

# St Catherine's Primary School

Coneybury, Bletchingley, Redhill, RH1 4PP

**Inspection dates** 6–7 December 2012

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The strong leadership of the headteacher has led to considerable improvements in teaching and the rate at which pupils progress in their learning. Consequently, attainment has risen and achievement is good.
- Teachers accurately assess pupils' learning and plan lessons that move pupils on to the next step. Therefore, pupils, including those who are disabled and those with special educational needs, are able to make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils want to learn and know how to make their work better because they are able to check their work against clear learning targets for the lesson.
- Interesting topics inspire pupils to learn about different subjects in new and exciting ways, and strongly support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Governors provide excellent support for the school because they hold leaders and managers to account and are thorough in monitoring teaching and how well pupils progress in their learning.
- Pupils behave well, respect one another and feel safe. They have high regard for the values that set the expectations for their attitudes and behaviour.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attainment in writing is not rising as quickly as it is in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils do not always have the opportunity to further improve what they have written once it has been marked.
- Teachers' lesson plans do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils take the lead and experiment with their own ideas in order to further improve their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons. These included joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members, the headteacher, members of the leadership team and other teachers. A discussion was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 36 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and parents spoken to during the inspection, as well as the responses to the school's own questionnaires.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, the plans for improvement and how the school keeps pupils safe. Minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour and attendance were also examined.
- Inspectors analysed the school's data on pupils' current progress and evaluated work in pupils' books. They also examined teachers' plans for lessons and documentation on how the leadership team monitors teaching and the performance of teachers.

## Inspection team

David Howley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Veronica Young

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- An average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium additional funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus and those with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has a speech, language and communication needs centre that provides for 17 pupils with early speech and language delay.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the current floor standard, which sets the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Raise attainment in writing by providing more opportunities for pupils to revisit and improve their written work after they have received guidance through marking.
- Ensure that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to experiment with their own ideas so that pupils can take more of a lead in extending their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's accurate assessment of pupils' learning and the evidence from national data show that pupils of all ages and from different backgrounds have made good and improving progress since the last inspection.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below that expected for their age. They make good progress because teachers accurately monitor and assess their learning and ensure that all children have lots of activities that enable them to explore and practise the next steps in their development. Children benefit from good and exciting outdoor facilities which enable them to extend their learning in a different environment. By the end of the Reception year, children's attainment is broadly average, although it varies from year to year dependent on the proportion of pupils with below average development in communication, language and literacy skills.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1. Attainment has risen in each of the past three years and pupils' overall attainment in 2012 was significantly above the national average. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the national screening check of how well pupils, aged six, understand letters and sounds was lower than that seen nationally. This was because an above average number of pupils had low starting points in speech and language development. However, support programmes are adapted to meet the needs of individuals and well planned lessons covering the sounds made by the different letters and groups of letters (phonics) enable pupils to progress quickly. Consequently, their attainment in reading is similar to that nationally at the end of Year 2.
- Progress in reading has increased over the past two years and is good throughout the school. This is because pupils read on a daily basis and are enthused with a love of reading. Pupils in Key Stage 2 described how their reading logs are checked every week and how they will be given extra time and support if they have not been able to do the minimum amount of reading that is expected. As a result, their attainment has risen to be similar to that nationally.
- Pupils in the speech, language and communication needs centre also make good progress. They receive good support in the Early Years Foundation Stage and communicate confidently with sign language because they learn alongside other children as much as possible.
- Progress is good in writing because pupils' imaginations are stimulated by exciting topic work, which builds upon what pupils have learned in English lessons. Nevertheless, progress in writing is not as rapid as it is in the other subjects. Consequently, pupils' attainment does not catch up with that nationally until Year 6. Lessons are carefully structured to develop writing skills, but pupils do not have enough opportunities to further improve pieces of writing once they have been marked.
- Pupils are making more rapid progress in mathematics because they have the opportunity to apply the skills they have learned to practical situations. For example, in an outstanding lesson a class of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils were given the opportunity to solve problems to show that they fully understood the use of coordinates.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average. There are some differences in the attainment of year groups due to the different proportions of pupils with speech and cognitive learning difficulties. The school's rigorous tracking of pupils' learning shows that all groups of pupils, across the school, are making good progress, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding also make good progress because these funds are used wisely to provide additional support that meets their particular needs.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers regularly use assessment information to check pupils'

