

INSPECTION REPORT

**COCKERTON CE (Controlled) PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Darlington

LEA area: Darlington

Unique reference number: 114212

Headteacher: Mr R Fenton

Reporting inspector: Mr N B Jones
20973

Dates of inspection: 28 - 30 January 2002

Inspection number: 194270

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Newton Lane Cockerton Darlington
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Neville Newmarch
Date of previous inspection:	3 February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cockerton is a smaller than average primary school catering for pupils aged four to eleven. There are 191 pupils (83 boys and 108 girls) on roll. This oversubscribed school is situated in the village of Cockerton, which is a suburb to the north-west of Darlington town centre. Just over eight per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. All of the pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds and one is learning English as an additional language. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. Thirty-one pupils are on the register of special educational needs (below average nationally) including one pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Cockerton is an effective school that provides very good value for money. The headteacher's strong and effective leadership, combined with the shared commitment of staff, governors and parents to raise standards, results in a very positive learning environment. These high expectations and good teaching enable the children to achieve well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school.

What the school does well

- By the time the pupils leave the school, their attainment is well above average in English, mathematics and science.
- The teaching is good overall and is very good in Key Stage 2.
- The headteacher, assisted by supportive governors and a dedicated staff, provides very effective leadership.
- There is a very positive ethos, based on high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour.
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The partnership with parents is a strength of the school.

What could be improved

- The pupils do not do as well as they could in mathematics in Key Stage 1.
- Aspects of the provision in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) could be improved.
- The time allocated to teaching physical education in Key Stage 2 is not always used effectively.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the last inspection in February 1997, Cockerton provided a satisfactory education with the pupils attaining standards that were in line with the national average. Since then, the school has made considerable improvement. A new headteacher was appointed nearly three years ago and he set about raising standards in English, mathematics and science. The school's strategies for improvement have been so successful that by the time the pupils leave the school they are now achieving standards that are well above average in these three subjects. The school has fully addressed the issues

identified in the last inspection report and the quality of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, has improved significantly.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	A*	B	B
Mathematics	B	A	A*	A*
Science	A	A	A*	A*

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that for the past two years the results of the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the age of eleven have been generally well above average. Where A* is shown, the school's results are very high and in the top 5% nationally. There has been considerable improvement in all three subjects since the last inspection. Inspection evidence confirms that by the age of eleven the pupils' attainment is well above average in English, mathematics and science. Overall, the pupils make good progress through the school, although the rate of progress is greater in Key Stage 2 where there is usually more pace and challenge in the lessons. This is particularly so in mathematics. Standards in the other subjects observed during the inspection were generally satisfactory. The new computer suite is being used effectively and is leading to an improvement in standards in information and communication technology. However, due to the excessive length of some of the physical education lessons in Key Stage 2, standards in this subject are not as good as they should be.

By gaining 100% success at the expected level (Level 4) in English and mathematics in the 2001 national tests the school exceeded its own targets by over 10%. The school has set more ambitious targets for 2002 and inspection evidence indicates that they are likely to be achieved.

The results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 over the last three years have varied considerably from year-to-year because of the overall ability levels of the different year groups. However, averaging out these results for the three year period indicates that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Evidence from the inspection confirms these standards. The pace, challenge and high expectations observed in the teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 2 were not evident in Key Stage 1. This results in the pupils in Key Stage 1 making significantly less progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils are keen to learn and have very positive attitudes towards their work. They enjoy coming to school and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils behave well and act sensibly. They know what is expected of them and are polite and caring towards others. They get on extremely well together.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships throughout the school are of a very high standard.
Attendance	Just below average.

Good concentration by the pupils and a productive work rate are a regular feature of most lessons. Year 6 pupils partner Reception pupils in their first few weeks in the school to help them settle in and the pupils also sit at mixed-age tables at lunchtimes. This contributes significantly to the family ethos of the school and assists the pupils to understand each other and to offer help if needed.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Overall, the quality of teaching is good and in Key Stage 2 it is very good. In 61 per cent of the lessons seen during the inspection the teaching was good or better, including 22 per cent that was excellent or very good. No teaching was less than satisfactory. The school is particularly strong at teaching literacy and numeracy skills. In the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) the basic skills are well taught and the children have a very good introduction to the literacy and numeracy lessons. They make good progress in reading, writing and number.

