

Cockton Hill Junior School

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

Inspection dates

26–27 April 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Cockton Hill Junior School is a welcoming and happy place. It has improved since the last inspection.
- The headteacher provides the school with strong and effective leadership. She is ably assisted by leaders at all levels who ensure that the quality of education continues to improve.
- Surveys conducted by the school indicate strongly that most parents are happy about the quality of education that it provides.
- Pupils are eager to learn and usually conduct themselves well in class and when moving around the school. They are polite, helpful and keen to discuss their work.
- Good teaching now ensures that all groups of pupils have the opportunity to make good progress with their learning, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders monitor pupils' progress accurately, and quickly provide effective extra support for those who fall behind.
- There is still scope to improve teaching further by ensuring that work in a range of subjects, such as religious studies, geography and science, is assessed with the same rigour as it is in English and mathematics.
- There is also still further scope to ensure that higher-ability pupils are challenged in these subjects as well as they are in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers ensure that pupils fully master basic skills in mathematics, but they do not always show them how these relate to the world outside the classroom.
- Teachers deploy their skilled classroom assistants well to ensure that all groups of pupils have plenty of attention and assistance.
- There are a few occasions when teachers organise pupils into working groups which are too large. These large groups limit pupils' opportunities to participate fully in activities.
- Attendance is improving and persistent absence reducing quickly because the school is increasingly effective in ensuring that pupils attend regularly.
- Good welfare arrangements mean that pupils' health and safety have a high profile. Where pupils need extra support to overcome barriers to learning, the school provides it.
- Governors play an important role in supporting leaders at all levels but at the same time continuing to probe and challenge when they think that more can be done.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the consistently good quality of teaching and pupils' already good achievement by:
 - ensuring that, in subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers consistently challenge the most able pupils
 - maximising pupils' participation when working in groups
 - showing pupils how their basic skills in mathematics relate to the world outside the classroom.
- Strengthen leadership and management by leaders checking pupils' work more regularly in subjects such as science, geography and religious studies, to ensure that it is being assessed as well as their written work in English.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders work effectively as a team to ensure that the quality of provision for pupils continues to improve. As a consequence, pupils' achievement has risen substantially since the previous inspection.
- A key feature in the school's improvement has been the way in which the headteacher and governors have drawn on the advice provided by the local authority and particularly Fishburn Primary School. These bodies have made valuable suggestions about how much progress pupils should make and how teaching can be improved.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and the development plan draws on any perceived weaknesses, which become areas for improvement with appropriate timescales for expected impact. The local authority has played its part in helping the school to monitor the improvements and verify that they have in fact materialised.
- Leaders at all levels play their part in ensuring that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. When difficulties arise, a collegiate approach soon eliminates them.
- Good staff morale means teachers and their assistants are confident that the school is doing better than previously. They have worked effectively together since the previous inspection to eliminate weaknesses in classroom practice identified at that time. A further development now lies in the checking of pupils' work in all subjects to ensure that it is assessed as well as their work in English and mathematics.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching well and scrutinise pupils' written work carefully. Consequently, teaching and learning have improved, particularly in English and mathematics. However, there is still scope to improve on the consistently good teaching to enhance its quality even further.
- An accurate tracking system monitors the progress that all pupils are making. When individual pupils do not make expected progress, the school finds a way of providing extra help to enable them to catch up. This is particularly evident in the way the school provides for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, for example, with the provision of skilled extra help in reading or handwriting.
- The curriculum puts considerable emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy and numerical skills but not to the exclusion of everything else. Pupils in all year groups receive a well-rounded education and have the opportunity to gain considerable knowledge and understanding in all of the national curriculum subjects. The development of computing skills is particularly strong.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities and visits effectively supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school effectively promotes pupils' understanding of British values, such as the rule of law, democracy and tolerance. Studies in religious education provide pupils with a developing understanding of the different beliefs to be found in Britain and further afield.
- The school uses its primary school sport and physical education (PE) funding well to provide pupils with many opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities. As a result, around two thirds of pupils either participate in after-school sporting activities,

such as football, rugby and cricket, or represent the school in teams. The funding provides transport for pupils to participate in local competitions. It also provided equipment and transport for the boccia team, which won a local championship.

- Equality of opportunities has a very high profile. In this respect, the school spends wisely its pupil premium and special educational needs funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the same opportunity for success in school as other pupils and that pupils who have special needs and/or disabilities have all of the support they require.
- Most parents appreciate the way that the school has improved and now provides for their children. Typical of many positive messages received during the inspection was, 'My child is doing really well at the school and her teacher is brilliant.'

