

Cockerton Church of England Primary School

Newton Lane, Cockerton, Darlington, County Durham, DL3 9EX

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too few pupils make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Even where there is good teaching, pupils are given too few opportunities to explore ideas for themselves or to improve their writing and mathematics skills by practising them in different subjects.
- Work is not always well planned to meet the needs of all pupils and they learn too slowly. Teachers do not ask questions that challenge pupils to think hard.
- Marking is inconsistent and does not always give pupils clear advice about how to improve their work.
- While senior leaders have a clear understanding of how to improve the school, their analysis of teaching and pupils' progress is not rigorous enough. They do not offer clear judgements to teachers when they observe lessons. Analysis of pupils' progress is focused too much on expected, rather than good, progress.
- Strategies to involve subject leaders more in planning improvements and to check that they are working are not yet fully in place.
- While decisive action has been taken to improve the governing body, procedures to monitor the school's performance, including the impact of the pupil premium funding, are not yet fully in place or rigorous enough.

The school has the following strengths

- There is much good teaching that interests pupils and helps them to make good progress, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is some outstanding teaching in Years 3 and 6.
- Attainment in 2012 was above average and those pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium attained in line with all pupils nationally.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' behaviour is good; they say they feel very safe. Attendance is above average.
- There are clear strategies to support and develop teachers whose teaching requires improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector also met and spoke by telephone to the school’s external review partners.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school’s improvement plan; the school’s data relating to pupils’ progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books and the school’s documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 lessons taught by 10 teachers and listened to a group of pupils read. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher conducted four joint observations of lessons with the inspectors. The inspectors also observed the headteacher reporting back to teachers on their findings regarding the quality of learning and pupils’ achievement in lessons.
- The inspectors took into account the 28 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and spoke to parents informally.
- Seven staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

June Foster

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- There are many lunchtime and after-school clubs, which are managed by the headteacher and run voluntarily by staff.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The school has applied for academy status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the summer of 2013, improve the quality of teaching to at least good, in order to raise pupils' attainment and to accelerate their progress, by:
 - sharing the good and outstanding practice that is in the school already
 - using the school's information about how well pupils are working to set tasks which are hard enough for all pupils and require pupils to work at a quicker pace
 - improving marking so that pupils know clearly how to make their work better
 - asking questions which give pupils the chance to explain their ideas fully and to think harder
 - developing the curriculum so that it offers pupils more exciting and stimulating learning experiences and more opportunities to explore independently and together
 - offering pupils more opportunities to improve their writing and mathematics skills by practising them in different subjects.
- Increase the impact that leaders at all levels have on pupils' attainment and progress, by:
 - using lesson observations more robustly to ensure that teachers are clear about judgements and have specific areas for development which are acted upon and checked
 - ensuring that leaders and teachers are clear about what constitutes good progress and that they meet the demanding targets for improving the attainment and progress of pupils that are part of their performance management
 - improving the skills of subject leaders, through the effective use of training to help them continue to improve and offering them greater accountability for pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that the governing body robustly reviews all aspects of the school's work, including the way that the pupil premium funding helps to raise the attainment of those pupils who are eligible to receive it.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most children start school with skills that are in line with those typically expected for their age, although the proportion of children whose skills in reading and writing are lower than expected has increased in the last two years. Children typically do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 so that at the end of Year 2 they are above average for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils, including those of White British heritage, make expected progress in Key Stage 2. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is typically average. However, attainment for pupils in Year 6 in 2012 was above average. While these pupils had made good progress from their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage, they had made only expected progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils currently in Year 6 have made progress from their starting points that is in line with expectations.
- Pupils with special educational needs attain standards that are in line with similar pupils across the country. They make expected progress from their starting points, as a result of work that is well-suited to their abilities and sensitive support from teaching assistants.
- Overall, pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make the expected progress. Within this group, those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals attain standards above those of similar pupils around the country. Although they attain as well and make similar progress to other groups in the school in mathematics, their attainment is lower and their progress slower in English.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils typically make the progress expected of them in reading. This is a result of effective teaching of how to link sounds and letters to help pupils read words they are not familiar with and a drive to help pupils enjoy books and read more in school and at home.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Much is good and, on occasion, outstanding especially in Years 3 and 6, but elsewhere the pace of learning is often too slow. This is also often the case in those lessons where teaching is good. Teachers make it clear to pupils what they will learn and show them the skills they will need to use. However, this limits opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves or to practise their skills. Teachers do not always ask questions that encourage pupils to think hard and develop their ideas.
- While there are good examples of teachers making sure that work set is at the right level and with the right amount of interest, they do not all consistently plan work well enough to get the best out of all pupils. In a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils had to estimate numbers. Many pupils found the work difficult and the teacher did not change the work when she realised this. In the follow-up lesson, the teacher acted upon the inspector's feedback and advice from the senior leadership team and planned a lesson which was more interesting and helped pupils to learn and make progress.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and this marking helpfully tells pupils how successful they have been in their work. Pupils are very clear about the level of their work. However, advice about how to improve their work is inconsistent.
- The curriculum offers too few opportunities for pupils to develop their mental mathematics and calculation skills or to practise their mathematics skills in real-life problem-solving activities. Pupils' written work shows that they make expected progress in writing. Some pupils have excellent writing skills, but not all pupils write at length often enough to make consistently good progress. While pupils do a lot of writing in religious education, they do not do enough writing in other subjects.
- Where teaching is good and outstanding, teachers make lessons interesting. They use exciting topics and drama techniques, allow pupils the chance to talk together to plan their ideas and

