

Stroud Valley Primary School

Castle Street, Stroud, GL5 2HP

Inspection dates 19–20 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils achieve well. Their needs are met well throughout the school and most make good progress to reach average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers make sure that pupils enjoy learning and as a result they are eager to learn.
- Pupils behave well, are courteous and respectful to each other and have excellent relationships with the adults in school.
- Pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium make good progress because of the good quality care and support they receive.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are fully included in all learning activities, which reflects the school's commitment to equal opportunities. They make good progress and achieve well.
- The headteacher has made sure that all staff and governors expect the best for the pupils. Together with senior staff and governors, she has developed a strong sense of ambition which has resulted in improved teaching and raised standards.
- Parents and carers are extremely pleased with the quality of care and education their children receive.
- The interesting range of activities offered by the school make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Subject leaders are not fully involved in checking the progress of pupils in their subject areas.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They also observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with members of staff and eight members of the governing body. In addition, a conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined the school’s own documentation relating to pupils’ progress, attendance, behaviour logs, school self-evaluation, the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings and policies relating to safeguarding.
- They visited the on-site after-school club to talk to staff and children.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 6 read, and spoke informally to pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- They looked at pupils’ books from across the school in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors took account of 52 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and also spoke informally to groups of parents and carers at the start of the day. In addition, they considered a small number of emails and letters received from parents and carers.
- Inspectors took account of 29 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Anne Newall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

George Long

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to most primary schools.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- About one-in-eight pupils in the school who are disabled or have special educational needs are supported at school action, which is a higher proportion than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is similar to the national average. Currently, there are no pupils attending the school who are in the care of the local authority or who are members of service families.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school operates an on-site breakfast and after-school club which are managed by the governing body.
- A number of awards have been earned by the school, including the Healthy Schools award and the Rights Respecting School award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 by:
 - using assessment more effectively within lessons so that the most able pupils are given work that challenges them to do better, so that they reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Increase the impact of subject leaders by:
 - involving them more closely in monitoring work in their subjects, including lesson observations, so that they are fully aware of pupils' progress and can support their colleagues to raise attainment further.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of children start school with skills and abilities which are generally well below those expected for their age. Due to lively and interesting teaching which captures their imagination and inspires them to try hard, most make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although their attainment is below average by the time they enter Year 1.
- Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils continue to make good progress although some, particularly the more able, do not reach the higher standards of which they are capable because their work is not always difficult enough to challenge them. As a result, not enough achieve the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school and reach standards of attainment by the end of Year 6 which are broadly average in English and mathematics. Standards are improving further because of outstanding teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress. This is because their needs are closely identified and they receive good teaching with specific additional support from skilled and experienced teaching assistants.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make similar, and in some cases, better progress compared to other pupils in the school because their individual needs are identified, support is given to help them in class and in small groups, and the effectiveness of this support is checked to make sure it works. The pupil premium has been used to buy in extra help for these pupils throughout the school. The average point score of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in 2012 was just below that of other pupils in both English and mathematics and gaps in attainment between these and other pupils are closing.
- The proportion of pupils who met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was similar to the national average, and by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 they read confidently, fluently and with enjoyment. Pupils who read to the inspectors spoke enthusiastically about the school's reading challenge against other schools and how this had encouraged them to read more frequently.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- Where teaching is best, pupils make excellent progress in understanding and applying new skills. This was seen, for example, in an outstanding Years 5/6 mathematics lesson where pupils linked decimals, percentages and fractions when solving problems. Skilful intervention by both the teacher and teaching assistant moved the pupils' learning on rapidly.
- Another example of active learning was seen in an outstanding Years 5/6 physical education lesson where pupils built upon their previously developed skills of balancing, changing direction and altering speed to improve their routines. Their teacher filmed their work and used playback immediately so that pupils could evaluate each other's performances and suggest improvements.
- Children in Reception are taught how to improve their own learning by choosing activities themselves, for example writing in the 'squishy shaving foam', and taking responsibility for tidying up equipment afterwards.
- In some classes, pupils' work is carefully marked with constructive comments which help them to understand exactly what they have to do next to improve. Staff have recognised that this is a strong feature of good learning and it is being shared across the school.
- Occasionally, teachers do not move pupils, particularly the most able, on to new learning quickly enough to challenge them. Consequently, not all make the rapid progress that they are capable of. In a small minority of lessons, teachers talk too much in lessons or give too much direction.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are given precisely tailored support by their teachers and teaching assistants which helps them to make good progress. Their progress

