

Monks Risborough C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110434
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	378099
Inspection dates	5–6 March 2012
Lead inspector	Peter Sudworth

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Vere
Headteacher	Stephen Nunn
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 December 2006
School address	Peters Lane Monks Risborough Princes Risborough HP27 9LZ
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Peter Sudworth

Additional inspector

Brenda Isles

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in nineteen lessons or parts of lessons and saw nine teachers. They had discussions with pupils, staff and the Chair of the Governing Body, listened to pupils read and examined pupils' work. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at various documents, such as those relating to safeguarding and progress. The inspectors read the parents' and carers' comments on the 114 questionnaires returned and also examined responses from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

The school is an average-sized primary school with seven classes. Children usually enter the Reception class in the September before their fifth birthday but some pupils, particularly the youngest ones, sometimes begin at a later date at the request of their parents. Most pupils are White British and no children are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average as is the percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award and Travel Plan (gold award). Two members of staff were on maternity leave at the time of the inspection. The school meets the government's floor standard, which sets minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school where pupils achieve well because of good teaching. The pupils play a key role in helping create an effective learning environment. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection, maintaining above average results. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very happy that their children attend the school. As one parent wrote, 'We are extremely happy with this school, as are our children. The staff really know them and how to teach them.' It is not yet an outstanding school because teaching is not outstanding and progress in mathematics is not as brisk as in English.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress, especially in reading and writing. Mathematics attainment is above average, but progress is not as rapid as in English. Pupils achieve well in science.
- Teaching is good. The teachers prepare interesting lessons which meet the needs of different abilities. Pupils learn well as a result. Some teaching is outstanding. The pupils say, 'You always learn something different in every lesson.' They describe their teachers as 'fair and understanding'. The school is well staffed, with the additional staff used effectively for those who need extra help. However, pupils' learning targets are not always used effectively enough so that pupils can work on their next steps for improvement.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate very mature attitudes in their relationships with one another and are mutually very supportive. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves and others safe.
- The school is well led. Staff work well together. The governing body is supportive and involved. The curriculum is well planned, offering the pupils a good range of experiences, with outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff provide very good care for all pupils who, as a consequence, feel confident in the help and guidance they receive. The monitoring of teaching is rigorous and performance management is well organised.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' rate of progress in mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2, to more closely match that in English, by:
 - using resources more effectively to help pupils' understanding
 - ensuring that pupils learn their multiplication tables thoroughly and can recollect and use individual facts quickly
 - using real-life situations more frequently to use and improve their mathematical skills and to give the learning a real sense of purpose. (The school itself has recognised the need to improve progress in mathematics to match more closely that in English; this is in the school development plan.)
- Ensure that there is a greater consistency in the use of pupils' targets for their future learning so that all pupils are clearly aware of what they need to concentrate on next in order to improve.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils achieve well. Attainment and standards of work are above average and have been for a long time. Parents and carers unanimously, and correctly, state that their children are making good progress. Children's skills on entry are slightly above those expected for their age. Children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the rich environment stimulates learning effectively. By the end of Reception, attainment is often above average. In one activity, children successfully compiled their own family tree after the teacher had initially demonstrated with a family of teddy bears.

Pupils continue to make good overall progress in Year 1 through to Year 6. Reading standards are particularly high, both at the end of Year 2 and when pupils leave school. This is because pupils are taught reading skills well, good literature is introduced to pupils and they have good strategies to choose new books. Pupils discuss favourite authors and show a good understanding of texts. Writing standards are consistently above average. Pupils across the school write imaginatively and make good use of grammar, punctuation and accurate spelling to enliven work. They write purposefully in different subjects, for example evaluating their products in design and technology. Pupils demonstrate good skills in speaking and listening. They are articulate and listen well to the views of others. In Year 4, pupils spoke thoughtfully about 'fairness' in different situations in a very well planned philosophy lesson. Others listened with rapt attention. Although attainment in mathematics is above average, progress is not as rapid as in English because not all pupils, especially at Key Stage 2, are able to quickly recall individual multiplication facts and they are not given enough opportunities to use and improve their skills in real-life situations.

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Investigative opportunities in science promote a good understanding of the scientific process and enable pupils across the school to achieve well. Pupils apply their good skills with computers effectively. Year 5 pupils compiled attractive booklets about the Ancient Greeks using a range of computer techniques.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported in small groups, or through individual tuition, to help them with specific difficulties. The school ensures that any gaps in achievement between different groups are identified and tackled quickly and this enables all groups of pupils to make equally good progress.

Quality of teaching

Parents, carers and pupils correctly believe teaching to be good. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the well-planned and challenging range of both indoor and outdoor activities promotes their learning and independence well. Also, there is a good balance of adult-led activities and those that children choose for themselves. Elsewhere in school, staff plan effectively and make the lessons challenging and interesting with a good balance of introductory discussion and activity. Examples of outstanding teaching were seen. Teachers give good attention to the basic skills and overall teach these well. However, in mathematics, opportunities to enhance these skills in real-life situations are sometimes missed. In addition, resources to assist the pupils' mathematical understanding are not always used well enough. Staff, including teaching assistants, are deployed very well. They question pupils well and, because of the excellent relationships, pupils are confident to contribute answers. Staff give particular attention to disabled pupils and those with special educational needs with work that is challenging and well matched to their needs. The teaching of reading is good. Phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) teaching is skilful and the use of ability groupings across the youngest three classes ensures that content is well matched to ability.

