

INSPECTION REPORT

**GRANGEFIELD
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bishops Cleeve, Nr Cheltenham

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 131784

Headteacher: Mrs Lynne Mitchell

Reporting inspector: Mr George Crowther
18814

Dates of inspection: 7th – 9th July 2003

Inspection number: 248858

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Voxwell Lane Bishops Cleeve Cheltenham Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL52 8GL
Telephone and fax number:	01242 671003
E-mail address:	admin@grangefield/gloucs.sch.uk
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S Powell
Date of previous inspection:	None – School opened in September 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
George Crowther <i>Registered inspector</i> 18814	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Science Art and design Music Educational inclusion, including race equality	What sort of school is it? The schools results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Elizabeth Dickson <i>Lay inspector</i> 19653		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jo Cheadle <i>Team inspector</i> 23233	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
Julia Power <i>Team inspector</i> 32731	Mathematics Geography History Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Grangefield is a new community primary school, opened in September 2000, which is expanding rapidly. At present, it has 131 boys and girls, aged 4-11 years, organised in five classes. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 did not start their education at Grangefield; many joined the school for a fresh start following challenges elsewhere. The school is situated in the large village of Bishops Cleeve about three miles north of Cheltenham. Almost all of the pupils live in the area surrounding the school, but a few travel from further afield. A few children of Show People attend the school. The school serves families whose social circumstances are generally more favourable than the national picture, and very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Overall, pupils' attainment when they start school is about average, though there is a wide range of ability within each age group, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Six pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, mainly for moderate learning difficulties, and one has a statement to outline particularly challenging needs. The proportion of pupils needing additional support is well below average. Almost all pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds and none is at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection, the school was coping very well with extensive building work to create new accommodation for the younger pupils.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Grangefield is a good and effective school. The staff have quickly established a very positive approach to encouraging pupils' learning. There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' confidence, building their social skills, and valuing their contribution to the life of the school. Those pupils who joined the reception class in September 2000 have achieved well. Standards in the current Year 2, in English, mathematics and science, are above national expectations, and this was reflected in these pupils' good performance in the most recent national tests. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 joined the school at various times in their primary education and, considering their particular starting points, almost all have made good progress. The quality of teaching is good overall, and was very good, occasionally excellent, in a significant proportion of the lessons seen. The headteacher has provided very good leadership for the school during its first three years and what the school is trying to achieve is very clear to all members of the school community. She has been well supported by all the staff and governors. The school provides good value for the funding it receives.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Children get a very successful start to school in the reception class.
- Pupils are achieving well and reaching standards that are better than would be expected.
- Very good leadership by the headteacher has created a purposeful environment for learning in which both pupils and staff enjoy their work.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, with some very strong features.
- Creative approaches to fostering the pupils' personal and social development result in very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour, which support their progress well.
- Positive and productive links with parents make an effective contribution to children's learning.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The presentation of pupils' work does not always match the standard of the content.
- Provision for music needs to be developed further.
- Governors are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the work of the school and planning the way forward.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

Grangefield is a new school, so the inspection was unable to evaluate this aspect.

STANDARDS

Normally, this section shows the school's results in National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, in the year prior to the inspection. In this case, however, the results are not included because less than 10 pupils took the tests. Where very few pupils take the tests, the results are not considered to be a valid measure of the school's performance because the result of just one pupil can have a significant effect on comparisons with national averages. Likewise, the targets most schools set for the percentage of pupils predicted to reach the expected standard are meaningless.

When children start school in the reception class, their overall attainment is normally about average, though some year groups have slightly higher attainment. During the Foundation Stage (reception), children's achievements are good in all areas of learning, and particularly strong in their personal and social development, and in acquiring early skills in literacy and numeracy. By the time they enter Year 1, almost all of them reach the Early Learning Goals (the standards expected nationally at that age) and a significant proportion exceeds them.

Throughout the rest of the school, pupils' achievements are good overall. Results of national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated, owing to the small number of pupils taking the tests. However, early indications of the results for 2003 (the first full year group that joined the reception class) show that pupils' attainment is above average, and that they have achieved well since they started school. Very few pupils have taken the tests at the end of Year 6; results have been very variable, and are not a reliable measure of how well the school is doing because most of these pupils have only been at the school for a small part of their primary education. The school's own data, however, show that the great majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress. Many of these pupils joined the school with existing learning difficulties, so their good progress is an indication of the school's success. Some of these pupils are unlikely to reach the nationally expected standard by the end of Year 6. All pupils are doing equally well, regardless of their particular attainment or needs.

