

Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection Reports

Stroud School King Edward VI Prep School

November 2019



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School's Details

School	Stroud School King Edward VI Prep School			
DfE number	850/6004			
Registered charity number	1088030			
Address	Stroud School Highwood House Highwood Lane Romsey Hampshire SO51 9ZH			
Telephone number	01794 513231			
Email address	registrar@stroud-kes.org.uk			
Head	Mr Joel Worrall			
Chair of governors	Mr Alan Morgan			
Age range	3 to 13			
Number of pupils on roll	317			
	EYFS	53	Key Stage 1	58
	Key Stage 2	171	Key Stage 3	35
Inspection dates	5 to 7 November 2019			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Stroud School is an independent day school for pupils aged between 3 and 13 years. The original proprietorial school was founded in Surrey in 1926 and moved to Mere in Wiltshire in 1946 before relocating to its current location in 1953. The school was bought by King Edward VI School in 2012 and is administered by a sub-committee of the full board of that school, who meet termly. Since the previous inspection, new classroom accommodation has been created, comprising four teaching rooms, a library and resource areas, as well as a dance studio and pastoral support rooms for counselling.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.2 The school aims to instil in pupils a desire to strive for success in all areas of the curriculum, in order to leave with a strong sense of honesty, respect and happiness, a love of learning, high levels of intrinsic motivation and confidence, a strong sense of individuality and social responsibility.

About the pupils

- 1.3 Pupils come from local professional and business families, and from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds living within a 15-mile radius of the school. The school's own assessment indicates that the ability of pupils is above average. The school has identified 43 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which include dyslexia and dyspraxia, all of whom receive additional specialist help. One pupil in the school has an education, health and care (EHC) plan. English is an additional language (EAL) for 38 pupils, 6 of whom receive additional support. Data used by the school have identified 164 pupils as being the most able in the school's population; the curriculum is modified for them and for 43 other pupils because of their special talents in sport and music.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The registration authority for independent schools is the Department for Education (DfE), which directs inspection according to a specified frequency or at any time where the DfE has particular concerns about a school. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and reporting on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Accordingly, inspection records whether the school meets each of these standards, which are arranged in eight Parts, each of which is divided into separate paragraphs. The inspection of schools that have early years settings not requiring registration similarly records whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, the inspection reports on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. It comments on the progress made by the school in meeting the compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

All association independent schools will have an inspection within three years from April 2016, in accordance with the Framework and DfE requirements. The inspection may be of COMPLIANCE ONLY or a combined inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE depending on a number of factors, including findings from their most recent inspection. Schools judged not to meet the standards may also be subject to a progress monitoring visit before their next routine inspection. The progress monitoring visit will judge whether the school has taken the necessary action to meet any un-met standards identified at their previous inspection.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a FOCUSED COMPLIANCE INSPECTION which was combined with an inspection of EDUCATIONAL QUALITY, the report of which appears later in this document. The COMPLIANCE inspection reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated in the relevant section of the report and the school is required to take the actions specified. In this focused compliance inspection, key regulations and standards have been inspected in detail. These are the regulations on safeguarding; measures to guard against bullying; arrangements for pupils' health and safety, arrangements to check the suitability of staff; the provision of information to parents; the handling of parents' complaints; and other related aspects of leadership and management.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the full regulations and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school meets the standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and no further action is required as a result of this inspection.

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 The school uses its own framework to determine attainment, instead of the national framework.
- 2.3 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.4 **The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.5 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.6 **The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.7 Arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by means that pay due regard to current statutory guidance; good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.8 **The standards relating to welfare, health and safety [paragraphs 6–16], the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met.**

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.9 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.10 **The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.**

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.11 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.12 **The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

2.13 A range of information is variously published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.14 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.15 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.16 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.17 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils.

2.18 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school [paragraph 34] is met.

3. Educational Quality Inspection

Preface

The EDUCATIONAL QUALITY inspection reports on the quality of the school's work. It focuses on the two key outcomes:

- The achievement of the pupils, including their academic development, and
- The personal development of the pupils.

Since the school was last inspected, the framework for inspection has changed. The current inspection framework uses different criteria and arrangements for grading from those used in previous inspection frameworks. The judgements made on this inspection are, therefore, not directly comparable to judgements made on previous inspections.

All independent schools are required to meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards. However, different inspectorates apply different frameworks that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. The ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by the national inspectorate, Ofsted. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement about key outcomes for pupils and information on the quality of the school's work.

