



# Cockerton Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 114212  
**Local Authority** Darlington  
**Inspection number** 289838  
**Inspection dates** 30 November –1 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Joy Frost

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Newton Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Cockerton, Darlington
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		County Durham, DL3 9EX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01325 380758
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	207	<b>Fax number</b>	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Rev R Wallace
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Chris Metcalfe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school. In 2004 the school's status changed from voluntary controlled to voluntary aided, following extensive consultation with stakeholders. The great majority of pupils are White British. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has gained many national awards including: Artsmark Gold, Activemark, Healthy Schools Award, Inclusive School Award and Investors in People.

The school is currently awaiting the approval of plans for a new building to replace the existing accommodation.

## 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 with some outstanding features. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well and their personal development and well-being is outstanding. Pupils are courteous, work cooperatively together and behave exceptionally well in and around the school.

They know how to keep safe and stay healthy and they make a good contribution to the community through the church and other links. The great majority of parents support these views and are happy with the education the school provides. The school cares for its pupils well, but pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not always identified early enough.

Children come to school with broadly average levels of attainment except in personal and social development which is less well developed. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good because of the wide range of activities on offer, and most children attain the expected goals for their age. By the time they leave the school, in Year 6, they reach standards in English, mathematics and science that are consistently above average. Pupils make good progress.

Teaching throughout the school is good with some very good features. Teachers' planning is thorough and takes account of what pupils already know. Systems for checking how well pupils are doing are used outstandingly well. Most pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. There is a strong emphasis on pupils acquiring the basic skills and the development of reading skills is exceptionally good. Teachers work hard to ensure that children settle into school well and, by the time they leave Foundation Stage, their social development is good. However, some children are not yet ready for the more formal teaching at the end of Reception and in Year 1. The provision for creative arts is a strength of the school and the many opportunities to enrich the pupils' learning outside the classroom contribute to their high level of enjoyment. However, new technologies are not sufficiently embedded across the curriculum. The school is aware that provision for outdoor play, an issue in the last inspection, is limited because of the inadequacies of the building.

The school is well led and managed, with good support from the governing body. All school members are fully involved in identifying the areas for improvement. This is a school that knows itself very well and provides good value for money. The school has a good capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Revise planning between Reception and Year 1 to ensure the needs of the youngest pupils are fully met.
- Develop the use of information and communication technology (ICT) across all areas of the curriculum.
- Make sure that the procedures for the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties are robust.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall pupils' achievement is good and very good in Key Stage 2. Children start school with standards in line with those expected for their age. By the time they leave the school, their standards are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. A good start is made in the Foundation Stage where reading and writing skills are taught well. In Key Stage 1, standards over time are above expectations. Support staff are well deployed to run intervention programmes for pupils who are falling behind and, consequently, they make good progress. However, some pupils are not yet ready for formal teaching at the end of Reception.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, is outstanding. However, the school knows that whilst cultural awareness is satisfactory it needs developing further. The pupils respond very well to the Christian ethos which pervades the school, for example, the celebration assembly provided an excellent opportunity for pupils to reflect on the meaning of Christmas. There is a very strong feeling of community within the school and the great majority of parents give the school their full support. Pupils' behaviour is very good overall and in most lessons is outstanding. Pupils are very friendly, confident and courteous around school and attentive in class. The school promotes these values very well. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe and keep healthy. The children in the Reception class settle very quickly, demonstrating developing confidence and independence. The majority enjoy school, attend well and take part in activities with pride and enthusiasm. The older pupils successfully run a healthy snack stall at playtime and pupils enthusiastically take part in the wide range of sporting and healthy living activities offered by the school. The school council gives pupils a voice in the strategic direction of the school. One of its successful initiatives was the lobbying of the local council to remove graffiti and litter from the local housing estate.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good quality teaching and learning enables most pupils to learn effectively. A great strength of the school is that teachers know pupils well and how much progress they are making. Teachers analyse pupils' work well and identify what they need to do to improve. Teachers and skilled teaching assistants work together to meet the needs of the different ability groups and ensure that the majority reach their targets. Characteristics of the good teaching include effective questioning skills and briskly paced activities well matched to pupils' needs, and a wide range of opportunities to

practise speaking and listening skills in all lessons. Parents and carers are fully involved in their children's learning, with many parents giving their time voluntarily to support the school. The needs of older pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well met. However, the learning difficulties of younger pupils are not always diagnosed early enough. The school's involvement in initial teacher training is having a positive impact on teaching and learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school offers a good curriculum with outstanding features. Children in the Foundation Stage experience a wide range of practical activities which give them first hand experiences. They have a solid start to their education and make good progress. Although there is a wide range of opportunities in classrooms, the school recognises that insufficient use is made of the outdoor environment to promote learning. The school provides well through the curriculum for the more able pupils, especially in the performing arts in drama, dance and music. Enrichment activities provide a very good contribution to curriculum provision. Visits also add to the richness of experiences and enhance learning. There is an impressive range of activities to help pupils feel healthy and safe and gain skills needed for work in the future, including presentation skills and the good teaching of French across Key Stage 2.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good. All staff, including support staff, have received training in child protection procedures; these are fully in place and used as a model within the local authority. However, the school is aware that support for pupils with learning difficulties needs developing further, so that all pupils are identified at the earliest opportunity. Pupils feel safe in school and bullying is infrequent. They are confident that any problems they have are dealt with promptly. They know who to go to if they need help. Teachers monitor pupils' academic progress well because they have developed robust target setting procedures, which help them to fully understand what they need to do to make progress. There are good procedures to ensure children settle quickly when they start school in the Reception class and there is a smooth transition to secondary school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and governing body are responsible for the very special ethos of the school. They work well together to provide clear strategic direction for the school, and the governing body ask challenging questions and hold the school to account. There is a clear vision and sense of purpose shared by all staff. The headteacher, ably supported by senior staff, leads this school very well. He has established robust monitoring and evaluation procedures which contribute to the very good standards

achieved by the pupils. Managers at all levels are beginning to contribute to school improvement by carrying out audits, writing action plans and monitoring their subject areas. Good relationships at all levels enable teachers to work together in teams and share expertise. Resources are well deployed and ensure good value for money despite the limitations resulting from inadequate accommodation, and the rapid growth of the school in recent years. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and focused on continuous improvement. Since the last inspection, it has maintained its strengths and improved pupils' personal development and well-being.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

The School Council

Cockerton Church of England School

Newton Lane

Cockerton

Darlington

County Durham

DL3 9EX

30 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you so much for making Mrs Havard and I welcome when we visited your school recently. We think you go to a good school that has some outstanding features. We also think that your teachers look after you all very well.

We were particularly impressed with:

- how well you behave in lessons, the dining hall and playground
- how well you get along with each other
- how much you want to do your best
- how well your headteacher and teachers know you, and make sure you are safe and healthy in school.

You told us that you enjoy the opportunities to take part in music, art, dance and drama in school and clubs. The pupils we spoke to know a lot about how to keep safe and healthy and were proud of how well you all get along together. We saw this for ourselves as we went around the school.

The inspectors have asked your teachers to:

- provide more structured play opportunities in class for the children starting Year 1
- make sure pupils who have difficulty learning get extra help as soon as possible
- let you use ICT in more of your lessons.

We are confident that you will help your teachers to achieve these changes and we wish you all well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Joy Frost

Lead inspector