The good teaching, particularly in English, mathematics and science, is a strength of the school and enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress in these subjects. The teaching of English and science is of a good standard throughout the school. However, in mathematics the teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2 (with excellent teaching in Year 6) leading to the pupils making much greater progress in the juniors. In Key Stage 2, the lessons include a brisk quick-fire mental arithmetic session, followed by group work at a challenging level for all pupils and concluding with a class session to sort out any problems and consolidate and assess the progress made. This was not the case in Key Stage 1, where the teaching in a Year 2 lesson lacked the same kind of stimulation or structure.

The school makes good provision for pupils of differing abilities. This varies from support for pupils who are making insufficient progress to sessions for those of very high ability who are working to achieve Level 6 in mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced with a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Year 6 pupils have French lessons. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision throughout the school with a caring and supportive approach. Pupils are well supported and make good progress. Procedures for the identification and assessment of pupils' needs are good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Appropriate support is offered and very good progress is made very quickly.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. A sense of community and a Christian ethos are promoted and developed very well through assemblies, lessons and in partnership with parents and the church.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good support, guidance and welfare for its pupils. Assessment procedures throughout both key stages are used effectively to plot the pupils' progress and set targets.

Although planning indicates that there is generally good coverage of the expected areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year), the provision could be improved. There are no regular opportunities for the children to develop their climbing or balancing skills using large apparatus, to experiment with wheeled equipment or to experience outdoor play. The book area is unattractive and offers little encouragement for young children to develop an enthusiasm for books. The children are not given regular opportunities to experiment with painting or musical instruments during free choice activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The school's quest to raise standards is very effectively led by the headteacher. The school improvement plan is comprehensive and has a strong focus on raising standards. The curriculum co-ordinators play an important role in the planning for improvement by identifying priorities for their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body supports the school effectively. A useful review of its practices has identified a number of key areas for

	improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Effective systems are in place to monitor pupils' progress through the school and to enable challenging targets to be set for the pupils (and teachers) on a year-by-year basis.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes effective use of time, staff, accommodation and learning resources.

The governors, through the finance committee, effectively manage the budget and ensure value for money when purchasing resources. The recommendations of the very recent auditor's report are being implemented. Resources for information and communication technology are very good but there is no suitable outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage. Since the last inspection two new classrooms have been built to accommodate growing numbers. The window frames in the old part of the school are in very poor condition.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children make good progress and standards of work are good. • The teaching is good. • Pupils are expected to work hard. • The children like school, behave well and have a very positive attitude towards their work. • The school is well led and managed. • The school has a family feel and promotes Christian values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children do not do enough art, music or physical education. • Parents would like more information about some aspects of school life. • More confidentiality is needed at parents' consultation evenings.

Inspectors' judgements fully support the parents' positive views. Regarding the areas that parents would like to see improved:

- The amount of time allowed for art, music and physical education (PE) is about average compared with similar schools. However, the time given for PE could be more effectively used in Key Stage 2.
- Parents are normally very well informed, although the school recognises that it would be useful to provide more information about extra-curricular activities.
- The school accepts the concern regarding confidentiality at consultation evenings and will endeavour to improve the situation.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

By the time the pupils leave the school, their attainment is well above average in English, mathematics and science.

1. At the time of the last inspection in February 1997, standards in English, mathematics and science were judged to be average. Since then there has been a considerable improvement and the attainment of the pupils by the age of eleven is now well above average in all three subjects.
2. The teaching of English is a strength throughout the school. A strong emphasis is placed on reading and by the age of eleven pupils achieve well above average standards. They have a very good understanding of what they read and the ideas presented in key texts. They use interesting words and phrases very well to illustrate the point they are making when responding to the teacher's questions about a shared text. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 read confidently and enjoy stories. Their ability to use contents and index pages is well developed. The pupils' progress is good and owes much to the school's wide range of interesting books, to regular reading at home and in school, and to the good quality of the teaching.
3. Throughout the school, writing skills are taught well and as a result pupils make very good progress. They are given opportunities to write in many different styles and for a variety of purposes. The range of writing is very effectively extended through different subjects, for example in writing clear scientific reports and when writing prayers or reports in religious education. Clear attention is paid to teaching the structure of writing and improving spelling skills. In Key Stage 1, most pupils are able to write fluently. They can write from different points of view and many are beginning to develop an argument accurately. They enjoy planning their work, discussing together how characters can develop and reading their writing of character profiles to each other. By the end of Key Stage 2 many of the pupils can summarise an argument and write accurately in different forms. They organise their writing into paragraphs and use punctuation correctly. The pupils use a wide and interesting range of vocabulary to enliven their work.
4. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are very well developed. They are confident and skilled in providing explanations to challenging questions. They offer interesting opinions, discuss ideas in groups and justify their own views in a mature way. The pupils in Key Stage 1 work well with discussion partners and are keen to share answers and report back to the class after investigating the sounds made by different musical instruments. By the age of eleven most pupils are fluent speakers and offer their ideas freely. When teachers intervene with probing questions, the quality of the pupils' responses is very high.
5. By the age of eleven, the pupils' attainment in mathematics is well above average. The teachers develop mathematical skills not only in mathematics lessons, but also across the curriculum, for example, through data handling and graph work in science and geography. The progress made by the pupils is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, very good in Key Stage 2 and outstanding in Year 6. By the time they leave the school they are achieving very high standards in all aspects of mathematics. The excellent teaching in Year 6 provides constant challenge to the pupils and ensures that the work is of a very high standard. Half of the class are working confidently at Level 5 (well above the expected level) and around half of these are working towards achieving Level 6 (exceptionally high). Many of the pupils are able to convert fractions to decimals, find the percentages of various quantities and interpret co-ordinates in all quadrants. Their very good

