

Inspection of St Rose's Special School

Stratford Lawn, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 4AP

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 June 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, flourish at St Rose's Special School. All pupils have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in the school. Some children have SEND in the Nursery. Through the seamless integration of therapy and education, pupils learn to manage their emotional responses to the world around them exceptionally well. Pupils and staff have very positive, caring relationships. Consequently, pupils love coming to school and attend well.

The curriculum nurtures pupils' curiosity about the world around them well. Staff check pupils' understanding before they move on to more complex learning. Staff know the learning, emotional, social and physical needs of each pupil very well. This enables bespoke approaches which support pupils' learning across the curriculum.

Children in the Nursery and Reception Year are enthusiastic about learning a range of skills. For example, Nursery children learn to navigate the space beneath a parachute as the wind billows in and out.

Throughout the curriculum, pupils learn to form strong friendships with each other. They demonstrate kindness, empathy and support. They have very well-planned opportunities to develop exceptionally strong social skills. For example, pupils organise an end of year 'prom' where pupils dance, listen to music, drink mocktails and make social connections.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school prioritises the social, emotional, physical and learning needs of each pupil. The school's vision to ensure that each pupil is well prepared for their current and future lives underpins everything that staff do. In close collaboration with the therapy team, staff ensure each pupil is enabled to communicate their needs, wants, understanding and feelings as effectively as possible. For example, pupils who previously were limited in what they could articulate are enabled to find their 'voice' through eye gaze technology.

The teaching of communication and reading is the bedrock of the curriculum. The school has worked hard to revise the curriculum so that it enables pupils to build incrementally on their prior learning. This has ensured that pupils study the most appropriate pathway.

Pupils read a wide range of stories. This supports their knowledge of the world and the structure of language. Pupils listen and respond to the sensory retelling of stories with infectious delight. The early reading programme enables some pupils to learn to read with fluency and understanding. However, in some areas of the curriculum, the teaching of reading is not consistently well adapted to meet the learning needs of some pupils.

The school has redesigned the programmes for different subjects across the curriculum. The role of subject leadership is relatively new. As a result, the curriculum details clearly the knowledge that pupils should learn and when. However, the school acknowledges that this is an ongoing area of development.

Many children in the Nursery do not have SEND. Through the early years curriculum, they learn to develop their language and social skills well. It is a fully inclusive setting where children do not 'see' difference and forge strong, caring relationships with each other.

In lessons and around the school, pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Staff know the social and emotional needs of each child exceptionally well. This enables them to monitor meticulously pupils' engagement with learning. Staff implement bespoke approaches to support pupils with their behavioural needs extremely well.

The school's approach to supporting the social and emotional needs of pupils is replicated with staff. The support for staff well-being goes above and beyond. As a result, staff are overwhelmingly proud to work at the school.

The personal development programme shapes pupils' characters very well. They learn in depth about relationships and the world beyond school. They learn about their roles as citizens of modern Britain in highly bespoke ways. They have opportunities to participate in clubs such as scouts where they engage with protecting the natural world around the school. Pupils learn sign language to create a shared means of communication across the school. Pupils learn a breadth of sports such as boccia and swimming. Pupils are elected to the student council where they support improvements to the school.

Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for adulthood. They receive highly individualised guidance about their next steps. Pupils visit local colleges routinely and learn about the worlds of work and volunteering such as at the local fishing lake. Pupils articulate their knowledge about the world around them with insight and enthusiasm.

Governance of the school is effective. The trustees know the school very well and together with the governing body pose suitable challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of reading is not well adapted to meet the learning needs and interests of pupils in some areas of the curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school must ensure that the teaching of reading draws on the information about each pupil's learning needs and interests so that pupils learn effectively in all areas of the curriculum.
- Subject leadership is still relatively new in some subject areas. The curriculum in a minority of areas is not yet fully implemented. The school must ensure that subject

leaders are supported to co-ordinate the continued development of their subject areas so that they are consistently well sequenced and well planned.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	115813
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10344525
Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sister Teresa
Principal	Sheila Talwar
Website	www.stroses.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Rose's Special School is a non-maintained Roman Catholic school for pupils with severe, complex, profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- The school belongs to the English Dominican Congregation.
- All pupils who attend the school have an EHC plan. Three local authorities fund these places.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held discussions with the principal, members of the leadership team, the chair of governors and the chair of the board of trustees.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with education officers from Gloucestershire local authority.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors discussed the curriculum in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors met with staff to consider their views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers who responded to the confidential questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. They evaluated the views of staff from the Ofsted online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sean McKeown

Ofsted Inspector

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