is regularly checked by the school's new special educational needs coordinator, who offers excellent advice to staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, showing excellent manners and courtesy towards each other and adults. They enjoy a range of responsibilities in their classrooms and around the school, and appreciate earning 'raffle tickets' for good work and behaviour.
- The pupils work well together and their social skills are encouraged by group work and helping each other in class. There are just occasional instances of silly behaviour in lessons when pupils are not fully involved in learning because the tasks set do not fully catch their interest.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children feel safe and secure quickly through the use of 'soft time', when their parents and carers are encouraged to come in with them to involve them in an activity and make friends. Parents and carers say they are made to feel welcome and appreciate being involved in their children's early days at school.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong, and older pupils talk about their responsibility towards ensuring their own and each other's happiness. They are knowledgeable about safety and show consideration for each other when they play very sensibly on their multi-level playgrounds.
- Pupils also have a good understanding of keeping themselves safe in a range of situations, including e-safety. They are aware of different forms of bullying such as name-calling and cyber bullying. They say that bullying is very rare in school and that 'if it did happen, the teachers would sort it out quickly'.
- Attendance is average and improving because staff are vigilant in dealing with non-attendance and because pupils enjoy their lessons and want to be in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have correctly identified the school's strengths and weaknesses. They work closely with governors to implement appropriate action plans. As a result, the quality of teaching and the resources to support teaching have improved considerably since the last inspection. Consequently, pupils are making better progress and standards are improving across the school. This indicates that the school has the capacity to improve further.
- Senior leaders analyse information about the progress of each pupil and monitor the quality of teaching. They use this information to set targets and hold teachers to account for their pupils' progress. These good procedures for managing the performance of teachers have helped to identify teachers' training needs, and these have been addressed through support from outstanding teachers within the school as well as from external sources.
- Subject leaders check the progress of different groups of pupils, but are not yet involved fully in checking all aspects of their subject, for example observing lessons so that they can gain a full picture of pupils' achievement. This means that they have had limited impact on improving teaching through supporting their colleagues.
- Pupils throughout the school are given equal opportunity to succeed and staff ensure there is no discrimination. Several parents and carers wrote to say that the school does, 'treat each child as special and important'. The school has developed excellent relationships with parents and carers, as well as with a range of external agencies to ensure pupils receive the help and support they need.
- The school offers a range of topics and activities which enthuse the pupils, such as 'Water, Water Everywhere', and is enriched by visits, for example to the nearby Slimbridge Wetlands and to the local museum.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for the school.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governors have a good range of skills. They attend training which provides them with the skills to question and challenge senior leaders about how well the school is performing. They are very supportive of the headteacher and staff, and share their ambition for the school to be successful. Governors receive regular reports from senior staff about the school's work, and consequently have a good picture of all aspects. Individual governors are responsible for liaising with members of staff over various parts of school life, such as child protection and special educational needs, and they also visit classes. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement and where it needs to be improved. They are well informed about the management of teachers' performance, including that of the headteacher, and they review teachers' pay accordingly. Governors supported the school's decision to buy in additional support with the pupil premium to provide additional help for groups and individual pupils. The school's finances are well managed.

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

Unique reference number	115541
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	405585

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernard Hodgkin
Headteacher	Debbie Sleep
Date of previous school inspection	25–26 November 2010
Telephone number	01453 764400
Email address	admin@stroudvalley.gloucs.sch.uk

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