

Sheepscombe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115534
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	379093
Inspection dates	30–31 January 2012
Lead inspector	Jill Bavin

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Willard
Headteacher	Paul Lailey
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2008
School address	Far End Sheepscombe Stroud GL6 7RL
Telephone number	01452 813852
Fax number	01452 813852
Email address	admin@sheepscombe.gloucs.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	30–31 January 2012
Inspection number	379093



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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 123 4234, or email 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 information 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'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
 Textphone: 0161 618 8524
 E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
 W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Jill Bavin

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed eight lessons taught by three teachers and one higher-level teaching assistant, listened to pupils read and examined work in pupils' books. Additionally, the inspector met with pupils, members of staff and members of the governing body. A variety of documentation related to safeguarding, data about pupils' progress, monitoring and evaluation records, and school development plans was scrutinised. The inspector took account of responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Questionnaire responses from pupils, staff and 41 parents and carers were analysed during the inspection.

Information about the school

This is a much smaller primary school than most. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes in the mornings and in two mixed-age classes in the afternoons. One class teacher works full-time. All of the other class teachers work part-time. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals are both below average. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is below average. A higher proportion of pupils join the school after the Reception Year than is typical nationally.

Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes in the leadership, management and organisation of the school. The current, part-time headteacher is the third in the last 18 months. He took up post in September 2011 when a collaborative partnership, including shared headship, with Cranham Church of England Primary School began. At the same time, the school opened an eight-place Nursery for four sessions each week. The governing body has an entirely new membership since the previous inspection and more than half the members are new this academic year.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and 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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	4

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures, because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- Pupils’ achievement is inadequate because many pupils are making slow progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 to 4. Pupils typically leave Key Stage 2 with levels of attainment that exceed national averages in English and mathematics. This occurs because in Years 5 and 6 the quality of teaching and learning is good and the pace of learning accelerates.
- There is too much inadequate teaching and not enough that is good because expectations of many pupils are too low. Teachers do not plan routinely or effectively to meet the varying needs of pupils between Years 1 and 4 or for more able children in the Reception Year. These pupils do not receive sufficient helpful feedback about their achievements or guidance about how to improve. The features of good teaching and learning evident in Years 5 and 6 are not shared with other staff. The current organisation of the day, and the ways in which teaching groups are organised, do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to develop and record their ideas fully in English and mathematics.
- Typically, pupils’ behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils behave sensibly in lessons and around the school. Behaviour has improved with the introduction of ‘family points.’ When pupils’ learning needs are met well, they respond positively in lessons. They mostly feel safe in school and develop a secure understanding of safety issues. Attendance rates are rising.
- Leadership and management are inadequate because they have not secured good enough achievement for pupils in Years 1 to 4. There has been insufficient improvement since the previous inspection. The new headteacher has a good

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

understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Under his leadership, there have been several recent and positive developments. However, it is too soon for these promising improvements to have had a full impact on pupils' learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that assessments of pupils' learning provide a reliable and accurate basis for measuring their progress and planning the next steps
 - making better use of learning time during the school day, ensuring that in afternoon sessions there is time to complete activities

- Ensure that by January 2013 all teaching and learning is at least satisfactory and most is good by:
 - making sure that the work planned meets the needs of all pupils
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality, quantity and presentation of pupils' work
 - monitoring pupils' progress in reading more closely
 - routinely providing pupils with feedback about their achievements and next steps during lessons and through marking in books
 - sharing the features of good teaching.

- Develop the capacity of staff and governors to understand and use information about pupils' progress and school performance to bring about improvements to teaching and achievement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

While most parents and carers are positive about their children's achievements, many make slow progress in Years 1 to 4. The inspector found that attainment is above average when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 but lesson observations and an analysis of work in pupils' books confirmed that, although boys and girls make good progress in Years 5 and 6, they are disadvantaged by not having made sufficiently consistent progress in learning in Years 1 to 4.

