

# Cockton Hill Infant School

McIntyre Terrace, Cockton Hill, Bishop Auckland, County Durham , DL14 6HW

## Inspection dates

11–12 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Boys and those pupils supported through the pupil premium do not make as much progress as other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always make sure that all pupils, particularly the most-able pupils, have enough to do in lessons to enable them to make good progress in all subjects.
- Teachers' expectations are not always high enough and, sometimes, pupils' work is not completed or is of poor quality.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is not always good because the work set is sometimes not at the right level for them. As a result, their attention wanders and some silly behaviour occasionally disrupts learning.
- School leaders do not use the school's systems for managing pay awards for staff effectively to set clear objectives for improvement, in specific teaching skills or in aims for pupils' achievement. Weaknesses in teaching are not always tackled swiftly enough to make sure all pupils make good progress.
- School leaders do not use well enough the systems for making regular checks on pupils' progress, to identify those pupils in danger of falling behind in their learning and then take rapid action to help them catch up.
- Governors do not have enough information on the progress of different groups of pupils to hold school leaders to account effectively for improving achievement for all pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school is now improving owing to the strong leadership of the new headteacher.
- The school cares for pupils well. Pupils and their parents are confident that adults are approachable, kind and always willing to help.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and pupils now have ample opportunities to read widely.
- Provision for children in the Reception class has improved to allow them to play and learn outdoors in all but the very worst weather.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed the teaching of six teachers and visited all classes. They saw 14 lessons or parts of lessons. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books to assess achievement currently and over time, and the quality of teachers' marking.
- The inspectors spoke to groups of pupils to get their views on the quality of teaching, what they enjoy doing in school and what they feel about safety and behaviour. They listened to pupils read. Inspectors took account of 15 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school leaders, teachers and a representative of the local authority. Additionally, inspectors met with parents informally at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents including the school's view of its work, records of accidents and bullying incidents, the school development plan and various policies.

## Inspection team

Janette Corlett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anne Humble

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized infant school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils is supported at school action because they are disabled or have special educational needs. Similarly, an above-average proportion has a statement of special educational needs or is supported at school action plus.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school operates a breakfast club on site.
- A new headteacher was appointed from September 2012 and senior and middle leaders are also new to their roles.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding and secures equally good or outstanding progress for all groups of pupils by ensuring that:
  - teachers always plan and deliver lessons which stretch all pupils, particularly those who are most able, to achieve as much as they can
  - all teachers have high expectations of the amount and quality of pupils' work so that pupils work hard in all lessons and complete the tasks they have been set.
- Improve the achievement of boys and those pupils who are supported by the pupil premium in reading, writing and mathematics until it is in line with that of other pupils by ensuring that school leaders:
  - use the information gained from assessing pupils' work and progress effectively, to identify those pupils who are in danger of falling behind in their work
  - act swiftly to make sure that teachers give these pupils the extra help that they need to catch up.
- Improve behaviour in lessons by making sure that, when pupils are expected to work without adult support, teachers give them work that is set at the right level to maintain their interest and make them too busy learning to want to misbehave.
- Improve leadership and management by using effectively the systems to manage teachers' pay and progression so that all teachers:
  - are clear about the specific areas of their teaching that they need to improve
  - have measurable, appropriately challenging, objectives in relation to improving pupils' achievement.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The progress of boys and those pupils supported by the pupil premium in reading, writing and mathematics is not as good as that of other pupils in the school. This means that, by the end of Year 2, their attainment is between four to six months behind that of other pupils and this is why achievement requires improvement.
- Recent actions to improve this are beginning to narrow these gaps in performance, particularly in reading. In writing and mathematics the gaps are not closing rapidly enough because school leaders are not using the available resources, such as the pupil premium funding, as effectively as they should to improve attainment in these subjects.
- Overall standards over time are above average at the end of Year 2 but too few of the most-able pupils reach the highest possible standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils reaching the highest level in writing was well-above average in the end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments in 2013. However, inspection evidence shows that very few pupils in the current Year 2 class are achieving beyond the standards typically expected of their age in any subject.
- Children's starting points in the Reception class are generally below those typical for their age, particularly in relation to language and communication. Most children make typical progress and the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards at the end of the year is below that found nationally.
- Pupils' progress in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics varies because the quality of teaching is not yet strong enough in all classes.
- While the school fosters good relations amongst all groups of pupils and makes sure there is no discrimination, there remain some inequalities in opportunities for learning. For example, the challenge in lessons for the most-able pupils is not yet consistent enough across years and subjects to ensure that these pupils always make good enough progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress when they receive support individually or in small groups from teachers and skilled support staff. Their progress is less rapid when working on their own because the tasks are either too difficult for them or not purposeful enough to move them on in their learning.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because teachers' expectations as to the amount and quality of pupils' written work are not consistently high enough. Too much work in books is of poor quality, is incomplete, or there is not enough of it completed in the time allowed.
- Teachers and support staff frequently work with small groups of pupils because these pupils need a little extra help or a more challenging activity to move them on in their learning. Sometimes, when this happens, other pupils in the class either do not have enough sufficiently challenging work to do, or cannot complete the work without some adult help. This results in time wasted and these pupils not making enough progress.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work shows improvement. However, not all teachers are following the school's policy on marking and some work is not marked. This means that pupils do not always have enough guidance on how to improve their work.
- Teachers do not always show pupils what to do. This reduces the opportunities for pupils to understand what the teacher expects them to do and how they will know that they have been successful. For example, in one lesson with a higher ability group about using adjectives to make writing more interesting, pupils were not given any examples of sentences using good adjectives as a starting point and so the adjectives they used in their own work were not of a high enough quality to reflect their ability.
- The teaching of phonics – the sounds that letters make - has improved and this is helping pupils

to become more competent readers. Additionally, the school's recent work on how to best look after the environment has stimulated pupils to read more widely across a range of subjects. This further supports improved progress in reading, particularly that of boys.