application of written calculations across a wide range of problems is matched by the ability to calculate mentally at an equally high level.

- Standards in science are above average by the age of seven and well above average by the time the pupils leave the school. A feature of science is the use of systematic investigations to test out predictions and hypotheses. The pupils are alert and interested in the hands-on investigations that they carry out and make good progress throughout the school. In Year 2, the pupils have a good understanding of the range of work that they have covered on living things. In one lesson they were knowledgeable about what makes human beings different from other mammals and collected data efficiently when investigating the differences and similarities between human beings. By the age of eleven the pupils have a good understanding of processes such as evaporation and condensation, have good knowledge of the properties of metals, and know how to recover salt dissolved in water. In a Year 6 lesson the pupils systematically investigated how easily different substances would dissolve in water, being well aware of what constitutes a fair test.

The teaching is good overall and is very good in Key Stage 2.

- Overall, the teaching in the school is good, and in Key Stage 2 it is very good. This strength of the school enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress overall with very good progress being made in Key Stage 2. Teaching is particularly strong in English, mathematics and science.
- Relationships between pupils and adults who work in the school are very good. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour, and the pupils respond by behaving well and working very hard. In most of the lessons a good working atmosphere is created and the teachers know their pupils well. A strategy used effectively by many of the teachers is the setting of time-targets for groups and individual pupils. This method was used successfully in science in Year 2 where the teacher broke the lesson down into a succession of time-targeted sections. This not only maintained the pupils' interest but also ensured a very good pace to the lesson.
- Lessons are well planned, classes well-managed and resources well-prepared to ensure that lessons run smoothly. This is particularly evident when teachers are using the new computer suite. The activities are well organised, with programs and equipment prepared beforehand, allowing the pupils to make best use of time. The teacher demonstrates techniques and skills to the whole class before providing immediate and individual opportunities for pupils to use the computers to practise, refine and use what they had seen. The availability of the computer suite is clearly benefiting the pupils by providing them with regular opportunities to learn new skills. For example, in one lesson Year 6 pupils very quickly and efficiently learnt how to use an art package to draw images of faces and facial expressions.
- In the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) the good teaching enables the children to make good progress, particularly in language and literacy, and mathematical development. The teacher and nursery nurse work hard to provide a range of activities to cover each of the areas of learning. The basic skills are well taught and the children have a very good introduction to the literacy and numeracy lessons. In one such numeracy lesson, the enthusiastic, encouraging approach of the teacher, combined with a good variety of activities, enabled the children to learn at a good pace over an extended period of time. The children made good progress in learning to count to 10 and in some cases well beyond 10. The teacher, nursery nurse and two parents provided very good support to the children in the follow-up activities. Effective use of questioning was used to

promote the pupils' thinking and communication skills as well as their mathematical understanding.

11. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the skills of literacy are well taught. Lessons are carefully planned and show clearly what pupils are to learn. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils who always have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Teachers in Key Stage 1 have very good knowledge of the best methods to teach letter sounds and the way in which these are built to form words. This helps the pupils to make good early progress in their reading skills. Teachers use a good range of techniques to engage the pupils' interest. They have high expectations that very young pupils will think deeply about what they have read and carefully draw out their opinions on elements such as plot and character. For example, Year 1 pupils were able to offer thoughtful and interesting views on the motives and flaws in character that allowed a lazy employer to abuse the kind intentions of 'Farmer Duck.'
12. Throughout the school there is a clear emphasis on developing and using a wide vocabulary and on writing convincingly and accurately. In Key Stage 2, the teachers specifically teach the skills needed to write for a variety of audiences and purposes. They carefully teach the composition of creative and personal writing. For example, in a Year 3 writing lesson in which the pupils were writing character profiles, they were given a variety of examples from well-known texts to analyse for purpose, style and vocabulary. The pupils were then encouraged to write their own interesting and amusing descriptions of characters from well-known books.
13. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is good but there are variations between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but the pace and challenge of lessons could be more demanding. In Key stage 2, the teaching is very good overall with excellent teaching in Year 6. The pupils make very good progress in Key Stage 2 with outstanding progress being made in Year 6. Teaching in Key Stage 2, and in particular in Year 6, is characterised by the brisk pace and constant challenge in lessons. In a quick-fire mental arithmetic session in Year 6, all of the pupils were required to respond rapidly to questions on decimals and negative numbers. The high tempo of the lesson was continued with work set at a challenging level for all of the pupils on converting fractions to decimals (and visa-versa). This stimulating work enabled the pupils to make rapid progress.
14. The assessment procedures in both key stages are good. Ongoing and accurate assessments of the pupils' work are made. The teachers keep very detailed records of the pupils' academic achievements and the school has introduced a very good system of setting individual targets for pupils. This comprehensive system of assessment and target setting allows work to be planned for children of differing ability. Programmes are put into place for both those pupils who are under achieving and for target groups of pupils with other needs. This includes the most able pupils. The progress of all of the targeted pupils is very carefully evaluated by the headteacher.
15. The procedures for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs are thorough. The pupils' individual work plans are regularly updated and fully evaluated.
16. The teachers' marking in books is thorough, always positive and offers suitable pointers to help the pupils to improve. Well-planned homework, particularly for English and mathematics, makes a significant contribution to the pupils' progress. The pupils in Year 6 who are working at Level 6 in mathematics and science are provided with booster classes to enable them to extend their studies well beyond the level expected of primary school pupils.

The headteacher, assisted by supportive governors and a dedicated staff, provides very effective leadership.

17. The school's quest to raise standards is very effectively led by the headteacher. The report from the last inspection indicated that the school's planning did not have a clear enough focus on raising standards. The present headteacher (who was appointed after the last inspection) was instrumental in the school rectifying this weakness by clearly identifying how standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science, were to be raised. The strategies employed have been so successful that standards in these subjects have improved considerably and they are now well above average for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. The strength of leadership is recognised by the parents, with 97% of those who responded to the questionnaire indicating that the school is well led and managed.
18. The school effectively uses information from the national and other tests to identify strengths and weaknesses and to track the pupils' progress through the school. This information is used to set challenging targets for the pupils (and the teachers) on a year-by-year basis. Where expectations of individual pupils are not realised, a programme of support and encouragement is put in place. The headteacher is directly involved in this target setting and in maintaining a constant oversight of each pupil's progress, particularly of those who are not reaching expectations. In order to help the pupils achieve their full potential, appropriate support is given to groups of differing abilities. This varies from support for pupils who are making insufficient progress to sessions for those of very high ability who are working to achieve Level 6 in mathematics and science. As well as evaluating the progress of individual pupils, the school has also been effective in monitoring and improving its performance as a whole. In this context, the school identified writing across the curriculum as a particular weakness and put in place strategies for improvement. Consequently, this area for development is already showing significant signs of improvement.
19. The headteacher monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and learning through regular lesson observations of each teacher. The information gathered from these observations is used to provide individual teachers with pointers for improvement and to inform the professional development of staff. The school's improvement plan is comprehensive and has a clear focus on raising standards. The curriculum co-ordinators play an important role in the formulation of this planning by providing a development plan for their subjects on an annual basis. This involves an evaluation of the present position and an identification of priorities (in terms of resources, planning and staff training).
20. The governing body works hard and supports the school effectively. It is well led by the chairperson who visits the school at least once a week and shows a great commitment to the whole school community. The literacy and numeracy governors make termly observations of classroom practice in order to assist the Governing Body in assessing standards. With support from the Local Education Authority, the Governing Body has carried out a thorough review of its practices and has identified key areas for improvement. This has been useful in pinpointing areas for development such as, matching governor training to the needs of the school and enhancing the governors' role in policy making and review. The governors, through the finance committee, effectively manage the budget.
21. The headteacher leads a hard working and dedicated staff well. High expectations and a constant striving to maintain and improve the school's standards are shared goals. Particular emphasis is also placed on the children being part of a family group. This was recognised by the parents in their meeting with the inspectors. The caring, sharing and belonging aspect of school life is evident in the way that the pupils interact with each other and with adults.

