

# Cockton Hill Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114110
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	378796
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Petts

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Malcolm Cresswell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anita Boyd
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	09 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	McIntyre Terrace Cockton Hill Bishop Auckland DL14 6HW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 602058
<b>Fax number</b>	01388 602058
<b>Email address</b>	c.h.j@durhamlearning.net

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## Introduction

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This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed eight class teachers and one higher level teaching assistant. They held meetings with members of the governing body and spoke to staff and groups of pupils. They analysed 60 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires from staff and pupils. The inspectors also looked at pupils' progress and achievement data, intervention and support programmes, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, school policies and plans for improving the quality of learning. They scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke to the School Improvement Partner to discuss her reports about the school.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of learning and the rate of progress made by all groups of pupils in Years 3 to 6, especially in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- The quality of teaching and its effectiveness in sustaining pupils' progress and tackling any pockets of relative underachievement.
- The extent to which senior leaders are demonstrating the capacity to sustain present improvement and bring about further improvement.

### Information about the school

Cockton Hill is an average-sized junior school. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage with very few speaking English as an additional language. An above-average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. The number with a statement of special educational needs is close to twice the national average. Almost one third of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. The school extends its services in that it provides a breakfast club. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

**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: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Cockton Hill is a good school. All parents and carers expressed happiness with their child's experience at school. The comment of one parent, 'The staff are extremely supportive to families', sums up the views of almost all parents and carers. During a period of changing senior leadership, middle managers capably supported by a proactive and committed governing body, have been effective in maintaining a positive, friendly atmosphere where pupils progress well and achievement matters. An experienced headteacher is now in post and the school is at the early stages of benefitting from her ambitions for the school. The school's self-evaluation correctly identifies strengths and areas for improvement. The initial assessments of the quality of learning by the headteacher are accurate and these are informing development priorities effectively, for example providing a better match of the curriculum to the needs of pupils. The school has a good capacity to take action, overcome weaknesses and improve the outcomes for pupils.

Most pupils enter Year 3 with skills and experience that are broadly typical for their age. They settle quickly and happily in the friendly atmosphere. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average, which represents good progress overall. Pupils' good achievement and enjoyment is evident, because the teaching is good. Nevertheless, the pattern of pupil progress is a little uneven as the pupils move through the school. In Years 5 and 6 pupils make faster progress, because thought-provoking approaches capture pupils' interests and inspire their thinking. Positive action taken by the school has improved writing skills significantly, especially for less-able pupils. However, the application of their mathematical skills to work out problems is less well-developed. There are occasions when approaches are not always imaginative enough to create extra opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language make good progress, because the support they receive is effective. In individual cases the support is highly effective. The progress of pupils is systematically checked and accurate assessments completed. Marking is positive and helpful and pupils are given clear guidance for improvement. However, teaching does not always exploit the information about progress well enough to match activities to the abilities, talents and interests of pupils.

Behaviour is good and among older pupils it is often exemplary in the classroom. The pupils report that, 'If they cross the line action is taken'. Their attendance is average, but improving as school strategies to manage attendance are increasingly successful.

Pupils take great pride in their decision-making responsibilities of deciding how to improve the school. They eagerly take part in local events, for example the Woodhouse Arts Festival.

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

- Accelerate the rates of progress and boost achievement further, particularly in Years 3 and 4, by ensuring that:
  - activities allow the pupils to apply their skills to solve problems, especially in mathematics
  - pupils' thinking is consistently challenged and questioned to justify their ideas and explain their solutions.
- Further improve the quality of teaching by:
  - making more effective use of the school's progress information to shape activities to more closely match pupils' needs and interests
  - using and building upon current thought-provoking practice within the school to increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding
  - increasing the use of imaginative approaches to inspire and excite pupils' learning and promote even more enjoyment.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

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Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy their good teaching, especially in Years 5 and 6. Typically, attainment is above average in national tests by the end of Year 6. Since the last inspection, the concerted action taken to improve writing skills has been effective with an increasing proportion of pupils of all abilities exceeding what is expected of them for their age. In lessons where approaches are stimulating, such as when devising a 'hook' in their story-writing to capture the reader's interest, pupils construct some imaginative and engaging story openings. When activities do not stir the pupils' thinking sufficiently, opportunities are sometimes missed to enable pupils to apply their skills to unravel problems, such as in mathematics. In Years 3 and 4, inspection evidence and school information show that rates of progress are slightly more uneven. This is because activities are not always matched closely enough to age and ability and pupils are not constantly challenged to think for themselves. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as that of their peers, because they receive constructive, well-targeted individual help from teachers and teaching assistants.

