

Cockerham Parochial Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119525
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379828
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Evelyn Bush
Headteacher	Jackie Cookson
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who visited 10 lessons or parts of lessons. The inspectors observed four teachers and held discussions with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, groups of pupils and a local authority adviser. They observed the school's work, and looked at school policies, records of meetings of the governing body, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 51 responses to parents' and carers' questionnaires were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether pupils make sufficient progress in Key Stage 1, especially those who are more able.
- How effective the teaching of spelling and reading skills is in accelerating progress throughout the school.
- The extent to which leaders have increased opportunities for pupils to write across the curriculum.
- The impact of the recently developed outdoor area for Reception children on their learning.

Information about the school

Cockerham is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Most pupils are White British. The school has gained a number of awards, including the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency information and communication technology (ICT) Mark and holds Healthy School status. The 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

Cockerham is a good school. It is a welcoming and friendly setting in which to learn. The headteacher is providing astute leadership and has acted quickly to bring about improvement, such as by delegating more leadership responsibility to the assistant headteacher. This is important because staff have not been fully involved in promoting school improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and gives a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The information gained is used effectively to prioritise and plan for further improvement. The governing body is very supportive of the school but not adept in rigorously monitoring and evaluating its performance. Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding and makes a significant impact on pupils' learning. The school has been successful in consolidating and building upon its good performance at the last inspection. The capacity for further improvement is good.

Children have a good start in Reception, making good progress and achieving well. This good progress is maintained throughout the rest of the school and, by the end of Year 6, attainment is well above average in English and mathematics. Writing is a weaker aspect of pupils' performance in English. They lack accuracy in structuring sentences and in spelling correctly. The recently introduced programme to support the teaching of spelling and reading throughout the school has yet to be fully evaluated. Nevertheless, teaching is good and the early signs are that it is having a positive impact on pupils' ability to link letters and sounds. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as other pupils because of the well-targeted support they receive.

Pupils behave well and show much enjoyment in coming to school, as is reflected in their high attendance. Teaching has many strengths and is particularly strong for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Nevertheless, there are times when activities lack sufficient challenge, especially for the more able. Teachers do not always set next steps in learning for individual pupils that are sufficiently precise. The curriculum is enlivened by enrichment activities that add interest and variety to pupils' experiences. Its planning has been improved, so there are now good opportunities for practising and improving writing skills when working in a range of subjects across the curriculum. A notable feature is the provision for ICT which has been recognised by the gaining of a variety of national and local awards. The creation of an outdoor area for children in Reception has had a positive impact on their learning and development. The school places strong emphasis on ensuring pupils' safety and well-being. This is much

appreciated by parents and carers, with one comment being typical, 'The school has strong community links and a lovely caring atmosphere.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the rate of pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers always effectively challenge pupils, especially those who are more able
 - always making the next steps in learning for individual pupils precise
 - improving pupils' skills in writing correctly structured sentences with accurate spelling.

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - fully involving all members of staff in promoting school improvement
 - improving the skills of the governing body in holding the school to account through rigorous monitoring and evaluation of its performance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well from their skill level on entering school, which is generally just above that typical. They show enjoyment and enthusiasm in their activities and are willing to persevere when faced with difficulty. Pupils collaborate well to explore ideas and confidently relate their findings to others. They read fluently and write imaginatively. Nevertheless, pupils lack accuracy in their sentence structure and in their spelling. They are skilled at using their mathematical calculation skills to solve real-life number problems. Pupils have well-developed ICT skills. This was evident when pupils in Years 5 and 6 were creating a PowerPoint presentation to depict stories from the Arabian Nights. There is no significant difference between the achievements or the learning of different groups of pupils.

Pupils willingly take on responsibilities, such as a school councillor or eco team member, and so contribute positively to the life of the school. They care about issues facing the local community and have worked successfully to raise the awareness of drivers to the dangers of speeding past the school. Pupils say they feel safe in school and know they can talk to an adult if they have any concerns. They have a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle, such as by taking regular exercise. Pupils are willing to reflect on their experiences and show respect for other people's feelings and values. They have a good understanding of the beliefs and traditions of cultures different to their own. Pupils' above average attainment and high attendance means they are prepared well for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons well to meet the needs of the different age ranges in classes. Classroom management is good, so that little time is lost. Activities are practical and interesting but sometimes lack sufficient challenge, especially for those pupils who are more able. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers generally use discussion and marking well to guide pupils to improve. As one pupil commented, 'We can talk to teachers and they explain how we can do better.' Nevertheless, teachers do not always provide pupils with guidance on the next steps in learning that are sufficiently precise. Relationships are good and make a positive contribution to the progress that pupils make.