There is a very positive ethos, based on high expectations of work and behaviour

22. There is a clear and strong commitment in the school to ensuring all pupils do their best, both academically and personally. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' work and behaviour. The school has a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which there is a clear emphasis on pupils' wellbeing. The ethos of the school is very much focused on everyone working together for the benefit of the pupils and this helps provide a very clear sense of direction and purpose. All staff are dedicated and work very closely as a team. The teachers know the pupils very well and are warm and encouraging to them.
23. The pupils' enthusiasm for learning makes a significant contribution to the climate of the school and to the high standards achieved. They enjoy coming to school. Pupils take a pride in their work, are highly motivated and have a strong desire to improve. They work hard and are determined to take advantage of what the school has to offer. Good concentration and a productive work rate are regular features of lessons. Teachers encourage pupils to ask questions, work things out together and have a go at new ideas. In response, pupils are interested and receptive learners.
24. The school operates as a harmonious community in which all of the pupils work and play happily together. The oldest pupils conduct themselves with high levels of self-discipline and set a very good example to others. By the age of eleven, pupils display very good levels of maturity. They are able to reflect on their work, help each other and evaluate what they have achieved. For example, in a Year 6 lesson studying different points of view, pupils listened well to different arguments about whether mobile phones should be allowed in schools. They shared ideas and discussed the argument. They were able to discuss perceptively the different views expressed in contrasting articles. The pupils' very good standards of behaviour in lessons and around the school make a strong contribution to the creation of a very positive learning environment.

The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

25. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. Spiritual development is good and is continuing to improve. Assemblies are carefully planned and prepared and give pupils time to reflect on the themes presented. The music played and performed adds to the calm and reflective mood. Class circle times provide special quiet occasions where pupils know that their contributions are carefully listened to and valued. There are also some good moments in lessons, for example, moving thoughts in lines of poetry contributed by the pupils in a Year 4 literacy lesson. Regular visits to the local church contribute considerably to the teaching of Christian values.
26. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. The staff are very good role models for the pupils. High standards of behaviour are promoted through a system of school and classroom rules, which are consistently applied. The pupils are expected to behave well and they do. The teachers appropriately praise pupils and reward their good behaviour. Pupils' acts of kindness, consideration and effort are celebrated in a special assembly, the Gold Book Assembly, which is held each week. Assemblies, circle times and personal, social and health education lessons help to develop pupils' moral understanding.

27. The pupils' social development is well promoted. They are encouraged to work together in lessons and to share ideas when working in groups or pairs. The pupils undertake an appropriate range of responsibilities and duties in the classroom and around the school. The school is planning to start a School Council to further extend this. The take-up of extra-curricular activities and after-school booster groups is good. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in music and sport, which includes inter-school competition in football and netball. The pupils sing at charity events and at a nearby retired people's home. Year 6 pupils partner reception pupils in their first few weeks in the school to help them settle in and the pupils also sit at mixed-age tables at lunchtimes. This contributes significantly to the family feel of the school and helps the pupils to understand each other and to offer help if needed.
28. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Through religious education and visits to different places of worship the pupils find out about different religions and cultures. Many other visits, including museums and art galleries, help them to learn about their own culture and to expand their knowledge of other countries, customs and cultures. In art and design the pupils study the work of famous artists. Recently, a visiting artist worked with the pupils and greatly assisted their appreciation of art.

The partnership with parents is a strength of the school.

29. The very good relationship between home and school contributes well to the children's learning. Parents have confidence in the school because they know that the headteacher, staff and governors want the best for the children. They are pleased with the progress that their children make and the standard of work that they achieve. They feel that the teaching in the school is good and that the children are expected to work hard. Their children like the school, behave well while they are there and have very positive attitudes towards their work. The parents are happy with the way that the school is led and managed. At the parents' meeting, they agreed that the school has a real family feel and promotes Christian values consistently.
30. The school has effective links with parents and keeps them well informed about their children's progress and of events in the school. This is achieved through an informative school prospectus, supplemented by the annual governors' report to parents and reinforced with regular letters to the parents. However, there are some areas which could be improved, for example, some parents were not aware of the full range of extra-curricular activities available and for which the school has received an award. The school is already addressing this. The parents were concerned about the lack of privacy and confidentiality during interviews with teachers about their child's progress. The school accepts this as a valid concern and will endeavour to improve the situation.
31. A number of parents help in the school and this was seen to be very effective on the morning that the reception children were going to the local library. Apart from the teacher and her assistant, there were three parent helpers and this contributed considerably to the trip. The parents help their children with homework and this makes a very good contribution to their learning. Parents find the staff, and the headteacher in particular, to be very approachable, helpful and sympathetic. The Friends of Cockerton School Association organise many events and raise useful additional funding for the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The pupils do not do as well as they could in mathematics in Key Stage 1.

