

# Stroud and Cotswold Alternative Provision School

Ryelease Road, Stroud, GL5 1JR

**Inspection dates** 2–3 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress is not strong enough to lead to good achievement, owing to weaknesses in teaching. Overall, pupils do not attain standards that pupils reach nationally. Pupils have not achieved as well as they should have done. Standards are not high enough.
- Teachers do not always ensure that what pupils are meant to learn is clear, or that activities are relevant and challenging enough.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because too few show a keenness to learn in lessons.
- The safety of pupils requires improvement. The attendance of students in Key Stage 4 is too low and fixed term exclusions are too high.
- The school's improvement is recent and has been too slow. The actions of leaders and managers have not assured good teaching or achievement. Parents do not receive enough information about their child's academic progress.
- Governance has not been strong enough to ensure the school improves. Until recently, the management committee has not supported or challenged the school well enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- The newly appointed headteacher has, in a short time, brought about improvements, including in the quality of teaching, and has raised staff morale.
- The school has an accurate picture of where it is and what it needs to do to improve.
- Pupils, parents and other schools value the school highly.
- Achievement, teaching and behaviour are improving. There are now examples of good teaching and good progress.
- Members of the recently restructured management committee are knowledgeable and experienced. They are now challenging and supporting the school better than in the past.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in five lessons and a Year 11 examination revision session on the school's two adjacent centres. He compared findings with observations previously made by the headteacher. Morning break and lunch arrangements were also seen.
- Meetings were held with pupils, a parent, staff, members of the management committee, and representatives of the local authority. A telephone discussion was held with the Local Authority Designated Officer.
- The inspector listened to pupils read to the rest of the class in lessons.
- He looked at the school's work and examined various documents, including ones relating to keeping pupils safe. He also looked at records of pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Some 16 questionnaires completed by staff were analysed.
- There were insufficient responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire, to show results. The inspector looked at the results of a parent survey done by the school.

## Inspection team

Michael Farrell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, in September 2011, changes have taken place in the school's structure. In April 2013, the former Stroud and Cotswold Pupil Referral Service with three centres became the Stroud and Cotswold Alternative Provision School with two centres on the same site: Belle Vue and Ryeleaze. The Ryeleaze Centre, known as the Whitminster Centre at the previous inspection, educates Key Stage 4 students who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. The Belle View Centre, newly commissioned in September 2014, educates pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. It also educates students in Key Stage 3 who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from the mainstream. While the school is registered to take pupils as young as five, it has never taken any pupils of this age and has no plans to do so in the future. The school educates very small numbers of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, sometimes individual pupils.
- The provision has experienced considerable turbulence, especially in its leadership. In 2013, the headteacher, and soon after the deputy headteacher, left and the school was led by the second deputy. A new headteacher started in September 2013. Around this time, at the request of staff, the local authority increased its monitoring and support. The headteacher left in April 2014, soon after which the second deputy left. From April 2014, an interim headteacher was appointed. In September 2014, local authority support was further formalised and increased.
- From October 2014, when the local authority and others were concerned about the quality and continuity of governance, a project committee was formed to work in tandem with the management committee. In March 2015, the management committee was reconstituted.
- The current permanent headteacher was appointed in April 2015. At the time of the inspection, he had been in post for six weeks. A recently appointed executive headteacher oversees this school and two other pupil referral settings.
- The school provides commissioned places for up to 54 pupils unable to attend mainstream provision. Pupils may be referred at any age and at different times of the year. Seven pupils have a statement of special educational needs or its newer equivalent, an education, health and care plan. Just over a quarter of pupils are girls.
- A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds; a very small number are in the care of the local authority. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school does not receive additional catch-up funding for Year 7 literacy and numeracy, nor primary sport funding.
- About a quarter of pupils are supported by pupil premium funding, which is additional government money for pupils eligible for free school meals or who are looked after. This proportion is a little lower than average. Very few pupils in Years 6 and 11 are eligible for pupil premium.
- Alternative provision for a small number of pupils is offered part time. When students are not attending that provision, typically they attend the main school. There are three providers: Prospects Training, Stonehouse, near Stroud, provides for six Key Stage 4 students; The Door, High Street, Stroud, educates two Key Stage 4 students; Open House, Gloucester Street, Stroud, provides for four students from Key Stages 3 and 4.

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

- Improve teaching and pupils' achievement to good or better in all key stages by:
  - ensuring that what pupils are meant to learn is clear and explicit and that checks are made in lessons that pupils have learned what is intended
  - providing greater challenge to all pupils in lessons so that they have to try harder and show greater enthusiasm for learning
  - making learning more relevant and increasing opportunities to demonstrate the use of literacy and numeracy in daily life (functional skills and understanding) especially in Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Improve attendance, especially in Key Stage 4, including by extending the strategies already used and systematically evaluating the outcomes.
- Reduce fixed term exclusions, especially in Key Stage 4, by ensuring that teaching and planned activities for learning are more relevant and engaging.