The headline judgements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Key findings

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- Pupils across all age groups make rapid progress from their starting points.
 - Pupils are skilled communicators, articulate, confident and good listeners.
 - Pupils are excellent mathematicians and have strong problem-solving skills.
 - Pupils' attitudes towards learning are exceptional; across the school they demonstrate high levels of initiative and independence.
- 3.2 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Pupils are very confident and reflective learners due to the embedding of the 'Stroud Spirit' across all areas of school life.
 - Pupils have a well-developed sense of themselves and an objective awareness of their strengths and areas for development.
 - Pupils' ability to work collaboratively is exceptional enabling them to have healthy, mature debate.
 - The pupils display a strong sense of belonging and responsibility towards each other.

Recommendation

- 3.3 In the context of the excellent outcomes the school might wish to:
- Review its marking procedures to ensure more consistency across subjects in order that pupils are very clear on the next steps in their learning.

The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements

- 3.4 The quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements is excellent.
- 3.5 The cohesive leadership, quality of teaching, subject specialism and a broad and exciting curriculum, including the extensive use of the outdoors in the grounds and on the beach, enhance learning for all pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), children make rapid progress from their various starting points, so that the vast majority reach the expected levels of development for their age and many exceed them. Pupils continue to make excellent progress throughout the school because they are challenged and supported by teachers. Teachers use tracking systems and assessment data effectively and excellent liaison between key staff, ensures quick intervention if there is a concern. Highly effective systems developed by academic leaders is determined to improve the progress of all pupils. Highly effective interactive feedback and marking systems, seen in pupils' books, often contribute positively to this, although this is not consistent across all subjects and areas. Pupils with SEND and EAL make similar progress to other pupils, achieving well in relation to their needs, due to accurate interpretation of assessment results and teachers' close liaison with one another and with parents. More able pupils perform to high standards, rising to the challenges presented to them within and beyond the classroom, so that many accelerate their progress. Pupils are identified within teaching departments and an extension programme is co-ordinated by a member of staff with responsibility for the more able. The school does not take part in National Curriculum tests but evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's own assessment data, show attainment to be above average in relation to national age-related expectations. Consequently, pupils are successful in gaining places at senior schools of their choice, many of which are academically selective, and a number of scholarships are offered each year. The overwhelming majority of parents

and pupils who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school enables them to learn and make good progress.

- 3.6 Pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding are strong across all areas of the curriculum. Their linguistic and mathematical skills are outstanding due to the many opportunities provided for them to use and develop these skills in challenging tasks. Any concerns are identified at an early stage and individual plans put in place which inform pupils, parents and staff of the steps needed to improve progress and attainment. Careful, regular tracking and parental involvement provide support which helps to reinforce and develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. In interviews during the inspection, pupils with SEND said that they are making good progress even though they find some things challenging, because of the support they receive from their teachers and extra support outside lessons. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaires agreed that the school helped their child to develop skills for the future.
- 3.7 Pupils are outstanding, articulate communicators, orally and in writing, and skilled and respectful listeners, able to build on the comments and contributions of others. From the EYFS onwards, pupils confidently express their opinions and ideas to each other and their teachers because teaching allows them to question and explore in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Their growing confidence is enhanced by wide-ranging drama and extra-curricular activities. Pupils write fluently, using increasingly sophisticated language and content, because the broad curriculum provides many opportunities for them to practise different genres of writing. In an English lesson, older pupils demonstrated a good understanding of how to write an effective action scene by looking at their previous targets and including cause and effect and time connectives. They used sophisticated sentence openers, similes, onomatopoeia, metaphors, and exciting verbs and adverbs. Drawing on prior knowledge and responding to incisive questioning and encouragement, they planned and organised their work effectively, reading it critically and reflecting, and so constructed short sentences which created suspense. Pupils of all ages talked about the core values of the 'Stroud Spirit': honesty, respect and happiness, which are embedded everywhere and contribute significantly to pupils' confidence in speaking, writing and listening. A thorough grounding in the understanding of letters and the sounds that they make, at the lower end of the school, ensures that pupils' reading ability is excellent from the earliest years and helps them to reinforce the spellings in a fun and individualised way at home. Pupils consistently use challenging language to explain their learning as a result of the secure knowledge and expectation of the teachers. In an imaginative geography lesson on rivers, the teacher captured the pupils' interest and imagination through the use of a practical example: pupils poured jugs of water on to a hill constructed of soil and grass, so that they could see and understand what happens when rain falls on a mountain and forms rivers. The pupils used appropriate language, to describe what was happening, thus building on and reinforcing prior knowledge. Pupils are constantly encouraged to express their ideas and feel that their opinions count.
- 3.8 Pupils are excellent mathematicians, producing an impressive quantity and quality of work as their mathematical skills are developed in a thorough and systematic way. Numerous mathematical opportunities exist across the curriculum and pupils enjoy these opportunities. For example, Reception children were observed setting up a shop to sell plastic food and using the till to charge customers. They recognised the digits on the till and explained that we use pounds and pence when paying for things. In a senior school lesson, pupils were using mathematical applications on tablet computers with great success. The well-planned lesson successfully supported the development of information and communication technology (ICT) skills within the mathematics curriculum. Excellent progress is evident across the school because of the many opportunities for pupils to consolidate their learning through imaginative and challenging lessons which give mathematics meaning for the pupils. In a design and technology lesson, pupils making wooden Christmas trees used their mathematical knowledge to work out the angle of the branches. Teaching encourages pupils to visualise the strategy they are planning to use, develops strong problem-solving skills. Pupils are highly successful in national mathematics competitions. Their ICT skills are steadily built on and improved, so that by the upper years they are able to code, demonstrate excellent keyboard skills and use ICT in their studies for