Governance of the school

- Governance has continued to be effective, helpful and challenging in the period since the previous inspection.
- Governors visit the school regularly and have an accurate picture of what it does well, how pupils are progressing and what still needs to be improved.
- The governing body plays its part in ensuring that performance management arrangements are robust and follow the requirements of the school's policies and procedures.
- Governors keep a careful watch on finances and ensure that best value for money is consistently achieved.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective because there are clear systems in place which members of staff follow consistently.
- The site is very secure and there is always plenty of adult supervision throughout the school day. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that there is always an adult on hand if needed.
- Effective checking on the identities of all adults who work with or have access to children is firmly embedded into the daily life of the school. Records relating to the full checking of everyone working in the school meet all requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Weaknesses identified at that time have been largely eliminated. The quality of teaching is now consistently at least good.
- Teachers and classroom assistants now fully understand how quickly pupils need to progress to reach expected levels of attainment or standards of work at greater depth, and plan accordingly.
- Typically, teachers and their assistants work productively together and manage their

classes well. They plan activities to ensure that pupils move forward in their learning and maximise the use of lesson time. Teachers' questioning of pupils to ensure that they are following and understand the next steps is now good.

- Teachers sometimes divide their classes up into groups of pupils to give them the opportunity to discuss topics and work collaboratively. However, the groups are sometimes too large to enable all pupils to participate fully. Consequently, several pupils make good contributions to discussion, while others are little more than observers.
- The teaching for the most able pupils is much better than previously, especially in reading, writing and mathematics, where more pupils are working at greater depth than the year before. Nevertheless, there is still scope to challenge these pupils further in other subjects.
- Teachers have successfully challenged pupils to produce much higher standards of written work than they did at the time of the previous inspection. In English, pupils now write more quickly and at greater length than previously. Work is now presented well and easy to follow.
- Pupils' work in mathematics is also logical, presented well and easy to follow. Teachers insist that pupils take a pride in their work and show the steps they have taken to arrive at answers. Good teaching of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of whole numbers, decimals and fractions enables pupils to tackle more challenging written problems with confidence. However, there is still considerable scope for teachers to show pupils how their study of mathematics links inextricably to the world outside the classroom.
- Planning for subjects other than English and mathematics ensures that pupils begin to develop a wide knowledge base and understanding of many topics in subjects such as science, geography and religious studies. Lessons in these subjects are interesting but pupils would benefit from more opportunities to put thoughts into their own words rather than copying details from text.
- Teachers apply the school's marking policy well in English and mathematics, but less so in other subjects, where common errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar often go unchallenged.
- A strong feature of all lessons is the way in which teachers manage their classes. They have high expectations of good conduct and pupils themselves confirm that interruptions are quite infrequent. This means that pupils have every opportunity to learn without distraction.
- Good planning for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities means they make just as good progress as other pupils, but often from lower starting points. The tracking of these pupils quickly identifies those who are progressing too slowly and triggers extra specialist help for them to overcome barriers to learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils benefit from a large amount of personal support and guidance. Each child is regarded as an individual and leaders do their best to ensure that all their needs are met. In this respect, the school spends its pupil premium and special educational needs funding to good effect to support the most vulnerable of its pupils.
- A strong programme of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is firmly rooted in all the school's work. Through assemblies, lessons and extra-curricular activities, pupils have a constant message of right and wrong, and how to mature and develop personal skills and attributes.
- Pupils have the opportunity to take responsibility in many ways, for example through the school council, which debates how leaders can improve play areas and how the school can help in the community. Pupils in all year groups play their part in raising funds for others who are less fortunate than themselves by supporting charities, such as Children in Need, The Shoe Box Appeal and Royal British Legion.
- Pupils say they enjoy the extra-curricular activities the school provides. Through these they develop new skills, have the opportunity to compete against others, make new friends and gain in confidence.
- By the time they leave Year 6, pupils are confident about transferring to secondary school and look forward to it. They say they have been prepared well through secondary school visits and have a very good idea of what to expect. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is sufficient for them to thrive on transfer to Year 7.
- Pupils and their parents do really appreciate the amount of help and support the school provides. Pupils say there is always an adult on hand to turn to for advice when it is needed.
- Welfare arrangements for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well organised and effective. Whether needs relate to motor skills affecting handwriting, autism, weak development of reading or difficulties with number, the school provides effective extra help, often drawing on the expertise of external specialists.
- Good levels of supervision at all times and an enclosed site mean that pupils feel safe. Pupils in all year groups say bullying is rare and when it does occur, members of staff deal with it promptly and effectively. The school's own records of such incidents confirm this view.
- Pupils confirm the school takes very effective steps to prepare them to cope with potential threats to their welfare. For example, they have sound advice on how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and why it is unwise to talk to strangers, especially if they are offered sweets or access to furry animals.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and helpful. They welcome visitors to their school and are keen to discuss their work. Pupils in the 'nurture group' are particularly keen to welcome visitors to take part in their activities.
- Behaviour is good when pupils are in class, moving around the school, playing outside

or having lunch. Pupils consider and have due regard for the safety of others.

