

Inspection of Monkwick Junior School

School Road, Colchester, Essex CO2 8NN

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and are safe. They come to school with positive attitudes, excited to learn. Bullying is rare. Any incidents that occur are dealt with promptly. Pupils say that if there are problems and you tell a teacher, they are sorted out.

Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils talk proudly about their school values, including everyone being part of one team where everyone looks out for each other.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They meet leaders' high expectations and learn what they need throughout the curriculum to ensure they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils behave well and are kind to each other. They are respectful to others during lessons and around the school. Pupils listen carefully and enjoy learning.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They enjoy the wide range of clubs that are on offer and appreciate the support they receive from staff. Pupils say that differences are respected. Pupils happily take on a range of extra responsibilities. These include serving on the school council and helping younger pupils with playground games.

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

Leaders have carefully considered the important skills and knowledge they want pupils to acquire in each year group. Teachers make lessons interesting, which inspires pupils to learn. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to revisit knowledge and apply skills as they move up through the year groups. Teachers also ensure that pupils make connections between what they are learning in different subjects. This helps pupils build a secure understanding of new concepts.

Subject leaders take part in regular, professional training. This helps them keep their knowledge up to date. Some leaders of foundation subjects are new to their roles. They know their subjects well, although their ability to offer professional support and training to class teachers is still developing.

The learning environment is calm and orderly, and this ensures that pupils can focus on their lessons. Pupils know that good behaviour is necessary to achieve this, and they rise to this expectation. Pupils are engaged, and their positive attitudes ensure that they can concentrate on their learning.

Teachers introduce new learning systematically. They ensure that lessons build on what pupils have learned before. Nevertheless, there are some inconsistencies in how teachers deliver the curriculum and, as a result, some activities are not used to maximum effect to ensure pupils develop a deep understanding of what they need

to know. Leaders are aware of this and are supporting teachers to improve this aspect of their work.

Leaders have high ambition for all. There is a strong and inclusive culture. Most pupils with SEND achieve well because the curriculum is well organised, and teachers adapt lessons well to meet their needs. However, a small number of pupils have not had their needs fully identified early enough. This is partly due to the pandemic. In these few cases, leaders are supporting teachers so they can help pupils to catch up.

The reading programme is well considered. Leaders have trained teachers well. Teachers use leaders' intended curriculum to good effect. A love of reading is promoted through the careful selection of texts and stories. Pupils talk confidently about their favourite books. Leaders are committed to reading catch-up. Those who need extra help receive it as soon as they start in Year 3. Gaps in knowledge are quickly identified and support is provided to fill these gaps. Pupils learn to read confidently and fluently. Leaders regularly check that pupils are doing well in their reading.

The school's wider offer provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of different faiths and values. Leaders have also designed a bespoke 'advantage curriculum' which gives pupils access to a wide range of artistic and cultural activities. As a result, pupils learn a great deal about the wider world, and they learn to appreciate the arts, music, and local history.

Governors and the trust hold leaders to account for the school's work and check that statutory requirements are met. Governors challenge school leaders and hold them to account for the quality of education in the school. Governors gain a good awareness of what it is like to be a pupil at the school through their own monitoring visits and checking processes.

The vast majority of staff are positive about the support they receive from leaders for their own well-being and workload. Staff are given the time and training they need to do their jobs well. They feel that leaders listen to them and value their opinions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A strong safeguarding culture exists in the school. Leaders, including governors, know their responsibilities for safeguarding. Staff receive regular training. This helps them to be vigilant and identify concerns as they arise. A rigorous reporting system ensures nothing is missed. Leaders work well with a range of agencies to get pupils and families the assistance they need.

Members of the local governing body and trustees have a strong oversight of safeguarding procedures in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Overall, the curriculum is implemented effectively. However, there are some inconsistencies in teachers' pedagogy in some subjects. This means that in some lessons pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should prioritise further training to help teachers refine their practice and to make sure that all subjects are taught to an equally high standard.
- Some leaders of foundation subjects are new to their roles. They know their subjects well. However, their ability to offer professional support and training to class teachers is still developing. This means that in some subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is not improving as fast as it could. Leaders should make sure that subject leaders are well trained to undertake all aspects of their role.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	145020
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10227324
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Pavitt
Headteacher	Rebecca McCutcheon
Website	https://www.monkwickjunior.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Monkwick Junior School is an academy, sponsored by The Sigma Trust.
- The school runs a breakfast club providing childcare.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the school's leadership team.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, modern foreign languages, and design and technology. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors met with leaders who have responsibility for disadvantaged pupils and the physical education and sports grant.
- Inspectors met with the chair of governors and one member of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with five representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer, the chair of trustees, the trust human resources manager, the assistant director of education and the primary executive lead.
- Inspectors looked at the single central record of pre-employment checks. They spoke to leaders, school staff, governors, and pupils to review the school's arrangements for safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. They considered the 18 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including seven free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 15 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Nick Rudman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Sutton	Ofsted Inspector

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