The good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in the pupils' good behaviour and the positive relationships they enjoy with each other and adults. Most pupils attend regularly with the numbers of persistent absentees falling to average levels, as a result of successful action taken by the school. Pupils are safety-conscious and state that they feel safe, 'As staff take good care of them'. They show a good grasp of the benefits of eating healthily and keeping active and fit. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and the school fully involves them in the planning of their roles, such as organising the buddy system, where older pupils look after the younger ones in the yard. As a result of their good basic skills and willingness to work as a team pupils are well-prepared for their next stage of learning.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

The quality of teaching is good overall with some well-thought-out approaches observed which capture the pupils' enthusiasm and constantly challenge their thinking and understanding. In the best lessons, active approaches incorporate high expectations well-matched to pupils' abilities and needs. Open-ended questioning probes their thinking and understanding, such as when challenged to describe the childish and immature character in their story writing. As a result the rate of progress quickens. When progress slows, not enough is expected of pupils, there is less variety in activities and classroom routines are not so well-established. Sometimes too much time is spent on the same task, such as sitting on the carpet, which can lead to individual pupils becoming restless. Marking is systematic and helpful with pupils being given challenging targets and a clear sense of how to achieve them.

The good curriculum is being steadily enriched to match the interests of pupils more closely. Themes are increasingly used to link subjects together in interesting ways to promote learning, for example learning about life in World War Two. This is adding to the richness of learning and boosting achievement and enjoyment. Activities aimed at developing personal skills are having a very positive impact. As one pupil remarked, 'Last week's residential was awesome!'

The good care, guidance and support which pupils receive are developing strengths of the school. Staff can point to real successes in helping pupils overcome difficulties and challenging episodes in their lives so that they once more enjoy their learning and achieve success. Provision is also extended before school, with a breakfast club for families who require it. Good links with specialist support agencies help the school to personalise approaches to ensure intervention pinpoints the support which each pupil requires.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*


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<sup>1</sup>The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

During a period of staff change, the school gained much benefit from an effectively-led governing body and capable and hard-working middle managers. They were well-supported by a committed team of staff. Teaching and learning are well-managed. The headteacher has quickly established high expectations for improvement with a firm focus on raising the achievement for all groups of pupils. A good deal of success has been achieved improving the quality of pupils' learning through partnership working, for example promoting the creative and performing arts through secondary school and community project links. Systems to analyse progress information are robust, although the information is not exploited sufficiently to boost achievement. Nevertheless, all pupils are given equal opportunity to achieve success and there is no discrimination.

The positive relationships with parents and carers add to the sense of belonging and aid pupils' learning. Safeguarding procedures and requirements are met and practice to ensure that all pupils are properly protected is secure. The governing body is increasingly confident and effective and its members demonstrate a good grasp of school strengths and areas for development. They actively help to shape the strategic direction of the school. The growing confidence and experience of middle leadership is adding to the sharpness of monitoring and evaluation. Community cohesion is promoted well and is closely linked to the UNICEF Rights Respecting initiative, which permeates all aspects of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A range of first-hand experiences makes a strong contribution to developing the pupils' understanding of the diverse world around them. For example, the school enjoys close ties with pupils in schools in Ireland, Spain, Turkey and Tanzania.

### *These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Just over one quarter of all parents and carers returned the questionnaire with their views of the school. These views were very positive about the quality of experiences and enjoyment that the school provides. All parents and carers appreciate that their children are kept safe. The inspectors' findings support these views. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors judged behaviour to be good and saw some exemplary behaviour by older pupils in lessons. They observed teachers dealing with any minor incidents effectively. A very few parents and carers spoke of concerns about the management of lunchtimes. Following the end of the national pilot scheme in July, which enabled all pupils to access a free school meal, the headteacher has altered arrangements to take account of almost half the pupils preferring packed lunches. Lunchtime arrangements were observed by inspectors and found to be well-organised. Pupils were seen taking full advantage of the calm and orderly atmosphere when eating a meal or a packed lunch to talk to their friends. They were also seen responding positively to staff encouragement to eat healthily and join in physical activity in the playground after their meal.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cockton Hill Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 239 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	53	27	45	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	50	29	48	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	37	34	57	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	38	36	60	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	42	33	55	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	38	32	53	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	38	34	57	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well-prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	42	32	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	42	32	53	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	38	29	48	3	5	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	33	33	55	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	35	32	53	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	42	33	55	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and is consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100. Sixth-form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**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.**



21 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Cockton Hill Junior School, Bishop Auckland, DL14 6HW**

Thank you for your very friendly welcome when we inspected your school. We really enjoyed our time at Cockton Hill, especially the talks we had with you, your staff and your parents and carers. You go to a good school and here are some of the positive things we found.

- Your staff are committed to working hard to make sure you are happy in school.
- You obviously like school and this is reflected in your improving attendance and good behaviour. You also really know how to stay safe and to keep fit and active so that you can remain healthy.
- The school enjoys good links with the local community and local schools and works really positively with your parents and carers.
- You clearly enjoy helping your school to improve.
- The progress you make is good, because the school staff work hard to improve the way you learn.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and the governing body to look at more ways of helping you to improve your work and make even faster progress, especially in Years 3 and 4. We would like staff to use the information they have on how well you are doing to arrange activities which can excite and interest you more. We have asked that staff adopt more imaginative approaches to make more of your learning fun. We have also asked that staff ensure that you constantly use your mathematical skills to solve problems. Lastly, we have asked that teachers make certain that your tasks are even more thought-provoking.

You can play your part by attending regularly and working as hard as you can. Thank you for helping with this inspection.  
Best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Petts  
Lead Inspector