- Teachers use technology effectively to support pupils well in learning how to use computers and other equipment safely. For example, in one lesson when pupils from all year groups joined together to learn about Internet safety, they enjoyed using digital cameras, and did so very competently, to record the morning's events.
- Since the last inspection, teachers have provided more opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in reading, writing and mathematics across a range of subject areas. They are particularly successful in using drama activities to stimulate pupils' interest in reading and writing in lessons and after school. For example, pupils in the drama club are very proud of the stories they made up and acted out that they then wrote down and made into books with beautiful illustrations.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because not all pupils are attentive in lessons and, occasionally, they cause minor disruption to the learning of other pupils by shouting out in class or being a little bit silly. In a few lessons, teachers do not put a stop to this because they are working with other pupils and do not always take the time to ensure that all pupils are working hard.
- School leaders have worked well with outside agencies to improve the way in which teachers manage pupils' behaviour in lessons and this is beginning to have an impact and reduce incidents of poor behaviour.
- Attendance is below average, but is improving. The school works hard to make sure families understand that it is very important for their children to attend school unless they are ill, so that they do not miss out on any learning. Good attendance is celebrated in assemblies so that pupils are motivated to come to school regularly and on time.
- Partnerships with parents are strong and parents say they feel welcome in school and know that their concerns are listened to. Many families appreciate the daily breakfast club that supports working parents and makes sure that children have a healthy and safe start to the school day and are ready to learn.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Most pupils treat one another with respect and behave sensibly at playtimes and around the building in between lessons. They say that bullying of any kind is very rare, although occasionally they fall out with one another, just like any other youngsters of this age range. Parents say that they know their children are safe in school and that they are confident that the adults in school are kind and always willing to help.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe without being unduly fearful. A recent Internet Safety Day helped them learn to use the vast resources of the Internet while understanding that some sites are harmful. They also learned about cyber-bullying and how to protect themselves from this.
- Pupils look after their school well and they are willing helpers in tidying up routines. The Eco-Warriors take their duties very seriously by regularly checking that electricity is not wasted through leaving on lights or computers unnecessarily. A Civic Pride assembly that took place during the inspection helped pupils to understand how to be responsible dog-owners as well as showing respect for animals.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- School leaders' efforts to improve teaching quality have not yet shifted the significant proportion of lessons where teaching is not good. The school's records of teaching over time are not sufficiently detailed to demonstrate whether or not the quality of teaching has improved, and written notes from lesson observations by senior staff do not clearly indicate areas for improvement linked to appropriate opportunities for professional development. This means that

the school's own evaluation of the quality of teaching is not accurate and teaching is not improving as rapidly as it should.

- Parents feel that the school is led and managed well. Inspectors found that the new headteacher has a strong sense of the direction in which the school needs to travel. Since taking up her post, she has improved the learning environment for children in the Reception class and introduced more rigorous systems for checking on pupils' progress and holding individual class teachers to account for pupils' achievement.
- This, together with the recent appointment of an enthusiastic new leadership team, means that the school has the capacity to improve further. These new senior and middle leaders are relatively new to their roles, however, and, while they share the headteacher's ambition for rapid improvement, they have not yet had time to have a measurable impact on the school's performance.
- The improved arrangements the performance management of teachers are not always used effectively to make sure that any upwards movement on pay scales is linked to improved teaching and results for pupils. The objectives set for improvement are too general and not sufficiently related either to improving specific aspects of teaching or to measurable outcomes in terms of pupils' progress. For example, requiring a teacher to ensure that 80% of pupils reach age-related expectations at the end of a key stage gives no incentive to ensure that the most-able pupils achieve more than this and fulfil their potential.
- Good partnership working with local schools has provided opportunities for teachers to improve the quality of their work. For example, teachers meet with colleagues from other schools to check that their assessments of pupils' work are accurate and in line with current national criteria.
- The local authority has provided a range of support to the school. Recently this has included effective support to improve the provision for children in the Reception class and for implementing the new systems to check up on the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Pupils' participation in physical activities and sports is increasing as the school has used the primary school sport funding to train staff and supplement the resources available for activities such as gymnastics and dance during and after school. This is supporting pupils in adopting healthier lifestyles.
- Pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through a range of activities throughout the wide and varied curriculum. The school motto, 'If you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours', captures the way the school actively fosters kindness and tolerance for one another. As a result, pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and there are no recorded racist incidents.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors do not yet have enough information about pupils' progress, particularly about that of those supported through the pupil premium. They know that pupil premium funding has been used to support a number of projects to enrich pupils' experience in school. However, they do not know whether or not this has been effective in narrowing the gaps in the achievement of those pupils who are eligible for free school meals in comparison to that of other pupils. This limits their ability to hold school leaders to account.
  - Governors are aware of the school's arrangements for staff pay and progression, including that of the headteacher, but do not yet use this information to ensure that movement up pay scales is closely linked with improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
  - Governors ensure that safeguarding in the school meets requirements and that the school's financial arrangements are secure.
  - Governors are actively involved in the life of the school. They frequently visit and attend school special assemblies and events. Many governors are new to their roles and are keen to undertake further training and development sessions to support them in their work.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114111
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	431326

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	163
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Joan Imrie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Graham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 January 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 604627
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