progress and plan lessons that will move pupils' learning on to the next step.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and set high expectations in well-structured lessons. Pupils are very clear about the skills and knowledge they are gaining because they are able to check their work against the learning targets for the lesson. Similarly, teachers check the learning through regularly questioning pupils. Teachers do not always allow enough opportunities for pupils to lead in their learning by experimenting with their own ideas.
- Pupils contribute to the planning of topic work by identifying things they want to learn about. The new approach to teaching subjects through exciting topics has increased pupils' love of learning and the use of communication skills in reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum. Both boys and girls worked with great enthusiasm in the 'making' afternoon, where they rotated around Christmas-based activities including making sweets, mince pies, decorations and iced animals. Similarly, the introduction of the same topic for all year groups has improved teachers' planning and provided more inclusion for pupils with speech, language and cognitive learning difficulties.
- Very regular and informative marking by teachers enables pupils to know how they can improve their work. However, in writing, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to improve a piece of work once it has been marked, so that they can consolidate what they are learning more rapidly.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and effective in supporting teachers in the classroom and providing help for individuals or groups of pupils through programmes specifically designed to meet their needs.

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

- Pupils behave well and are respectful to one another in lessons, in the playground and around the school. This is because there is a strong emphasis on pupils taking responsibility for their own self-discipline.
- Pupils were involved in agreeing the six values that set the expectations for their behaviour and attitudes to learning. A half-termly focus on each value contributes strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. When pupils misbehave they are encouraged to reflect on the value they have broken and find a way of making recompense to others.
- Behaviour in lessons is good because pupils are engaged in their learning. Pupils say they get lots of support and help from teachers and other adults and that any occasional misbehaviour is dealt with quickly and fairly.
- Pupils feel safe in school and regularly practise fire drills and 'lockdown' precautions. They confirm that there is no bullying and they have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as 'picking on others' and cyber bullying. They know how to manage risks and speak confidently about how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Showing resilience is another initiative that promotes good attitudes in pupils and is rewarded through the achievement of bronze, silver and gold awards. Similarly, the Always Children project rewards pupils who show consistently that they can stick to a set of expectations. Pupils also enjoy having responsibilities such as the pupils' eco-council and being playground pals.
- Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons. Attendance is rising and no longer below the national average. The vast majority of parents state that pupils are well behaved and that their child feels safe and is happy at school.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher's ambitious vision for driving improvement has built a strong and committed team ethos. Governors, senior leaders, teachers and other adults in the school share the same high expectations. These have contributed to the improvements in attainment and the good

progress that pupils have made since the last inspection, and confirm that the school is well placed to improve further.

- Self-evaluation is systematic and rigorous. Senior leaders accurately evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and regularly analyse pupils' progress and ensure there is no discrimination. This has resulted in thorough and well-planned programmes for developing teachers' skills and appraising their performance. Teachers state that they 'enjoy learning as part of a team and provide good support for one another'.
- The leaders of English and mathematics are effective in leading initiatives that improve the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility. Teachers accurately assess pupils' learning and have responsibility for data from which challenging targets are reviewed to raise attainment in both subjects.
- The curriculum has been adapted well to meet the wide variety of pupils' needs and contributes effectively to the school's promotion of equal opportunities. For example, the introduction of whole school topics has inspired and raised the self-esteem of pupils, especially in the way it provides more inclusion for pupils with speech, language and cognitive learning difficulties. Parents with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage stated that they were happy that their child had come to the school and that it had 'a very good speech and language department'.
- The school engages well with parents. Almost all parents feel that their child makes good progress. As two parents commented, 'We are well informed and highly confident in the clear leadership provided by the headteacher.'
- The local authority provides an appropriate level of support for the school, which has become more light touch as the school has improved.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body provides excellent support for the school because it holds leaders and managers to account and considers its performance in comparison with similar schools both locally and nationally. It is able to do this because there is an annual training programme for all governors that covers the range of their responsibilities. Governors are vigilant in monitoring how well pupils achieve. For example, a governor is attached to each class and tracks those pupils as they progress through the school. Similarly, governors ensure that pupil premium funding is used effectively, for example in providing one-to-one tuition for pupils who are behind in their learning. Governors monitor spending efficiently and have redefined the role of the bursar. They also make sure that procedures for performance management influence teachers' progression through the salary scales. The governing body ensures that all statutory requirements are met, particularly those related to safeguarding.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124941
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	402301

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	242
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tom Bull
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephanie Gibson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1–2 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01883 743337
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