- Improve pupils' feelings of safety and understanding of keeping safe including by:
  - providing pupils with fuller access to appropriate outside professionals
  - increasing the existing opportunities for pupils to learn about keeping safe and regularly checking that they are fully understood.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - extending the monitoring of achievement, teaching and guidance to teachers to improve their teaching
  - widen the curriculum so that pupils can more fully demonstrate functional skills and knowledge, including in literacy and numeracy
  - improving information offered to parents, including developing a full prospectus.
- Improve the governance of the management committee, including by:
  - ensuring that members consistently hold the school to account for improving achievement, teaching, behaviour and leadership
  - evaluating rigorously their own performance and ensuring they now consistently provide at least good support and challenge to the school.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

---

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- Leadership turmoil has led to the effectiveness of leadership and management deteriorating over time, slowing the impetus for improvement. The leadership and management of teaching require improvement because monitoring and encouraging improvement in teaching have not been good enough, so that the quality of teaching and achievement have declined.
- Until recently, attendance has not been effectively promoted and fixed term exclusions have been overused. The atmosphere for learning has deteriorated and standards of behaviour declined.
- Until late in 2014, the management committee was not fulfilling its functions well enough, raising concerns about the effectiveness of governance.
- More recently there have been important improvements. The reconstituted management committee is challenging and supporting the school better. The new headteacher has quickly secured improvements. For example, strengths and weaknesses of teaching have been identified and improvements made. This has been done through short observations and discussions with teachers and there are plans to carry out fuller lesson observations. Staff morale is improved. The atmosphere for learning is improving, and pupils' behaviour and attitudes are getting better.
- Until recently, the role of middle leaders in monitoring has been underdeveloped. The headteacher has agreed new roles for middle leaders and their effectiveness is improving as they are starting to take fuller responsibilities.
- The school is now using assessment information more fully to identify when pupils are at risk of slipping behind and to take action. Effective careers guidance and advice help leavers to move into education, training or employment.
- The subjects pupils study broadly meet pupils' needs, contributing to the currently improving picture of progress and behaviour. However, activities are not always sufficiently engaging and relevant. Although there are opportunities to discuss and learn about keeping safe, these are not reinforced, assessed and evaluated enough to ensure that pupils feel safe to a good degree. There are not enough opportunities for functional skills to be developed, practised and demonstrated.
- For pupils who are absent or have fixed term exclusions from the school, their equality of opportunity to succeed is not yet good because their progress is affected. The school has ensured that there is no inadequate teaching. Any discrimination is addressed and good relationships are encouraged.
- The provision and progress of pupils attending alternative provision are suitably monitored. Checks have been made on pupils' safety, attendance is checked daily, and progress and achievement are monitored carefully.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is starting to be encouraged effectively. Spiritual development and moral development are encouraged in discussions about moral issues, such as drug use and, for younger pupils, through moral stories. Social skills are developed through social times, such as lunch, and through staff setting a good example. Cultural development is enhanced through art, stories, and visits. British values are effectively promoted so that pupils are tolerant of others. This effectively helps pupils at all key stages to develop awareness of values such as fairness and respect and to prepare for life in modern Britain.
- The local authority provides effective support in training staff and monitoring the school. Opportunities for staff professional development are useful and relevant. Parents speak highly of the school and are confident that their child is safe. They receive clear information about their child's personal and social progress, but not enough about academic progress.
- The headteacher has taken swift action to ensure the school works effectively to promote partnerships with other schools who write appreciatively of 'excellent' communication.
- Pupil premium funding is effectively targeted, for example on special resources for literacy, and the monitoring of its impact is improving.
- Safeguarding meets requirements. Records of staff checks are carefully kept. Some records on staff child protection training were incomplete and the school has rectified this. There are examples where the school has strongly and effectively supported some of its most vulnerable pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Since the previous inspection, the effectiveness of governance declined and the management committee did not hold the school to account rigorously enough. The effectiveness of governance following interventions from October 2014 is now improving, although not yet good. Members of the newly formed management committee have a wide range of skills and experience. Having worked in parallel with the project committee formed to strengthen governance, the management committee is