presentation, consolidation and research. More able pupils are identified and extended to become digital leaders, supporting their peers and staff in promoting digital literacy.

- 3.9 Pupils demonstrate excellent study skills, which develop as they progress through the school. They can synthesise information, analyse and hypothesise, successfully using higher order thinking skills. Teachers' use of skilful questioning challenges pupils and moves their thinking on to the next stage. Pupils make the most of every opportunity to further their study skills, and use their initiative to take their learning forward. In a history lesson, pupils drew from a variety of sources, writing notes before contributing their research on their chosen god to a class book on Egyptian gods. Similarly, in a science lesson, pupils hypothesised about the difference an additional battery would make to a circuit and the brightness of the bulb. The pupils discovered that with two batteries and two lights there is the same bulb brightness. Following the school motto of 'aeternum intrepidus' which translates as 'forever undaunted', pupils become independent learners, unafraid to try new things.
- 3.10 Pupils' success in all areas, including sport and drama, is celebrated in assemblies and displayed on the headmaster's 'wall of fame'. A high proportion of pupils both individually and as part of a team develop their talents to a high level, gaining awards and success in sport, music and the arts at regional and national levels. The ethos of the school strongly promotes the belief that all pupils should be encouraged to do what they are passionate about.
- 3.11 Pupils' attitudes across the school are exceptional and there is a real sense of the love for learning because the curriculum is designed to create opportunities for pupils to promote and develop their initiative, independence and creativity, in line with the school's aims. Pupils work collaboratively and take responsibility for their learning. The 'Stroud Spirit' greatly contributes towards this and towards adopting an approach whereby pupils see the value in making mistakes. This is a direct result of the ethos of the school which encourages 'having a go'. All teachers, supported by leadership promote this and are committed to it. There is a great rapport and trust between pupils and teachers.

The quality of the pupils' personal development

- 3.12 The quality of the pupils' personal development is excellent.
- 3.13 Pupils demonstrate exceptional levels of self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-confidence and resilience. Leaders and teachers actively promote these aims through the 'Stroud Spirit' and personal, social, health education (PSHE) programme which start in the EYFS. Pupils have a well-developed sense of themselves, an objective awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and a determination to improve. Constantly encouraged to try new things, they are not afraid of mistakes and prepared to take risks with learning, because of the mutual trust between teachers and pupils. Reception children enthusiastically described the role of 'Stroud Spirit' birds in their classroom: 'They look over us to see what we are doing; Independent Eagle sees if we put things away by ourselves and Teamwork Toucan watches to see if we work together'.
- 3.14 Pupils are very self-aware and able to discuss their strengths and the areas they need to target. They are secure in their learning and willing to explain their thinking to the class, for example in a mathematics lesson, when pupils came to the front to confidently explain their methodology in working out the whole from a fraction of a number. Pupils willingly reflect on their learning, as seen in a junior class when the pupils confidently commented on key things they had learnt, such as using facial expressions in drama to make a performance more interesting. Pupils feel secure about making the transition to the next phase in their learning. This is helped by the scheme whereby Year 8 pupils spend Monday break time with Year 3s and play with them. They also go on teambuilding trips with them to build a relationship and provide an additional listening ear if the younger pupils need someone to talk to. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school helped their children to be confident and independent.

