

# Stroud Valley Community Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115541
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	357771
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Carrington

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	232
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Christine Minett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debbie Sleep
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Castle Street Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2HP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01453 764400
<b>Fax number</b>	01453 755101
<b>Email address</b>	head@stroudvalley.gloucs.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 November 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	357771

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 11 lessons led by eight teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school planning, assessment data, samples of pupils' work, the school's monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a number of policy documents. The team received 89 questionnaires from parents and carers and also evaluated those from school staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the school is raising achievement, especially in writing and for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The improvements made to the use of assessment to support learning to help pupils evaluate their own work.
- The reliability of assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and its use to plan appropriate learning experiences indoors and outside.
- The drive and ambition of the governing body and staff to make improvements to the school's performance.
- The promotion of community cohesion outside the local area.

## Information about the school

Stroud Community is the same size as most primary schools. About a quarter of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above average. Nearly all the pupils are from White British or other White backgrounds. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a little above average. Most of these pupils have some form of learning difficulty including speech, language and communication needs. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the two Reception classes. Some of these children attend the new breakfast club that is managed by the governing body and which was inspected by the team.

The school has Healthy Schools Plus status and has the Artsmark gold award.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Stroud Valley Community Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has made a number of significant improvements, including to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in Years 1 to 6. Over recent years, it has closed the gap between pupils' achievement in the school and that found nationally. Attainment is broadly average by the time pupils leave Year 6 and pupils' progress is satisfactory. The books of pupils in Years 5 and 6 contain some expressive higher-level writing which demonstrates well the rise in attainment over the last three years. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given the help they need to make satisfactory progress.

As a result of good self-evaluation, senior leaders and members of the governing body have developed a detailed analysis of the quality of the school's work and its effect on pupils' progress. This includes effective tracking of progress and rigorous evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. School priorities for improvement are appropriate and development planning is effective. The necessary drive and ambition to improve is present amongst staff and members of the governing body. Senior leaders recognise that the three improvement areas identified by the inspection team will help the school move from satisfactory to good.

Leaders know that the following aspects are important areas for improvement. Work has begun on these but there is more to do.

- Assessment in Reception is not firmly enough focused on children's progress in the six areas of learning and so the information produced is incomplete. This affects the quality of planning and the use made of the outdoor area.
- In Years 1 to 6, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to think about, and discuss, their progress. The marking of work does not give enough detail of what has been accomplished and what has still to be completed in order to meet individual pupils' targets.
- The promotion of community cohesion is not extensive enough to help pupils understand the different communities found in the United Kingdom or overseas.

There are some good features to the school. Pupils' behaviour is orderly; they are polite, considerate and respectful. They have good awareness of healthy lifestyles which contributes to the Healthy Schools status. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their achievement in art is often impressive and imaginative. Assemblies and other activities provide ample opportunities for pupils to reflect on what is special for them. The school provides effective care, guidance and support, which is enhanced by its good partnerships with parents, carers and others.

Some outstanding teaching was observed in Years 5 and 6. The quality is not yet consistent through the school and so it is satisfactory rather than good at present. This

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

includes provision in Reception, where there has been a marked improvement in the quality of accommodation and resources outside. The school has established a sound track record of improvement. On the basis of policy and procedures in place, it has satisfactory capacity to maintain its rise.

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

- Improve assessment and planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - checking children's progress in all six areas regularly and thoroughly
  - ensuring the knowledge gained through assessment of progress is used to plan precisely children's next steps in learning
  - using displays in the classroom to show how well children are progressing
  - making sure the new outside area is used to develop the skills and knowledge identified for improvement by assessment.
- Strengthen the methods used to keep pupils in Years 1 to 6 informed of their targets and progress towards them by:
  - sharing targets for learning more clearly in discussion and displays in the classroom
  - making sure the marking of books gives enough information about how well pupils are progressing and what is the next step in their learning
  - reviewing the progress towards targets frequently enough in lessons
  - giving pupils ample opportunities to talk together and with the teacher about what they find easy and what is difficult.
- Widen pupils' understanding of different communities found in the United Kingdom and around the world by:
  - developing direct links between the pupils and other children in schools in this country and overseas
  - increasing pupils' understanding of other cultures, beliefs and celebrations.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
----------