Although there are variations year on year in small cohorts, children typically enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment which is broadly as expected for this age group. They make satisfactory progress in the Nursery. For example children made satisfactory gains in developing their vocabulary and ideas while discussing a book about farms. Children generally make satisfactory progress in Reception to reach broadly average attainment by the start of Year 1. However, there are times when more able children are not challenged enough and therefore do not do as well

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

as they should.

Pupils in Years 1 to 4 make inadequate progress in writing and mathematics because too often their individual needs are not met in lessons. Typically, pupils' attainment in reading is broadly average by the end of Year 2. Pupils, including those who sometimes struggle to decode words, understand the links between letters and sounds that they need to apply. However, a small minority of pupils leave Year 2 well below expectations for their age in reading. This is because their progress is not being monitored effectively and they spend too long reading books that are too easy for them.

Although there is some variation in achievement for individual pupils, there is no pattern of difference for any group of pupils. Those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those who join the school after Reception or those from minority ethnic groups make similar rates of progress. The development of assessment procedures to identify precise learning needs for pupils who have special educational needs or who are disabled is recent. As a result, targeted support for these pupils is still developing and their rates of progress are similar to their classmates throughout the school.

During the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 made good progress in applying their understanding of division to fractions and decimals. All groups of pupils within the class learned well because the tasks were well planned, adapted and presented to suit their various needs and ability. Higher-attaining pupils were challenged well with a demanding problem-solving task. Different groups of pupils, with different levels of skill, identified their achievements, such as their increased accuracy with calculations, and shared these with the inspector. They could do this because they are well informed about how well they are doing during lessons and through marking. As a result of a similarly effective dialogue and good teaching in Years 5 and 6 pupils make good progress in reading and writing and, despite gaps in previous learning, achieve well.

Quality of teaching

Although there is a perception by parents and carers that teaching is good, inspectors found that the quality of teaching was inadequate. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 reported that they seem to review work a lot and their understanding of how to improve their work is very general. Inspection evidence indicates that teaching is typically inadequate for pupils in Years 1 to 4. Teachers mostly have good relationships with pupils, which contributes to positive behaviour management and the satisfactory promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Topics such as 'inventors' successfully generate interest, but the impact of this on pupils' learning is undermined by low expectations of pupils' capabilities.

Lesson plans for pupils in Reception and Years 1 to 4 record different learning intentions for different year groups within the class, but do not consistently identify a good level of challenge for pupils of different abilities. This is a key factor in pupils'

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

inadequate progress. While the required curriculum is covered, because of the way the day is organised there is sometimes too little time available for pupils to finish what they have to do and this hinders their progress.

During some lessons in Reception and Years 1 to 4, misunderstandings, such as a pupil confusing '110' with '101', are not addressed often enough. Pupils receive too little feedback about their achievements and next steps. Guided reading sessions vary in their usefulness because, while adults may patiently support one pupil, other pupils are not necessarily extending their skills and understanding. Pupils' work in books indicates that insufficient attention is paid to addressing their most important needs and marking is seldom very helpful. For example, a pupil who wrote imaginatively and creatively, but with weaknesses in spelling or sentence construction in September still showed the same pattern of strengths and weaknesses in January. In most books, pupils produce little written work, so opportunities to develop their writing skills are too limited. Similarly, pupils seldom record in mathematics books how they have reached their mathematical conclusions. As a result, they do not have a record of strategies they have used to refer to. Teachers do not show high enough expectations of pupils' quality and quantity of work. It is too often poorly presented and this is not addressed.

In Years 5 and 6, constructive and detailed marking contributes to good progress in areas of previous weakness. Feedback during lessons is good. Skilful questioning gives the teacher an immediate understanding of who needs extra help and who needs the opportunity to work independently. This results in extra explanations and questioning for targeted pupils. In these year groups, pupils understand what they are doing and why because the lesson focus is consistently reinforced. A good level of expectation engenders pupils' pride in their work and its presentation.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Typically, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. In lessons when work is too easy or too difficult, pupils very rarely become disruptive, but they lose concentration and younger pupils become fidgety. The headteacher quickly recognised that pupils' motivation would be enhanced with a tangible reward system. Pupils appreciate earning 'Golden Time'. They report, either in discussion or through their questionnaire responses, that there is very little bullying of any sort; however, for a few pupils, occasional name-calling can be hurtful. They are confident about approaching an adult with such problems. Attendance rates have improved this year and are currently above average.