- 3.15 Pupils make age-appropriate decisions in their learning, understanding with increasing clarity how they can be determinants of their own success. The capacity for decision-making is well-established in the EYFS, where children happily choose their activities supported by well-organised resources which reflect their interests and gentle encouragement from staff. Pupils are self-assured and evidence from their work shows that they become confident directors of their own learning. They are aware of the need to make positive decisions and demonstrate an understanding that decisions will affect their future prospects. Their books show that pupils take considerable responsibility for their learning and build upon this in subsequent years. Older pupils are given many opportunities to decide on projects and activities. In a PSHE lesson, the teacher's trust in the pupils to make informed choices, allowed them to choose which level of questions they would like to tackle in the written activity. The school council plays an important role in school decisions, and representatives from Year 1 onwards consider requests from their peers and contribute to decisions about for instance which charities to support. During the inspection, for example, the school council were involved in 'interviewing' a prospective member of staff.
- 3.16 Pupils develop strong spiritual awareness through many opportunities to appreciate the world around them and its non-material aspects. Thoughtful assemblies allow pupils to reflect upon spiritual matters. In an assembly, pupils reflected on the meaning of different colours for people of different cultures and in another all pupils took part in a 'mindfulness' exercise. Pupils' books showed that they had composed thoughtful poems about their 'calm place'. The creative arts allow pupils to delight in opportunities to perform; they show confidence in performing and enjoy sharing their music and drama with others. In interviews with inspectors, pupils said that they greatly valued the opportunities to experience these aspects of school life. During the school's language and culture day, Year 3 pupils displayed great enjoyment, responding spontaneously and instinctively to the beat and rhythm of a traditional African dance, encouraged by staff who allowed the pupils to sense the music and respond in their own way. Pupils displayed a high sense of freedom and enjoyment. In discussion with inspectors, pupils spoke about how art and outdoor learning activities help them to take pleasure in the natural world around them. They enjoy looking after the animals on the school farm and the 'beekeepers' spoke knowledgeably about 'putting their bees away for winter'.
- 3.17 Pupils have a strong moral compass: they are very aware of the school's expectations and their behaviour is exemplary. Teachers, leaders, staff and older pupils are excellent role models. Pupils value and support the school's code of conduct, speaking proudly of their respect for rules, and the responsibility that they are given to think for themselves and care for others. Older pupils are aware that they are role models for younger pupils, and prefects check on their 'sections' at break times to see if everyone is all right or if they need help with anything such as friendship issues or rules for games.
- 3.18 Pupils learn from the diversity in the school community which helps to develop their appreciation of other cultures. They have high sense of empathy and responsibility towards others and are aware that learning about different cultures promotes tolerance and understanding. In a cookery lesson, Reception children showed an appreciation of the French language and culture. To varying degrees the children could say and write that they would like 'a croissant and a pain au chocolat please'. With support from the staff, the pupils excitedly made croissants and pains au chocolat. A Year 8 group learning Japanese could speak a number of words by the end of the lesson and had an appreciation of some of the specifics of Japanese culture. Pupils are respectful and enjoy learning about different cultures and religions within their school community and beyond.
- 3.19 Pupils develop a strong social sense: a sense of belonging, a positive self-image and mutual respect in an environment where they feel confident and cared for and have the freedom to enjoy learning. Many pupils spontaneously commented to inspectors, 'I am so happy here'. The school is divided into houses known as sections and pupils are keen to earn section stars through, for example, good work, behaviour and kindness to others. They collaborate effectively in lessons, learning skills required for leadership and for being part of a team. During a games afternoon, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils were

observed working very effectively in teams, collaborating well and showing leadership. This was a direct result of the skilled coaching they were receiving. During lessons pupils make good use of the opportunities they are given for paired and group work.

- 3.20 Pupils make an excellent contribution to the lives of others within the school, the local community and wider society, and are keen to volunteer for positions of responsibility such as form captains, section leaders and prefects. This extends to the local community and wider society, with pupils taking part in a range of events including singing to the residents in a local care home, where the pupils also volunteered, without prompting, to organise Christmas presents for their elderly friends. Assemblies, the school's 'civic award' and support for various charities through events such as harvest festivals and Christmas Fairs also help pupils to appreciate the circumstances of others and to help some of these groups, either financially or through wider activities.
- 3.21 Pupils have an excellent understanding of physical and mental health, reflected in the choices they make, due to the inspiring teaching, curriculum planning and the nurturing school environment. In a DT lesson observed, pupils were fully aware of safety requirements. They knew how to safely handle tools, how to stand when using equipment and how to learn safely in the room. They learned from their teacher's expertise with DT tools, helped by the low pupil-to-teacher ratio. Through the farm school pupils can take part in farm club where they learn the skills of animal husbandry, practical animal handling, and health and nutrition. They also collect fresh eggs and have the chance to be involved in the designing and building of pens and fencing. Pupils are shown early on how to care for and respect the animals. Pupils thrive in a school culture that offers considerable opportunities to participate in activities that support healthy growth, both physically and emotionally. Strong leadership for their personal development enables pupils throughout the school to flourish. Governance takes a deep interest in all aspects of the school, contributing strongly to the health, care and welfare of the school community.

4. Inspection Evidence

4.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the chair of governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period and attended form meetings and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mrs Loraine Cavanagh	Reporting inspector
Miss Dina Hamalis	Compliance team inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mrs Jane Crouch	Team inspector (Head, GSA school)
Mr David Edwards	Team inspector (Head, IAPS school)