supporting and challenging the school more effectively. The members know the students' standards and achievement, and how they broadly compare with that of students nationally, through visiting the school and receiving reports. They are increasingly aware of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching from first-hand observations and from external reviews of teaching. A review of the performance of the new headteacher is scheduled for September 2015. The management committee is aware of the performance management of other staff. Members recognise that, in the past, rewards have not necessarily been closely related to good teaching, but now have systems to help ensure that it is.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## require improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Since the previous inspection, the difficulties the school experienced led to pupils' behaviour deteriorating. Attendance is too low, especially for older students. Fixed term exclusions are too high, particularly in Key Stage 4.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, especially where lessons are not very engaging, shows little keenness to learn. There are occasional disruptions to lessons when, as pupils say, someone is 'kicking off'. Behaviour at lunchtimes tends to be settled and sociable, but at break times less so.
- In the past year, and especially since the appointment of the new headteacher, there have been improvements. Where there are disruptions, these are patiently dealt with by staff and before long learning resumes.
- The attendance and behaviour of pupils attending alternative provision improve during their time there. An audit of these provisions indicates that pupils are safe.
- There is no litter or graffiti in the school. The building and classrooms are tidy and attractive because pupils appreciate the facilities.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- A school survey a year ago and discussions with pupils during the inspection indicated that some pupils had some concerns regarding aspects of safety. They express some anxieties, for example about when other pupils are disruptive.
- Pupils know about keeping safe when using the internet and remember the work the school has done to remind them of this. However, they not fully confident beyond the basic information.
- The school teaches pupils about safety; for example, there are discussions about drug abuse. However, this is not yet done to a depth and an extent that ensure that pupils feel fully confident about keeping safe in different situations and contexts.
- Pupils attest that bullying is uncommon and they know they can talk to a member of staff if any occurs, or if they have any other concerns. They regularly meet for mentoring sessions, which they find very supportive.
- Parents express no concerns about the safety of their child. Staff are confident pupils are safe in school. An audit of the safety of pupils attending alternative provision indicated that pupils are safe there.

## The quality of teaching

## requires improvement

- Teaching at both sites and in all key stages requires improvement as many pupils have not learned well enough since the previous inspection. The impact of teaching in literacy, reading and mathematics, and in a range of other subjects, is not good enough for pupils to make rapid progress.
- In the primary phase, a range of activities support the development of pupils' literacy, including sequencing and reading traditional stories. However, because, over time, the objectives of what is to be learnt are not always clear pupils' progress is not rapid enough.
- In mathematics, the planned activities tend to not to interest or motivate pupils enough for them to progress as well as they could. Too often teaching does not explain the relevance and importance of mathematics in the everyday world and so does not engage the pupils fully in their learning.
- Observations of learning in lessons and evidence from pupils' books over time show that teaching requires improvement because of one or more of the following features:
  - what pupils are learning is not always clear enough to them; sometimes the aims of the lesson and what is assessed are different, which is confusing to pupils
  - activities, including in English and mathematics, are not sufficiently captivating or related to pupils' lives

and what pupils already know and understand

- pupils' attitudes to their learning show a lack of interest and too few show enjoyment in their learning
- there are too few opportunities for pupils to apply the knowledge and skills they are learning to everyday life and situations so that they can make fuller sense of their learning
- teaching does not always challenge pupils enough because tasks are too easy for them.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive, and staff set good examples of courtesy and respect.
- There are good examples in lessons where questions are well pitched to pupils' ability and this helps learning. Teaching assistants contribute well to lessons. Teachers and assistants work closely together as a team. Teaching of art is good. Pupils say they greatly enjoy the subject and they produce striking work in various media.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils enter the school generally with standards lower than expected because of missed or disrupted schooling and because of behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. From their different starting points, pupils now make steady progress, but this is not yet good.
- Weaknesses in teaching at both sites have hampered pupils' progress in literacy, reading and mathematics so that it requires improvement rather than being good. In literacy and reading, pupils do not achieve as well as they should do, in part because of the limited opportunities to apply and use these skills and knowledge. In mathematics, achievement is held back because what is learned is not always relevant enough; there are limited opportunities to apply mathematics learning.
- Overall, by the end of Key Stage 4, students do not reach the standards that students achieve nationally. The school does not offer a wide enough range of examination opportunities that would show pupils' skills and knowledge in day-to-day English and mathematics (functional skills).
- Many Key Stage 4 students take GCSEs or other qualifications at a level indicating that their progress is not yet good. Last year, GCSE results improved on the year before. Students are not entered early for GCSEs.
- The number of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is very small so it is not possible to generalise about standards of attainment. However, in both Key Stage 1 and 2 the progress pupils make requires improvement.
- The progress of the most able pupils requires improvement. Too few make good progress because teaching is not always challenging enough for them.
- The progress of disabled students and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. The school meets some of the needs of these pupils, for example in providing mentoring support, but their progress is not yet good.
- The number of pupils eligible for pupil premium is too small at the end of key stages to make meaningful comparisons between them and non-eligible pupils in the school. However, the school's assessment information indicates that individual pupils supported by pupil premium make similar progress to others in the school.
- As teaching begins to improve, so too does pupils' progress. For example, where activities are more interesting and relevant to pupils, their progress is better. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in art, which along with physical education is a popular subject with them.
- The contribution of part-time alternative provision to the progress of pupils who attend it is effective, for example helping older students move on the apprenticeships when they reach 16 years old.
- Because the school places strong emphasis on preparing pupils for leaving, and because regular and effective careers advice is provided, last year all pupils who left at the end of Key Stage 4 went into education, training or work.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is stronger in the primary phase than in secondary because a richer programme supporting it is offered.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135331
<b>Local authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	447989

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	53
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Packer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nick Stanton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–22 September 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	0145 3767293
<b>Fax number</b>	0145 3758284
<b>Email address</b>	nick.stanton@scaps.gloucs.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', 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 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



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 and as part of the inspection.

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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 and 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](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 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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2015

