



# Cockton Hill Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 114111  
**LEA** Durham  
**Inspection number** 279317  
**Inspection dates** 20 June 2006 to 21 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Margaret Shepherd

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	McIntyre Terrace
<b>School category</b>	Community		Cockton Hill
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7		Bishop Auckland, County Durham
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 604627
<b>Number on roll</b>	175	<b>Fax number</b>	01388 604627
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Joan Imrie
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr John Redman

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Cockton Hill Infant School is smaller than average and serves an area with some high levels of deprivation. More pupils than average are entitled to free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than usual. Standards on entry are below average. The headteacher and staff are very well established with many members of staff having taught the parents of the children currently in school. Each year group is organised into two separate classes.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. This confirms the school's own judgement. Parents hold the school in high esteem. One commented that, 'Cockton School has been our family school for generations.' This is one of the key strengths of the school. The well established staff know every child and their families very well indeed. This knowledge, together with outstanding organisation for inclusion, results in good achievement in both academic and personal development. Children enter the school with standards below average and leave it with above average standards. Achievement in writing is particularly good because the school has made this a priority for improvement. The care and support that the school provides are outstanding and result in pupils thoroughly enjoying their learning within a safe and secure context. Pupils do not always get the feedback they need about their work for them to understand how they can improve it. The school has excellent international links, works closely with the local community and has a high emphasis on citizenship skills. It provides a well balanced curriculum with excellent extra-curricular activities. The outcome of these features is that pupils develop outstanding cultural understanding and citizenship skills. Teaching is good overall, with all teachers working in an effective partnership with support assistants. Standards and provision are satisfactory in Reception. Where staff work directly with Reception children teaching is good, but opportunities are missed to provide interesting and challenging independent learning and the outdoor provision does not cover the Reception curriculum fully enough. The headteacher leads the school well and manages by example. He knows every pupil very well and creates a strong sense of commitment to the school from staff, who work effectively together. Coordinators play a key role in supporting the rest of the staff. These features have led to good improvement since the previous inspection and a good capacity for future improvement. The school provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the challenge of the independent learning in the Reception classes and relate activities more closely to the half-termly themes.
- Extend the outdoor learning in Reception by providing stimulating activities across all six areas of learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good overall. From a below average standard on entry in Reception, children reach standards that are significantly above average overall by the end of Year 2. Children make a good start in acquiring basic skills in Reception. By the end of Reception many have reached the expected level for their age. The curriculum broadens in Years 1 and 2 and the pupils make consistently good progress in these year groups. Standards by the end of Year 2 over the past three years have been rising and have been significantly above average for the past two years. Standards in writing