- Pupils are keen to learn and respond well to the encouragement teachers and their assistants provide. They say they like their teachers and do their best to come up to their high expectations.
- The good presentation of pupils' work shows that they take a pride in it. They also take a pride in their appearance and their school. The pupils' questionnaire shows the vast majority are happy at school and would recommend it to others.
- The school has recently excluded a few pupils for unacceptable behaviour. The number is quite small in relation to the number of pupils on the school roll, yet it indicates clearly that the school will do all it can to eliminate poor conduct.
- Attendance is improving and persistent absence falling quickly in response to the very considerable efforts that staff make to follow up pupils who are not at school. The school does all it can to ensure that pupils are not missing their education and, therefore, being disadvantaged. Current attendance figures are just short of the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Attainment has improved substantially since the previous inspection, in response to better teaching and leaders' much greater expectations of the amount of progress pupils should make. Progress made in all year groups is now good.
- Older pupils have made up for any previous underachievement from the time when the school required improvement. This is particularly evident in Year 6, where more pupils are reaching expected levels and greater depth in their studies compared with the year before.
- The difference in performance between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school and nationally from the same starting points is diminishing in all year groups in response to the very effective programme of support, which uses the pupil premium funding well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also progressing more quickly than in the last two years because leaders are quick to use the special educational needs funding to support them with expert tuition and assistance. By Year 6, most of the school's least-able pupils are reading at around expected levels for their age.
- In the Year 6 national tests in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average in writing and mathematics and around the average in reading. Results in the spelling, punctuation and grammar tests were also average. These results indicated strongly that pupils had made up for any previously lost ground and that their progress between Years 3 and 6 was good overall.
- In the 2016 Year 6 national tests, there was a considerable difference between the progress and attainment of the school's disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally, who had similar starting points. The current Year 6 disadvantaged pupils are reaching higher standards than the previous year group and there is now little difference between the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others.

- Current Year 6 pupils read fluently and write well. They write at length, to a good standard, for a variety of audiences. In mathematics, their knowledge of multiplication tables is good and basic number skills are strong for most pupils. Pupils are generally confident in the application of decimals, fractions and percentages to more complicated problems.
- Accurate assessments and tracking show it is not only in Year 6 that pupils' progress is accelerating. Pupils in all year groups make generally good progress in all the subjects they study. The most able pupils are doing better than in the recent past because they are being pushed harder than previously, particularly in English and mathematics, so a greater proportion are now working at greater depth in these subjects.
- Pupils' work in all year groups is extensive and presented well. Pupils make good progress in subjects such as geography and religious studies, where they consider a very wide range of topics. They also make good progress in science and have plenty of opportunity to conduct experiments, having first made predictions about the results they are likely to see. They learn how to write up these experiments and incorporate tables and charts. Progress in computing is also good. Pupils can explain what they have learnt in considerable detail, particularly when they use 'PowerPoint' packages.
- The highest ability pupils' achievement in subjects outside English and mathematics is sometimes limited because teachers often only expect them to produce the same work as pupils of lower ability.

School details

Unique reference number	114110
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10031988

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Cresswell
Headteacher	Emily Stevens
Telephone number	01388 602 058
Website	www.cocktonhill-jun.durham.sch.uk/
Email address	c.h.j@durhamlearning.net
Date of previous inspection	15–16 April 2015

Information about this school

- Cockton Hill Junior School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is well above average.
- There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Following the previous inspection, the school has received assistance from Durham local authority and Fishburn Primary School. This assistance is now much reduced.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, six jointly with senior leaders. They observed pupils in all year groups being taught at least twice and looked at a wide range of written work in English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- They held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, governors, groups of pupils and a representative from Durham local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school's review of its performance, development planning, records of pupils' progress, attendance records, incident logs and safeguarding procedures.
- The lead inspector listened to several pupils from Year 6 individually reading aloud.
- Inspectors also took account of 15 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, 25 responses to the staff questionnaire, 39 responses to the pupils' questionnaire and 15 free-text messages from parents.

Inspection team

John Paddick, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie McGrane

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