



# St Catherine's Bletchingley Village School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 124941  
**Local Authority** Surrey  
**Inspection number** 281840  
**Inspection dates** 9–10 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** David Marshall

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>	Coneybury
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bletchingley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Redhill RH1 4PP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01883 743337
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	244	<b>Fax number</b>	01883 744622
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Graham Saunders
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Simon Hobbs
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 October 1999		

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<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 9–10 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 281840
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

## Description of the school

St Catherine's is a village school with an attached unit for children who have severe speech, language and communication disorders. The majority of the pupils are White British heritage. The catchment area of the school is very mixed. Pupils' attainment on entry to school is below average, particularly in language skills. A well above average number of pupils have educational difficulties. In the mainstream school, 10 pupils have statements and all 28 Language Unit pupils have a statement. The percentage of children known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. During the last three years there have been seven changes of headteacher and three changes of staff.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Catherine's provides a good, and improving, education for all its pupils. Throughout the last three years when there has been severe disruption in the school's leadership, the staff have worked together very effectively to maintain pupils' standards and achievement. Several parents commented on this, and one wrote at length, 'I would like to comment on the exceptional team spirit and strong mutual support shown over the last three years by all staff at St Catherine's during an exceptionally difficult period for them.' Thanks to this dedication and care, pupils throughout the school achieve well. Progress is good and standards from a below average start, are average in English, mathematics and science by the time pupils leave the school.

Children make a very positive start to their education in the Foundation Stage, where provision is very good and so they make good progress. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Lessons are well planned, teachers make learning fun and the pace of lessons is very good in most classes. Teachers take great care to keep parents involved. Parents are very pleased about this and one commented that, 'The teachers are fantastic with the children but are also very good at keeping parents/carers informed.' The expectations of what pupils can achieve are generally appropriate but the use of assessment to pinpoint the next step in a pupils' learning varies from subject to subject. The careful use of tracking in English has successfully raised pupils' achievement. However, systems for tracking their progress over time in other subjects are not sufficiently robust. As a result, information about whether pupils are making adequate progress in relation to their ability is not readily available.

Pupils are very well cared for, and all of them, including the most vulnerable, are safe and secure. The school is very successful at putting the well-being of each individual pupil at the heart of everything it does. The model of care illustrated by the exemplary unit for pupils with severe speech, language and communication disorders is applied throughout the school. Consequently, whatever the pupils need, the staff make a point of giving them the best possible attention. As a result, pupils' personal development is very good.

The curriculum is satisfactory as it covers all subjects well and is enhanced by a very good range of additional activities. However, there are still too few planned opportunities for pupils to develop skills such as numeracy in other subjects to make their learning more meaningful.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The new headteacher is now managing the school very well and he is very ably supported by all staff. Strengths and weaknesses are speedily identified because the school has introduced good systems for monitoring its work. Teamwork is excellent and developments are now being driven forward at a good pace. The school's capacity to improve further is good.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Use the results of assessment and tracking procedures consistently in all subjects to ensure that all pupils make maximum progress.

- Modify the curriculum to extend the opportunities for all pupils to use the skills they acquire in English and mathematics more effectively.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Given their below average starting points in the Foundation Stage and the overall average standards reached by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' achievement throughout the school is good. Standards of attainment of the pupils currently in Year 6 are in line with those expected for their ages.

Thanks to the very good provision they settle down very well in the Foundation Stage and make good progress. In Key Stage 1 the emphasis put on developing speaking and listening skills helps to raise the standards pupils reach generally, but especially in reading. There is now a secure system in place that provides targets in pupils' books, tracks their progress in writing, reading and spelling and identifies where additional support will be most beneficial. This process is being extended to mathematics, and all other subjects.

School targets are challenging and have been reached this year with an average number of pupils reaching the expected level, and an above average proportion of pupils gaining the higher level. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties, both in the main school and in the unit, is very good, and they often make rapid progress as a result.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They are friendly, well-behaved, polite and confident when talking with each other and adults. They value their school, enjoy the many opportunities that it has to offer them and speak enthusiastically about it. Pupils feel very safe at school and have confidence in knowing adults whom they can call upon for help if they need it. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy, by eating sensibly and enjoying the many physical activities in the extensive school grounds. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now broadly average.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They are respectful of each other and form good relationships with each other and adults. As one of them said, 'Although we don't all know each other, we all care for each other.' They enjoy taking responsibility both for classroom tasks and by taking on school roles, like becoming members of the school council, being stair monitors or a Playground Friend. Pupils participate in a good range of activities that help them to understand about the lives of people from different cultures. Pupils' contribution to the community is good. In addition to fund raising for charities, the School Council has put forward ideas that are making a real difference to the quality of their school. Pupils are developing the necessary skills that will enable them to become good citizens in the future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and this creates a good working environment. Teaching is lively and teachers use interactive whiteboards well to make learning clear and more interesting. Pupils enjoy using these too and they want to learn because they are motivated.

