if pupils are secure with their new knowledge. Consequently, some pupils develop misconceptions and they do not build their knowledge as well as they could.

Most pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Routines in lessons and during social times are well understood by pupils. They respond well to the expectations shared by most staff. However, some staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour. Some pupils can lose focus and engagement in their learning. As a result, some learning time is lost.

Leaders are determined for pupils to learn to read and to develop a love of reading. This starts in the early years, where the curriculum centres around high-quality texts. Staff have the training they need to teach the phonics programme with accuracy. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. This helps them to build their confidence and fluency in reading. Leaders identify pupils who fall behind and support them to catch up quickly. Leaders prioritise the involvement of parents to help their child to learn to read. Regular opportunities are provided to ensure that parents are well supported. As a result of leaders' actions, pupils learn to read exceptionally well.

Children in the early years thrive. They are nurtured and well supported. This helps children to be curious about the world around them and share a love of learning. Staff maintain a sharp focus on language development. They design learning activities that help children to connect their ideas. This helps children to build their knowledge successfully.

Leaders have developed an effective curriculum that goes beyond the academic. Curriculum opportunities are deliberately planned to support pupils' understanding of the wider world. For example, pupils visit the Houses of Parliament in London to learn about democracy. Pupils learn about other cultures. Books are chosen across subjects to support pupils' understanding of equality and diversity. The new outdoor learning area enables all pupils to explore and discover the world around them. Pupils enjoy eating the fruits and vegetables that they grow. They appreciate learning about nature through bird watching and bug houses.

All staff are proud to work at the school. Staff morale is high. One member of staff shared, 'We are a family.' Staff feel well supported by leaders and governors who are mindful of their workload. Leaders prioritise training for staff and ensure that support is in place for curriculum development. This is highly valued by staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training that helps them to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff are clear about what to do if they have any concerns.

Records are monitored with rigour. This helps the school provide further support to families where needed.

All pupils feel safe. They know adults will listen if they have any worries. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Leaders make the necessary recruitment checks on adults who work in the school. Minor issues were identified with the recording of these checks, which have now been rectified.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not use assessment with enough precision in order to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, some pupils develop misconceptions and do not build their knowledge as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that assessment is effective in identifying what pupils know and can do so that teachers adapt learning in light of this.
- Some staff expectations of pupils' behaviour are not always high enough. As a result, some pupils do not behave as well as they could and learning time is lost. Leaders should ensure that all staff have equally high expectations for pupils' behaviour.

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 third ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2011.

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

Unique reference number	113162
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10211045
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Austen Donnellan
Headteacher	Karen Reeves
Website	www.monkleigh-primary.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Leaders provide a before- and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the 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 samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, parents, pupils, governors and a representative from the trust.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.

- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding leader, staff, governors and pupils, and evaluated record-keeping and staff training.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents. The inspectors considered comments made by parents online during the inspection and met with some parents at the start of the inspection. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gavin Summerfield

His Majesty's Inspector

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