

# St Catherine's CofE Primary and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113463
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	331597
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 June –1 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Sadler

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	163
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jeff Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Murch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2008
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Musket Road Heathfield Newton Abbot TQ12 6SB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01626 832665

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 June –1 July 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	331597

**Fax number**

01626 834232

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average size school serve its local area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which range from moderate learning difficulties to more profound disabilities, is above average. The great majority of pupils are of White British ethnicity. A small but increasing number are at the early stages of learning English. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in its nursery and Reception classes. A children's centre is being built on the site and it is planned that this should open later in 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. In 2008, the school was required to make improvements to pupils' standards and achievement, especially in mathematics, to assessment and hence to guidance for pupils, and to leadership and management in mathematics. It now provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education, having improved significantly in these areas and some others. There are emerging strengths, for example in the good quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage, in the quality of teaching especially of pupils in Years 4 to 6, and in the good links with a wide range of partners.

Through the effective leadership and management and good teaching by the current staff team, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are making good progress from their broadly average starting points. In Years 1 to 6, all pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. In some aspects, for example among pupils in Years 5 and 6 in science, their progress is good. Standards attained in national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 in 2008 were broadly average. The school's data and pupils' work show that the current Year 6 are on track to attain similar standards this year in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. In some aspects, standards, especially in Years 1 to 3, reflect a legacy of past underachievement, most notably in mathematics and writing. Overall, pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are now achieving in a satisfactory manner.

Teaching, while remaining satisfactory overall, is improving. Teachers are experimenting with new approaches which are enthusing pupils, especially in their writing, although it is too soon to measure the impact on their progress. Staff are beginning to use the information from improved assessment and tracking of pupils' progress to plan work that meets their needs more fully, although the range of strategies used to do this is too limited. In some classes, there is too much reliance on teaching assistants and other adults in helping lower attaining pupils to keep up. Consequently, these pupils are not developing the independent learning skills they will need in the future. For the past year, the satisfactory curriculum has focused heavily on improving pupils' skills in English and mathematics. Some other subjects have been given less attention, resulting, for instance, in pupils' limited appreciation of art, music and the range of cultures present in Britain and the rest of the world. This also reflects limited progress in ensuring that the school effectively promotes wider community cohesion, although the range of visits, visitors and clubs provided has improved and is now good. This is enhancing pupils' understanding of their local community.

The school provides good care and support for its pupils, and the small proportion of parents responding to the inspectors' questionnaire said their children were happy at school. Behaviour is good and pupils report little bullying, with any that occurs being successfully handled. The provision for supporting and nurturing pupils with emotional difficulties is especially good. The school meets all requirements to keep children safe and protected. More accurate assessment and improved marking of work have led to targets for improvement which show pupils how to make their work better. However, these are not sufficiently tailored to fully meet the needs of higher and lower attaining pupils.

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching and subject leadership. Leaders in English, mathematics and science monitor and evaluate pupils' progress in their subjects, bringing about improvement. The school has a satisfactory

understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and is using better quality data to set realistic challenging targets. The local authority and Anglican diocese have provided good quality support to the school, including through the appointment of additional experienced governors. As a result of these actions of leaders and managers, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The strengthened leadership team is in a satisfactory position to bring about further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress, especially in their personal development. They are becoming independent and confident learners because they are taught well, and are provided with a good range of activities with a good balance between those directed by adults and those which they choose themselves. Good use is made of the inviting well-equipped outdoor area, with children having easy access to a wide range of exciting activities indoors and out. There is good provision for children's welfare, enhanced by good relationships with parents, as shown by the well-attended nursery 'sports day'. There have been significant recent changes in staffing in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The current temporary team is effective and has introduced important improvements to assessment, so that children's progress is now accurately monitored so their needs can be met. For example, children at an early stage of learning English are supported well and are learning the language quickly.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- ensure that pupils make good progress and hence attain higher standards, especially in their writing, by extending and enhancing the successful strategies already adopted
- ensure that the planning of work to meet individual needs uses a range of approaches that enable pupils to develop their skills of working independently
- promote community cohesion and cultural development by broadening pupils' understanding of the range of communities in Britain and the rest of the world.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Preliminary results of national assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2009 suggest that the school's analysis of pupils' attainment is accurate. Most pupils make at least the expected progress and achieve their personal targets. Those who do not are identified and given additional help. Overall, pupils attain average standards but past underachievement in mathematics and writing has not been fully eradicated. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to solve mathematical problems and write at length, but in younger pupils, these skills are less well developed in relation to what is expected of pupils of their age. The school recognised that boys' writing skills were developing slowly and has adopted a more active approach to teaching that is meeting with some success. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress due to the support of teaching assistants. In other subjects, there is evidence that standards are above those expected in physical education (PE), but that standards in art and music are lower.