are higher than reading or mathematics. This is due to an emphasis on providing interesting experiences to stimulate writing and regular practice of technical writing skills. Pupils achieve well in science because of an emphasis on scientific investigations, which begins in Reception and develops consistently as children move through the school. The school is very successful in supporting less able pupils and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This results in good achievement by these pupils. The school systematically targets subjects in order to raise standards over time and this contributes to the rising trend at the end of Year 2.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good overall. The vast majority of pupils love coming to school and thoroughly enjoy learning. They trust and respect their teachers and behave well. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of their own particular role in the school community, for example as buddies, class leaders and members of the school council. The school is very much part of the local community through its links with parents, churches, local visits out and visitors to the school. All of these links enhance pupils' understanding of the world of work. The school also gives pupils an excellent understanding of the global community and of their place as citizens of the wider world. The numerous links that the school has with a wide range of countries enrich the pupils' good spiritual, moral and social education and provides them with an outstanding cultural education. They show care and consideration for each other, have a good understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and also appreciate the similar needs of people overseas. Attendance is satisfactory and has improved this year.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers work in productive partnerships with teaching assistants and this has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning, particularly during group work. When teachers introduce new learning they provide clear explanations and interesting tasks to help the pupils develop new skills. Teachers manage behaviour well and create a calm context for learning. In Reception, teachers work well with groups, providing challenging tasks. However, the level of challenge for independent learning is too low and these activities do not build systematically enough on previous learning. Assessment is good. Staff know the different levels of pupils' ability very well. They make sure that the questions they ask match the different levels of pupils' learning. This is particularly effective with the less able pupils and those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good quality and well matched to the needs of pupils. There is a strong emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the school is effective in helping pupils to appreciate the benefits of healthy eating, safe living and exercise. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection. Teachers are now trained and enthusiastic about its use but are currently limited by the lack of electronic whiteboards in classrooms. The school ensures that the parallel classes in each year group receive the same curriculum content. Statutory requirements are met. Reception classes provide a good curriculum for basic skills. However, they do not ensure that independent activities are based closely enough on the half-termly themes or ensure that the outdoor learning provides activities across the full Reception curriculum. The school prepares all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, well for their transition to the junior school. There is an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about these opportunities. They also really appreciate the many visitors into school and visits in the local community. Very strong international links with a large number of countries enrich pupils' understanding of the wider world and their place within it.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good overall, however care and support are outstanding. Parents recognise that all staff are totally committed to providing the best possible care for their children. A typical comment was, 'I hold the school in a high position of trust.' The headteacher and his staff know all the pupils really well as individuals and seek every opportunity to maximise and celebrate their achievements. Vulnerable pupils receive outstanding care and achieve well. The school has a 'can do' approach so pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are included in all activities and given the confidence to succeed. Good child protection, risk assessment and health and safety procedures are clearly understood by well trained staff. Teachers track pupils' progress carefully but do not always give them sufficient feedback about how to improve their work. The school works very closely with parents to ensure that learners make good progress. A sense of real community spirit was evident at the very well attended sports day where all pupils, staff, governors, and a large number of parents and other family members were encouraged to take part.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher uses his long-term knowledge of the school to good effect. He has a very good understanding of the community that the school serves and uses this to ensure that the school's provision matches the pupils' particular needs. This results in pupils developing an outstanding awareness of their own special place within the school community. The headteacher

sets great store on the importance of inclusion. His in-depth knowledge of each child and the context of their families provide a very secure basis for initiating changes to the school's provision. His focus on developing international links provides a rich basis for extending pupils' learning. He values every member of the school team and this creates a strong commitment by staff to work together for the good of the pupils. The coordinators work well together to develop their areas of responsibility. They make good use of the school's small size to communicate and support each other. Key school decisions are made together across the staff and this results in a clear commitment to implementing the changes. These features have led to good improvement since the previous inspection, a rising trend in standards and a good capacity to improve in the future. Governors are keen to support the school in practical contexts such as sports day. The school evaluates its performance well. It greatly values parents' and pupils' opinions and uses them when making changes. Parents appreciate this and have a very high opinion of the school.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

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The Pupils

Cockton Hill Infant School

McIntyre Terrace

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County Durham

DL14 6HW

20 June 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. You made us both feel very welcome.

We were very impressed with how much you enjoy your learning. We think that you all work hard and behave well. We were very impressed with how much you understand about being a citizen and all the different things you know about other countries and different cultures. You told us how much you enjoy all the different clubs, visits and visitors that you have and we agree that these are excellent. We think that your teachers and staff work well together. They make sure that none of you get left out of any school activities. We think that the school looks after you very well indeed and lets your parents know just how you are getting on whilst you are in school. Your headteacher works really well with your teachers to keep making sure that your school gets better and better. He knows you and your families very well. We were really impressed with how well he worked with all your teachers to make your sports day run so smoothly.

We think that you work well in Reception when you are with the teacher but when you work on your own, the things you do should be more challenging. We have asked your school to give you a lot more different things to do in Reception when you are learning outside. We know that you and your teachers have already started to make plans to make the outside a more exciting place to be.

Best wishes

Maggi Shepherd and Ann Wallis

Additional Inspectors