Most parents and carers consider that behaviour in school is good, that there is very little bullying and learning is seldom disrupted in lessons. A minority of parents and carers, and some pupils, expressed concern about the behaviour of those pupils who need particular help in exercising self-control. There is evidence of improvement in the behaviour of some pupils with challenging difficulties, in response to the school's strategies. The few exclusions have been appropriately handled and reflect the school's sound work to manage behaviour.

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

The personal, social and health education curriculum, as well as topics in assemblies, provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to understand how to make safe choices. Pupils are involved in devising class rules and make pledges to 'not be mean'. A recent development is the provision of a social skills programme for pupils with particular social and emotional needs. It is too soon for this to have had a full impact for all the pupils who are involved.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has made a good start to supporting staff and pupils, based on an accurate understanding of most of the school's strengths and weaknesses. In seeking to raise the quality of teaching and learning, he has provided staff with systematic professional development from trainers external to the school. As a result, two members of staff have begun to improve provision for pupils who have special educational needs or who are disabled. However, this work has not yet secured sufficient improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Staff and governors do not consistently identify and share reliable and accurate assessment information on which to base their evaluation of pupils' achievement, the school's performance and lesson planning.

Staff and members of the governing body have not had enough training or opportunity to contribute effectively to driving school improvement. In spite of the satisfactory promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, the curriculum is inadequate. This is because it does not provide sufficient focus on extending pupils' writing and mathematical skills throughout the school. The headteacher recognises that the current organisation of the school day with a long morning and a short afternoon session does not make best use of teaching time. This has yet to be addressed. The school's commitment to anti-discriminatory practice is without question. Nevertheless, the school does not promote equality of opportunity sufficiently well because some more-able pupils especially in Reception and Years 1 to 4 are not always provided with sufficient challenge to fulfil their potential and consequently underachieve.

Members of the governing body have made a good start to identifying their skills and the training they require. Safeguarding arrangements continue to meet requirements. However, since the previous inspection, the governing body and the school's leaders have had insufficient impact on the school's development. The quality of teaching, and pupils' achievement, have fallen from satisfactory to inadequate; the curriculum from good to inadequate. This track record shows that the school has inadequate capacity for improvement. Leadership and management are inadequate because weaknesses in previous years have prevented the school from moving forward sufficiently, and more recent developments are too new to have had sufficient positive impact.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Sheepscombe Primary School, Stroud GL6 7RL

Thank you for being so helpful when I visited your school recently. A special thank you goes to those pupils who filled in questionnaires, those who read to me, and to those who shared their ideas about learning and behaviour in the school so sensibly with me. Here are some of the good things happening in your school:

- you get on well together and behave sensibly in lessons
- you have good relationships with the teachers and teaching assistants, which helps you to feel safe
- there is very little bullying and you can always approach an adult for help
- your new headteacher has made a good start to getting to know everyone.

However, you are not all making enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics, so I have placed your school in 'special measures'. This means that the school will receive help to put things right. Other inspectors will visit your school regularly to help your headteacher and teachers make improvements. The most important priorities for everyone to address are to make sure that:

- teachers know what you can do and plan work that challenges you
- staff help you understand what you have done well and need to do next
- lessons are organised so you have time to develop your ideas and work hard
- your reading books are always at the right level for you
- you have plenty of opportunities to write things down, always as neatly as possible
- governors and teachers get further training to help them understand information about how well everyone is doing

All of you can help by continuing to behave well, coming to school regularly and sensibly telling your teacher if the work is too easy or too difficult for you. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin
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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**