Over the last three years, pupils' attainment has risen well. In the latest national assessments, it was broadly average in English and mathematics. The rise continues, with pupils' books this year containing better quality written work, especially in Years 5 and 6. In lessons, too, pupils' progress in writing has improved. In the outstanding lessons seen in Years 5 and 6, progress was particularly brisk. The pupils were enthused to write creatively due to the stimulus provided by the 'spooky house' theme and the teachers' very effective focus on personification. 'The destitute house screamed as it awoke, abandoned...' was one among many excellent responses from the pupils. Where teaching is satisfactory, the pace of learning is not as brisk, and progress slows.

The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good, enabling these pupils to be as successful learners as the others in class. Those with speech,

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

language and communication needs are motivated well to learning, especially in Years 5 and 6, where they progress well in English.

It is evident that pupils' progress accelerates as they grow older, with the best progress made in their final two years. At other times, progress is uneven and, while there is evidence of some good progress in earlier years, it is not consistent and is, therefore, satisfactory overall.

Pupils' enjoyment of learning is good most of the time and they are keen to do well. Attendance rates vary a little from year to year but the school promotes regular attendance effectively and so it is broadly average. Pupils feel safe in school and their depth of knowledge about healthy lifestyles is good. They talk wisely, for example, about the benefits of a healthy diet and participation in competitive sport such as the football tournament held with other schools during the inspection. Pupils take a good role within the school community, showing good ideas for how it can improve. They also have plentiful opportunities to take part in local events including Stroud Carnival and singing French carols at the local Christmas market. The pupils are prepared appropriately for the next stage of their education because they are able to work sensibly, independently and collaboratively by the end of Year 6.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching quality is improving. Like pupils' progress, it increases in effectiveness in later years. Generally, lessons are planned appropriately and key learning outcomes are identified clearly. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers sometimes talk for too long, which means there is less time for pupils to complete the practical activities or their written work. This is contrasted in Years 5 and 6 where lessons provide ample challenge and stimulus for pupils to make rapid progress and ample opportunities to manage their own learning.

The use of assessment to support learning is sometimes good, but not yet equally effective in all classes, and so is satisfactory overall. It is this that prevents teaching being good through the school. There is variability in the quality of procedures to keep pupils informed of their targets for learning and progress towards them. Where this is at its best, pupils take particular responsibility for their own learning and are motivated to extra effort and brisker working, with the result that their work is of a better standard. School leaders have already identified the improvement of the use of assessment to accelerate progress as a key priority.

There are merits to the curriculum, including the personal, social and health education of pupils and provision in art, which are of high quality. The use of information and communication technology to broaden pupils' skills and knowledge across the curriculum is satisfactory and is being increased appropriately, as are links between subjects, especially to support improved progress in writing. The curriculum is satisfactory rather than good because it is not yet flexible enough to allow for aspects of the curriculum to be explored in greater depth or extended fully according to pupils' individual next steps in learning. This, again, arises from the inconsistencies in the use of assessment to support learning.

Care and support are particular strengths of the school that enable it to cater successfully for the needs of both vulnerable children and those with barriers to learning. The staff are caring, kind and responsive to pupils' personal and social needs, helping them to settle in school and learn soundly. Some good guidance is given, although it is not always firmly enough rooted in the evaluation of the information arising from assessment. The new breakfast club provides an enjoyable experience for pupils and helps them prepare effectively for the day's work in school

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The governing body is committed to the success of the school and increasingly influential in bringing about improvement. Its members have appropriate opportunities to monitor the school's work. They are starting to review key performance data directly rather than always basing their understanding on what others tell them. The governing body ensures the safeguarding of children is thorough and reliable, although essential documents are not always organised and coordinated simply and clearly enough to make this good. Currently, a few documents are not easily enough located for instant reference by staff or members of the governing body.