Basic skills are taught well and, especially in English, teachers plan tasks matched to pupils' abilities, which helps them to make good progress. In some lessons, teachers also plan extension activities to ensure pupils are sufficiently challenged. However, on some occasions teachers miss opportunities for pupils to use skills, such as numeracy, to help them learn well in other lessons. Teaching assistants give very good support to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and as a result they are fully included and make very good progress.

Marking is satisfactory. It often shows pupils what to do to make their work better but this is not consistently done between classes or in all subjects. Checking of pupils' progress is consistent and rigorous at the end of the year. Interim assessments of pupils' writing are good but for other aspects of their learning are less informative.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets pupils' needs and includes support programmes to boost the progress of pupils who need extra help to reach their goals. There is a strong focus on the development of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Planning does not yet sufficiently link subjects and skills together to make a more flexible and meaningful curriculum, although teachers do make good use of their own and pupils' ICT skills in a range of lessons.

The curriculum is enriched with visits and visitors which make learning more interesting. The many trips out add to pupils' understanding and personal development. Pupils particularly enjoy their learning when they are able to draw together a range of skills for a particular topic. This happens in themed days or weeks such as 'Endangered Species' week. These opportunities greatly expand pupils' experiences but are currently limited to these special events. The wide range of well attended after-school activities extends pupils' interests well, in addition to further developing their skills.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Effective systems ensure the school environment is safe and welcoming. Procedures for child protection are rigorous and staff training is up-to-date. Visits from the emergency services give pupils a good understanding

of how to stay safe. Pupils are confident that any social or academic difficulties they encounter will be dealt with effectively by staff.

There are very well organised systems for identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and support for these pupils, both in the unit and the main school is very good. The school makes full use of its good links with outside agencies to ensure the needs of its vulnerable pupils are well provided for.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils have clear targets that they work towards in English. Although assessment is in place to track pupils' progress during and at the end of the year, this is not consistently used in all subjects.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The determination and zeal of the deputy head, all staff and governors in the last three years has been outstanding and has kept the school moving forward. In the first few weeks of taking up his post, the new headteacher has already shown how effective his leadership is. The whole school review he led has provided the school with a clear understanding of its strengths and areas that need more development. Teamwork is of the highest quality. Everyone is playing a valuable part in moving the school forward. Teaching assistants, the administrative team and premises manager are considerable assets and are very much appreciated by the school community.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and effective. The school improvement plan now provides detailed guidance on raising standards through the effective systems introduced to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. Governors are fully involved in this process and they bring a wide range of skills to bear as they challenge and support the school well.

The opinions of parents and pupils are valued and frequently acted on. The school has good links with other schools and organisations to provide effectively for all pupils. Management at all levels is improving. Some subject leaders are appreciating the opportunities they are now being given to manage and monitor their subject responsibilities more effectively. Within the school there is a high commitment to include all pupils in all activities. Parents value this and see it as an important feature of the school. The school has a good capacity to improve.

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

### 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>	3
<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	2
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**

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to the school recently. We really enjoyed our time at St Catherine's and you all helped us by being so friendly and sensible. I thought you would like to know what we found out.

We agree with you that St. Catherine's is a good school. When you arrive at the school in the nursery or reception classes you have lots of interesting things to do and adults help you to settle in really well. You develop your reading, writing and number skills in the infants and do well when you move into the juniors. By the time you go to secondary school you are well prepared. Those of you who do not find work easy do especially well because of all the help you get. We were pleased that you like school and come regularly. You all seem to really enjoy your lessons, work hard and behave well. There are lots of interesting things for you to do in the school day and in all the clubs and visits that you have.

Your teachers work hard to help you to do as well as you can. We have asked them to look again in some subjects to make sure you are all building on what you already know. We have also asked them to plan to give you even more opportunities to use what you know in lots of different ways. You must continue to listen carefully and take note of what they say. Then you will all continue to make really good progress in your learning.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help.

We wish you well in the future.

David Marshall Lead inspector