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

### **Grade: 3**

This area, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory overall. Some aspects are good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are proud of their school and are friendly and welcoming to visitors. They behave well around the school and in the playground and, in lessons that inspire and stimulate them, they show high standards of concentration and behaviour. However, in lessons which lack pace and challenge, they become bored and fidgety, and lose interest. Pupils know right from wrong and have a clear understanding of the need to help others; they enjoy raising money for local and national charities. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to keep healthy through exercise and a good diet, but have limited understanding of this issue beyond these aspects. Attendance is satisfactory. The school does all it can to ensure regular attendance and punctuality. There is a school council, and Year 6 pupils may volunteer to be trained as playground mediators. Pupils acquire satisfactory literacy and numeracy skills which will stand them in good stead in the future, although their ability to work and learn independently develops more slowly. There are insufficient opportunities for their spiritual and cultural development, particularly their understanding of the arts and cultures of other parts of the world.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching has a number of strengths. There are good relationships between staff and pupils, and teachers use questioning and praise effectively. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, enhanced in English and mathematics by recent training. Marking is an increasing strength and effectively shows pupils how to improve their work. Teachers are at an early stage in using the much more accurate information they now have about pupils' progress in order to plan work. Pupils with wide ranges of age and attainment are often given the same task. Teaching assistants and other adults enable slower learners to understand, but this does not enable these pupils to learn and study alone, and sometimes older or higher attaining pupils find the work too easy.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are taught the required subjects, but much time is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils have good opportunities for sport and PE, and to study religious education, but there are limited opportunities to develop skills in art and music. There is a good range of clubs and visits. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 particularly enjoyed a recent residential experience in Swanage. Plans to develop skills through a wider range of subjects and experiences are at an early stage of development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are cared for well and all requirements to keep them safe are in place. Good relationships with external agencies and parents ensure that support is available when needed. The support for pupils experiencing emotional difficulties, through a lunchtime club and nurture group, is a particular strength. Academic guidance is satisfactory, which is an improvement on the last

inspection. Each class has targets for literacy and numeracy which pupils know and understand, but these are not sufficiently precise to define the next steps in learning for each individual.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Under the leadership of the headteacher who was appointed shortly before the last inspection, firm action has been taken to improve the quality of teaching and of middle leadership. Leaders and managers have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, especially the latter. Emerging strengths in the Early Years Foundation Stage have not been fully recognised. Effective arrangements have been made to ensure good quality education for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Subject leaders are active and effective. In mathematics and English, regular monitoring of teaching and pupils' work, supported by local authority staff, is leading to pupils making improved progress. The governing body has an improved understanding of its role in monitoring pupils' achievements, challenging the school to improve and providing the necessary support. The governors are at an early stage in ensuring that the school promotes community cohesion and this is reflected in pupils' weak understanding of other communities.



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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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**Overall effectiveness**

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

4 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Catherine's CE Primary and Nursery School, Newton Abbott TQ12 6SB

We very much enjoyed meeting you and talking to you when we visited your school recently. It was good to see you working and playing happily together in beautiful weather. This letter is to tell you what we thought of your school.

St Catherine's is a satisfactory school. It is improving, and some important things about it are now good. Children in Nursery and Reception receive a good start to their education. You behave well and know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe. You tell us you enjoy school. You do things to help others, such as helping younger children in the playground and by collecting for charities. The adults in school care for you well, and you trust them if you have a problem.

When you leave at the end of Year 6, almost all of you have the literacy and numeracy skills needed in secondary school. The best of the teaching helps you to think and to express yourselves well. Those of you who need it get good help from the teaching assistants, but you need more help to know how to learn on your own. Overall, your progress is satisfactory. You enjoy activities like sport and trips out of school. We know Year 5 and 6 enjoyed their trip to Swanage.

The headteacher and staff are working hard to improve the school and have already improved the ways in which you are taught English and mathematics. You are now given targets and know more about how to improve your work.

We have asked the school to help you to make even better progress, especially in your writing. We have also asked that you are given tasks in lessons that you do not find too easy or hard. We would also like you to be taught more about the different people that live in Britain and the rest of the world.

I would like to wish you every success in the future. If you have suggestions about how things at school could improve, politely talk to an adult about this.

Yours faithfully

Paul Sadler Lead Inspector