The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Leaders have accurately identified how it may be improved. While pupils have a good understanding of and involvement in the school and local community, and appropriate awareness of other cultures and beliefs, they have limited opportunities to meet or communicate directly with pupils from different backgrounds elsewhere in the United Kingdom or overseas. The school does not tolerate discrimination of any form, which is made absolutely clear in its policies and procedures.

The school's partnerships with parents and carers are good. The parents and carers have a high profile around the school and share positive views of its work. Partnerships with other agencies, schools and individuals are also effective because they enable staff to improve the quality of provision. This is noticeable in the case of the support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils' equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Pupils are enabled to make appropriate progress and reach the expected standards in English and mathematics. Much of their personal development is good. Overall, equality is not yet good because work is not always sufficiently enough geared to pupils' individual targets. However, the school is well led by the headteacher, and other staff are increasingly effective in making improvements, so the school has the capacity to increase equality and its overall performance. Leaders demonstrate a secure capacity to improve teaching and learning, as is evidenced by their work to improve behaviour and pupils' achievement.



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

The school has improved the quality of the outdoor space well and parents and carers have some good opportunities to share in their children's learning. This is evident during the early morning when parents and carers are welcomed into class to sit and read with their children or to take part in other activities. Parents and carers of children in Reception think this is one of the better ways in which the school keeps them informed of their children's progress. The children enjoy their time in school and play and work happily together, as was observed when they climbed the large apparatus outside or played cheerfully together in the classroom.

The quality of indoor and outdoor learning is satisfactory, enabling the children to make appropriate progress from their starting levels of skills and knowledge, which are below those expected for the age. By the time the children join Year 1, attainment is below average, although most have reached their targets. Children's work in the classrooms and in their books shows few reach the higher levels in their work.

Assessment is not yet helpful enough to accelerate children's learning. This is because there is not enough evidence of regular assessment of children's skills and knowledge in all of the six areas of learning. Although there is some attractive work by children displayed, there is too little information of what it shows of their achievement. Planning is sometimes imprecise in relating the activities provided to the learning needs of the children. So, teaching and learning are inconsistent, and while satisfactory overall, they do not always lead to best progress being made by the children. Leadership of the stage is satisfactory and staff are determined to make improvements in the quality of provision so that children increase their progress.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The return of the parents and carers' questionnaires was broadly in line with the national average. Parents and carers hold very positive views of the school overall. In their written comments, a few expressed concerns about the communication between home and school and the information parents and carers receive to help them support their children's learning. Inspectors judge from this inspection that on the whole, communication is effective and that parents and carers are well involved in school activities and in helping their children's education. The positive comments of parents and carers centred on the effectiveness of staff and the headteacher's leadership. Many also wrote that their children were happy in school. The evidence of inspection matches these positive views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stroud Valley Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 232 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	63	32	36	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	59	66	28	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	35	39	45	51	7	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	37	46	52	8	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	45	44	49	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	46	39	44	7	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	36	51	57	5	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	31	35	44	49	6	7	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	43	48	36	40	6	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	37	46	52	2	2	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	45	42	47	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	38	43	43	48	5	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	55	34	38	4	4	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



26 November 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Stroud Valley Community Primary School, Stroud GL5 2HP**

Thank you for the enthusiastic welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and watching you learn. We read your questionnaires carefully and found you enjoy school, although some of you are worried about behaviour. In fact, we thought you were polite, friendly and well behaved. In our report, we write that your school gives you a satisfactory education. In it, we make judgements about other things in school:

You make satisfactory progress and reach the levels usually expected.

Children in Reception enjoy school and make the expected progress.

You know how to keep healthy and safe.

Teaching is satisfactory and there are now more good lessons than in the past.

You are well looked after and all the staff encourage you to do well.

Your school is led and managed soundly and has made some successful improvements.

We also write about three important things to improve next:

The work for children in Reception to help them to learn more quickly.

Provide more opportunities in Years 1 to 6 to talk about how well you are learning.

Give you more help in learning about people in other parts of this country and abroad.

We know all of you will help your teachers make these improvements. To start, you could explain to your parents, carers and teachers about the things you find easy and difficult at school.

We wish you success in your learning.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 1234 234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**