Teachers keep pupils fully engaged in lesson introductions through the effective use of individual whiteboards so pupils can record their answers. Marking is good: it includes positive comments about the successful elements of work as well as pointers for improvement, and several teachers give good exemplification of what they mean by their written comments. In a minority of classes the individual targets for pupils' improvement in mathematics and English are used well and are very clear, but in other classes the approach to their use is inconsistent and does not fully benefit the pupils' next steps in learning. Staff are often imaginative in their approaches, and at times this results in outstanding teaching. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher very skilfully combined different aspects of mathematics in one task which greatly motivated pupils. They read coordinates to locate on a map where they would find the next problem-solving and calculation activity which was hidden around the school. Teachers' good range of lesson content in different subjects, including philosophy and religious education, contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers implement the planned curriculum

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effectively with the particularly good application of writing skills in other subjects.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents, carers, and pupils view behaviour and safety to be good. Inspectors confirm that it is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Pupils are extremely polite, and they demonstrate courtesy, extremely good concentration in lessons, and outstandingly good attitudes to work. At breaktimes, they get along extremely well together. One pupil said, 'There are just a few odd fallings out but we sort it and remain good friends.' Another said, 'We are a good support to our mates.' Pupils show a good awareness of different forms of bullying but confirm there is no bullying in any form and records indicate that behaviour is outstanding over time. Pupils trust the adults and state that they are well looked after and kept safe. Pupils' involvement in exercise and selection of healthy foods at lunchtimes confirms the Healthy Schools status.

Pupils demonstrate a very good awareness of the school rules to which they contribute. Older pupils care for the younger pupils, and they undertake their various roles in school as helpers, for example in the dining hall and as school council members, with much skill. These duties develop their social development extremely well. Pupils make an exceptional contribution to their own learning. They respond very positively to opportunities to work independently and they collaborate exceptionally well in group tasks. Pupils are very aware of safety, for example road safety to which the Travel Plan contributes, and they are also aware of internet safety. They have confidence in the staff and know who to approach if they have a problem. Pupils' very positive attitudes and enjoyment of school are shown in their well above average attendance.

Leadership and management

The headteacher leads the school well, provides good professional development opportunities for staff and works alongside them to create a harmonious ethos and a culture of success. There is a strong team spirit and shared vision evident in the school. The headteacher benefits from the strong support of the senior management team and together they maintain a clear focus on improving teaching and achievement. The well-written school development plan has raising attainment at its heart, especially in mathematics where, as the school recognises, progress is not as brisk as in English. Good procedures are in place to ensure that teaching is monitored in a rigorous and effective manner. This approach has led to improvements over time and a clear and an accurate evaluation of the areas that now need to be addressed to improve teaching and achievement to the next level. Through meetings and visits, the governing body is well informed and able to challenge and ask pertinent questions.

Governors and school leaders ensure that safeguarding fully meets requirements. Child protection arrangements are exemplary and the staff display very good care of the pupils. School leaders and staff ensure that equal opportunities are promoted

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throughout the school and any form of discrimination is not tolerated.

The curriculum is managed well and meets the needs of pupils well. The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage clearly recognises how young children learn best. Older pupils learn a wide range of basic skills, blended with more creative aspects, although the mathematics curriculum does not include enough reference to real-life settings. Visits to local places of interest, such as the Chilterns to undertake mapping skills and compass work, bring a real meaning to learning. Residential visits for pupils in Key Stage 2 add to the variety and support the pupils' social development strongly. Assemblies, religious education and philosophy lessons contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection including raising achievement in writing, maintaining good standards in reading and science and capitalising on pupils' enthusiasm for learning. This progress, together with continued good teaching, good leadership at all levels and appropriate priorities for further development indicate that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



7 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Monks Risborough VC Primary School, Princes Risborough
HP27 9LZ**

Thank you so much for your help when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting you and talking to you about your work and about the school. You attend a good school and you make good progress. You reach a standard above that which we often find. Your speaking and listening skills, as well as your work in English and mathematics, are good for your age. You also make good progress in science. However, you do not make as brisk progress in mathematics as you do in reading and writing and so we have asked the school to help you make better progress in mathematics. The teachers recognise this too and they have already begun to review the approach to mathematics. You can help in this by learning your multiplication tables thoroughly so that you can recall any part of the different tables quickly.

The staff look after you and care for you very well. You clearly enjoy your lessons and look forward to meeting your friends. We noticed how well you all get along together. We found your behaviour to be outstanding throughout the school. You show much respect for one another and a great deal of courtesy. Your behaviour in class is excellent. Also you do lots of things to help the daily routine, such as helping at lunchtimes and with the preparation of the hall for assembly.

There is just one other thing that we have asked the school to do to improve at this time. We noticed that in some classes your targets are not used well to help you to know what you need to concentrate on next to improve your work. In other classes, they were used well. You can refer to your targets in English and mathematics to help quicken your progress even more.

Thank you once again for all your help during our visit. We trust that you will carry on working hard and doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sudworth
Lead inspector

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