Extra-curricular activities, which are well attended and include sports, sewing, and music clubs, enrich the curriculum. Pupils' horizons are effectively extended by the opportunity to go on visits, such as to the Maritime Museum in Lancaster, and to work with a variety of visitors. A residential stay at an activity centre in Cumbria for pupils in Years 5 and 6, successfully promotes their personal and social development. Partnership activity, including with local schools and Lancaster University, provides enhanced opportunities to develop skills in music, drama and sport. The curriculum is planned well to encourage pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle. This is reflected in the gaining of Healthy School status. The strong provision for ICT means pupils are confident and proficient in using their skills to support learning across the curriculum.

The school successfully ensures the care and welfare of pupils. All staff know the procedures to follow if they have concerns regarding the well-being of a pupil. Good links with a variety of outside agencies, including the school's educational psychologist and healthcare professionals, ensure extra assistance is available for individual pupils if required. Pupils who have medical needs are looked after effectively, to ensure their well-being. Transition arrangements are smooth throughout the school and onto secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders enthuse staff and, as a result, morale is high and there is a shared commitment to drive up attainment particularly in writing, and take the school forward. Leadership and management responsibilities are not delegated sufficiently to enable all staff to play a full part in promoting school improvement. The governing body is very supportive of the school but not adept in evaluating its performance and influencing future development. Safeguarding arrangements are comprehensive and ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and staff. The training of staff in safeguarding, particularly child protection, is of good quality. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well. Leaders have relevant information about different groups of pupils and regularly check their performance and contribution to school life.

Partnership activity is effective in developing learning opportunities that the school could not provide on its own in areas such as sport, music and drama. Leaders successfully promote community cohesion by encouraging pupils to view their role as not only members of the school but to consider their role in the local, national and international communities. Engagement with parents and carers is excellent and ensures they are strongly involved in their children's learning and the work of the school. This has a very positive impact on the progress that pupils make.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress and achieve well within a caring and stimulating setting. Adults work well together to plan activities that are practical and often linked to children's personal experiences. These activities do not always provide sufficient challenge, especially for the more able. The good balance between activities that are led by adults and those initiated by children makes a positive contribution to their development as independent learners. Children play happily together, willingly sharing resources and also taking turns fairly. They enjoy their activities, as one child commented, 'I really like school because we have lots of fun and learn things.'

Strong emphasis is placed on teaching children how to link letters and sounds. This was evident in an effective session in which they were learning successfully how to use 'th' to make a variety of words. The curriculum is enhanced by an interesting range of enrichment activities, such as seasonal walks around the school environment and opportunities for children to work with a variety of visitors. Children are cared for well in this calm and happy setting and support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good.

Good leadership ensures that children's progress is checked well and that their individual needs are met. The outdoor area is used throughout the day to promote children's learning and development. At times, there is insufficient intervention by adults during independent activities in this area to effectively take children's learning forward. Parents and carers say that staff are very approachable and keep them extremely well-informed of their child's progress and how they can support learning at home.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost all of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff. Two comments were typical, 'This is a wonderful school with helpful, caring staff who cater for each individual child's needs in education and welfare.' and 'My son's learning is coming on in leaps and bounds and he thoroughly enjoys going to school.' Inspection judgements support the positive views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cockerham Parochial Church of England Primary 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 inspector received 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 68 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	26	51	25	49	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	73	14	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	21	41	28	55	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	51	22	43	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	61	17	33	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	57	19	37	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	61	18	35	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	49	23	45	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	45	25	49	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	49	22	43	4	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	39	25	49	3	6	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	55	20	39	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	65	16	31	1	2	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 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.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add 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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



30 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Cockerham Parochial Church of England Primary School,
Lancaster, LA2 0EF**

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the many interesting things you do.

The inspectors judge that your school is good, and that:

- you make good progress and, by the end of Year 6, your attainment is well above average in English and mathematics
- the curriculum is enriched by a variety of extra-curricular activities and educational visits, such as to the Maritime Museum in Lancaster
- you enjoy school, which is shown by your high attendance, and learn a lot in lessons, as indicated in your questionnaires
- you contribute well to school life, such as through your good behaviour and by taking on a variety of responsibilities, including being a school councillor
- the school works really well with parents and carers to help them support your learning
- the headteacher, staff and the governing body are working hard to help you do better.

This is what we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure teachers always give you work that makes you think hard and set targets for improvement that are precise.
- Improve your skills in writing accurately constructed sentences with correct spelling.
- Fully involve all staff and members of the governing body in helping the school to improve further.

All of you are a credit to your school and can help it improve further by continuing to try your best in your activities.

Yours sincerely
Melvyn Hemmings
Lead inspector

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