32. Information from the national tests over the past three years and inspection evidence indicates that by the age of seven the pupils' attainment in mathematics is lower than in reading or writing. In Key Stage 1, the pace of lessons and challenge provided for the pupils is significantly less than that found in Key Stage 2. This results in the pupils in Key Stage 1 making significantly less progress. By the age of seven, very few pupils have quick mental recall of number facts to 20 or readily deal with two-digit problems and their mathematical knowledge is comparatively weak, bearing in mind the very high standards achieved by the pupils by the time they leave the school.
33. In Key Stage 2, learning is carried out at a brisk pace and constant challenge is offered to the pupils. The lessons include a brisk quick-fire mental arithmetic session, followed by group work at a challenging level for all pupils and concluding with a class session to sort out any problems and consolidate and assess the progress made. This was not the case in a Key Stage 1 lesson, where the teaching lacked the same kind of stimulation or structure. In this Year 2 lesson, the mental arithmetic start was too short with very few pupils being drawn into answering questions. The introduction to the main activity left many of the pupils confused and consequently they struggled with the follow-up activities and their progress was limited. The class session at the end of the lesson was not used to sort out the problems the pupils had experienced and so their misunderstandings remained unresolved.

Aspects of the provision in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) could be improved.

34. Planning indicates that there is generally good coverage of the expected areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage and that suitable opportunities are provided for the children to broaden their knowledge and develop their understanding across the curriculum. However, the provision could be improved. Although the children are time tabled to use the school hall and playground, the amount of suitable equipment available to aid their physical development is limited. There are no regular opportunities for the children to develop their climbing or balancing skills using large apparatus, to experiment with wheeled equipment or to experience outdoor play.
35. The book area does not offer much encouragement for young children to develop an enthusiasm for books. The books are not displayed in an attractive way and there are no comfortable areas that could be used by the children to enjoy the experience of browsing or sharing books. The breadth of free choice activities is rather limited, particularly in aspects of creative development. For example, the children are not given the opportunity to experiment with painting or musical instruments on a regular basis.

The time allocated to teaching physical education in Key Stage 2 is not always used effectively.

36. Although the time allocated to physical education (PE) is about average compared with similar schools, it is not always used effectively in Key Stage 2. In Years 3, 4 and 5 each class has one lesson, lasting an hour, each week. The dance lessons observed during the inspection were too long. For example, in Year 5, the lesson was extended to fit the time available and would have had much more pace and provided more concentrated physical activity if the time had been reduced considerably. The planned activities for the lesson were completed in 25 minutes and the rest of the time was spent getting the pupils changed and playing a game (to fill out the time available) that was unrelated to the rest of the lesson.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

37. In order to improve standards and the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **Improve the progress made by the pupils in mathematics in Key Stage 1.**
(See paragraphs 32-33)
- ***Enhance the provision for the Foundation Stage (Reception Year).**
(See paragraphs 34-35)
- **Make more effective use of the time allocated to physical education in Key Stage 2.**
(See paragraph 36)

* Indicates action already planned, either in writing or informally, by the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	18
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	3	7	7			
Percentage	6	17	38.5	38.5			

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		191
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		31

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	13	15	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	23	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (96)	86 (96)	89 (96)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	24	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (96)	89 (96)	96 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	10	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	7	9	10
	Total	20	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (91)	96 (96)	100 (96)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	7	9	10
	Total	20	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (91)	96 (96)	100 (96)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	191
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.8
Average class size	27.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	
Total number of education support staff	
Total aggregate hours worked per week	
Number of pupils per FTE adult	

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	335,462
Total expenditure	316,558
Expenditure per pupil	1,711
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,890
Balance carried forward to next year	32,794

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	191
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	27	2	1	
My child is making good progress in school.	60	36	3	1	
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	37		3	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	44	11	2	
The teaching is good.	68	28	3		1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	39	12	4	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	23	5		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	33	1		
The school works closely with parents.	40	47	10	3	
The school is well led and managed.	65	32	3		
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	36	2		2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	29	12	3	12