give them time to concentrate on their writing. In an outstanding lesson in Year 3, the teacher enthused pupils with the Bible story of Zaccheus. Pupils found out about how Jesus affected the people he met. They were able to enact the scene and write about what happened. Their behaviour was excellent because they fully enjoyed what they were learning.

- A clear strategy, which is improving reading and writing, is to use stories to give pupils ideas for writing. For example, the reading of *The Lion and the Unicorn* in Year 6 was used to explore what life was like for evacuees in the Second World War and to write about their feelings and experiences.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy in school and this is shown by their above average attendance. They enjoy their lessons when they are excited by their learning. Occasionally, there is some restlessness when the work is less stimulating or they have to listen to their teachers for too long. They respect one another, work and play well together and are very polite to adults.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good in their lessons and any minor misbehaviour is quickly dealt with by their teachers. Indeed, much excellent behaviour was evident in lessons during the inspection and around the school.
- Inspectors' analysis of the school's records of behaviour show behaviour is consistently good. This is as a result of the successful use of clear expectations. Pupils say that the few pupils who find it hard to behave well are helped by clear rules. As a result, there have been no exclusions in recent years.
- Pupils feel very safe and are aware of different forms of bullying. They say that any form of bullying, including cyber-bullying, is rare and when it does happen they are confident that it will be dealt with quickly. They know that pupils in their friendship groups, as well as the teachers and other adults in school, including the school chaplain, will help with any problems.
- Pupils like the house system and the responsibility of being house captains and they develop social skills in the after-school clubs. They say that the school council listens to pupils' concerns and ideas. It has agreed improvements to play equipment and the setting-up of the Buddy Stop where playground 'buddies' help pupils play safely and enjoyably together.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher is strongly committed to raising pupils' attainment and improving the quality of teaching. He has a deep understanding of what makes good teaching and has helped teachers come to a clear view of how their teaching can be improved. Training provided for teachers to help them to continue improving their skills has been largely successful. Accordingly, pupils' attainment has risen and there is much good teaching in the school.
- However, while leaders are clear about what needs to be done to improve the school, they are over optimistic about its strengths. In lesson observations, they do not always check how much progress pupils are making or make the judgements about the quality of teaching clear. They do not always check that areas for development are put into practice. Accordingly, even where teaching is good there is a lack of a clear understanding of how pupils can be helped to make more rapid progress. When measuring pupils' progress, the school focuses on how many pupils have made the expected progress, rather than on ensuring that pupils make more than the expected progress.
- The school has worked diligently to improve the quality of the work of subject leaders. They skilfully plan improvements and link subject planning into whole-school plans. They are less confident in using the information about pupils' attainment to plan work which would make pupils' progress more rapid. Subject leaders are not yet fully accountable for pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Performance management of staff is clearly focussed on raising pupils' attainment and improving the quality of teaching. Staff are clear that they will only be rewarded by moving up the pay

scale when their pupils have done as well as they should have done. The school makes use of information about how much progress pupils are making in individual classes. Leaders have introduced targets for teachers and pupils to bring about faster progress. However, these targets have not been in place long enough to ensure pupils make good progress.

- Funding has been used well to improve the basic skills of those pupils eligible for the pupil premium. While this shows the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination, these pupils' achievement remains lower than other pupils in the school.
- While some aspects of the use of the pupil premium funding are clearly focused on raising attainment for those pupils who are known to be eligible, some uses are less directly linked to attainment and the school has no clear procedure to check that individual pupils are benefitting from that funding.
- At its best, the curriculum is inspiring and includes activities which excite pupils. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness and to appreciate wonderful things, such as music, art and literature that humans have created.
- The local authority has handed over responsibility for educational matters to its schools. However, it continues to support the school in commissioning external advice on school improvement, as well as continuing to offer advice on personnel, financial and legal issues.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has taken external advice and undergone training to improve its effectiveness. With the headteacher, they have taken action to improve teaching and establish a team which includes many good and outstanding teachers, whose performance is assessed and whose training needs are met. However, teaching requires improvement. While governors carry out routine assessments of the overall provision, they remain over-reliant on the headteacher's view of the school's effectiveness, including pupils' achievement. While they know how the pupil premium funding is allocated, they are less successful in monitoring its impact. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	114212
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	401415

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Milner
Headteacher	Chris Metcalfe
Date of previous school inspection	11 May 2010
Telephone number	01325 380758
Fax number	01325 380758
Email address	admin@cockerton.darlington.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

