

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Monkton Academy

Dame Flora Robson Avenue, South Shields, Tyne and Wear NE34 9RD

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 December 2024

## Outcome

Monkton Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal and chief executive officer (CEO) of this single academy trust is Steve Bowler. The single academy trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alison Sharp.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils wear their Monkton badge with pride. They beam when describing themselves as 'Monktonites' and being part of their school community. The school values sporting and physical activity and the personal qualities that it develops. By being part of the school community, pupils learn to show respect, build resilience and be a good team player. The school aims to instil these character traits to prepare its pupils for the rest of their lives.

Pupils are happy in school. They work hard in lessons and play harmoniously together at social times. Behaviour across the whole school day is excellent. Pupils know that staff deal with issues fairly and 'there's always a way to put a mistake right'.

The school has high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are swiftly settled in to 'junior life' and staff get to know them and their individual needs quickly. As a result, pupils typically achieve well by the time they leave Year 6. However, some pupils have gaps in their number fact knowledge, which prevents them from achieving even more highly.

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

Pupils learn a well-considered and ambitious curriculum offer. Pupils learn important knowledge across a range of subjects and enjoy their lessons. Teaching ensures that pupils learn the intended curriculum well. The school has strengthened the wider curriculum and increased staff expertise. Staff know pupils well. They identify pupils' learning needs and help them to progress through the curriculum. Leaders accurately identify the right areas of the curriculum to improve so that pupils continue to achieve

well. There remains some variance in how well teaching checks pupils' understanding, particularly in mathematics. This means that, sometimes, pupils do not build their understanding as well as they could.

In English, the school develops pupils' vocabulary and writing knowledge through a well-crafted curriculum. By the end of Year 6, pupils write with confidence and purpose. Pupils explore texts together with interest. The majority of pupils are taught to read well. They read a range of books independently for pleasure and develop a preference for their favourite authors. In recent years, a growing proportion of pupils are joining the school with additional reading needs. The school recognises that the phonics programme requires further refinement to better support these pupils.

Pupils with SEND typically learn the same high-quality curriculum as their peers. Leaders identify their needs well. The school has carefully considered how to adapt the curriculum across the range of subjects. As such, all pupils in lessons can take part and learn the planned content. Pupils also receive the support and equipment that they need to become independent learners.

Pupils benefit from high-quality sports provision. This encourages many pupils to be physically active. The sporting successes of the school are impressive. For example, the school was recently awarded 'primary cricket school of the year' at a prestigious awards ceremony. Pupils, however, are clear that there is a place for everyone, sporty or not. Everyone has the chance to wear the Monkton sports kit and represent the school. This is a key part of the school's approach to the wider development of its pupils.

Pupils know that at Monkton leaving someone out is not an option. They know that derogatory language can be both disrespectful to an individual and a whole community. As such, they say that discrimination of any type is not accepted in their school. This strength of belief prepares pupils well for life beyond the school gates.

Most parents are happy with the work of the school. They appreciate how the school aims to ensure that pupils experience everything that the community and local area have to offer. The school builds a sense of social responsibility amongst pupils. The school and families worked well together to raise the funds for a defibrillator for the benefit of the local area.

The school and trust board prioritise pupil attendance. As such, the systems and rewards that the school employ are having a strong impact. Pupils want to come to school to enjoy all that is on offer. However, extra help or support is on hand for those who need it.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- There is some variation in the implementation of the school's phonics programme. This means that some pupils are not catching up as quickly as they could. The school should improve the teaching of the early reading programme to help pupils who need help to catch up quickly.
- There is some inconsistency in how well the school checks pupils' knowledge of number facts in mathematics. This means that, on occasion, some pupils can be moved on to new learning before they are ready. The school should carry out further work to assure itself that all pupils retain the knowledge needed to progress well to more complex learning in mathematics.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138025
<b>Local authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346435
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	192
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Alison Sharp
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Steve Bowler
<b>Principal</b>	Steve Bowler
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.monktonacademy.co.uk">www.monktonacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Monkton Academy is a single academy trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative education provider.
- The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector considered the responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text responses. The inspector also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil questionnaires and also met with staff to discuss their workload and well-being. The inspector also spoke to several parents during the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- As part of the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the principal and assistant principals of the school, subject leaders, the trust board and the school's appointed school improvement partner.

### **Inspection team**

Mark Dent, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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