Pupils' work shows that attainment in the current Year 2 is above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In the current Year 6, overall attainment is close to expectations in all three subjects, even though several of the pupils have some learning difficulties. In art, design and technology and religious education standards are above national expectations in Year 2 and Year 6 because the pupils have produced a range of good quality work. In all other subjects, pupils' attainment is close to national expectations. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are above average throughout the school and they are used and developed well in other subjects. There are weaknesses in the presentation of work in pupils' books, which does not always match the standard of the content.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils like coming to school and they enjoy their lessons, often showing real enthusiasm. They are confident about their learning and eager to contribute their ideas. They concentrate well on their work and try hard to do their best. This provides a good basis for learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. In lessons, pupils respond quickly to instructions from the teacher and know how they should behave. Behaviour is very good around the school, whether moving between activities or in the playground. There

	have been no exclusions in the past year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils get on well together and with adults, and this is particularly noticeable in the <i>Owl Family</i> activities. Older pupils help younger ones quite naturally. Pupils work together well in lessons. When given responsibilities, pupils carry them out sensibly.
Attendance	Poor. This is owing to long-term absences by the children of Show People, which are beyond the school's control.
<i>Owl Families</i> – The school organises the children into groups, containing all ages, each of which is named after a type of owl. Each day, as well as class lessons, some activities take place in these owl family groups.	

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	good	good	good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some very strong features. Throughout the school, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is clear from the interesting activities they provide, their lively presentation of new ideas, and the way in which they encourage pupils to participate and work hard. Lessons are planned in considerable detail, with clear learning objectives that are often shared with the children so they know what they are trying to achieve. Learning is well organised, with a good balance of methods and activities that keep pupils interested. Work is generally well matched to pupils' needs, but occasionally the higher-attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently. The very good and excellent teaching seen had a pace, challenge and high level of interest that really inspired the pupils and helped them to complete their work to a very good standard. In the lessons where teaching was satisfactory, often the pace of learning waned at some point, so pupils did not learn as much as when teaching was good or better. Teaching is good for both English and mathematics, and basic skills are taught very well in both literacy and numeracy lessons. Teachers and classroom assistants have very good relationships with pupils and provide considerable support to enable them to succeed, particularly those who lack confidence or have particular learning needs. Work at home, particularly reading, is used well to support learning at school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum, which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and has appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The curriculum for children in the reception class is particularly strong. The <i>Owl Family</i> activities play a central role in pupils' personal and social development, as well as enriching the content of the curriculum. There are strengths in science, art, design and technology and religious education because staff have good expertise and provide a rich variety of experiences. Provision for music is a relative weakness, largely owing to a lack of staff expertise. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities, including visits to places of interest.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Although there are only a few pupils who have special educational needs, these needs are generally identified early and the pupils are given good support in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal,	Very good. Particular emphasis is placed on developing pupils' personal

including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	skills, including their confidence and their ability to relate to friends of all ages. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good. Pupils' cultural awareness is developed very well, including their understanding of cultural diversity. Spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good care and support for pupils includes a strong emphasis on good behaviour, respect for others and positive relationships.
Assessment	Good. The school gathers a good deal of information about pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science, and uses it to check on pupils' progress and adapt lesson planning, if needed. Assessment in other subjects is sufficient to detect if there are any weaknesses in pupils' skills.
Aspect	Comment
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good. The school has close and positive links with parents. It encourages them to be involved in school activities, to take an active interest in their children's work and to support learning at home. Nearly all parents think that the school is doing a very good job.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides very strong and purposeful leadership. She has a clear view of what the staff and children should be trying to achieve and this has shaped the values of the school. All the teachers have management responsibilities, which they carry out effectively. The management of some aspects of the school's work is very good. The school improvement plan sets out priorities clearly, and the action to be taken to achieve them.
How well the governing body fulfils its responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors fulfil their responsibilities and many have supported the development of the school since its opening. They all have a good and growing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are beginning to develop better systems for monitoring the work of the school so that they can play a full part in planning the way forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has put effective systems in place for monitoring pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching and learning. These are strong in some subjects. Areas of relative weakness are identified and tackled. The school compares its performance with similar schools and is interested to know what parents and advisers think about its work.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes good use of the resources it has to support improvements in areas of its work. Financial planning and management are sound. The school plans ahead as well as it can, given the uncertainties of funding as the school expands.
The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources	The school is well staffed, and teachers use their specialist subject skills effectively in Years 3 to 6. Teachers, classroom assistants and other staff are an enthusiastic committed, hard working team. The building is adequate, at present, but current building work should make it very good. The grounds are extensive and are increasingly providing a good place for learning.

	Resources for learning are good for most subjects.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Their children enjoy going to school and make good progress. ▪ The school is well led and managed. ▪ Teaching is good. ▪ Staff are approachable if parents have concerns, and teachers keep parents well informed about children’s progress. ▪ The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. ▪ Behaviour is good, and the school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<p>Some parents feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the setting of homework is not consistent enough throughout the school; ▪ there could be more activities outside lessons for the younger pupils; ▪ they would like to see their children’s work when they attend discussions with teachers

Just over two thirds of the parents returned the questionnaire, which is a high proportion, and 20 attended the meeting. Most of these parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school’s work, and inspectors’ judgements support parents’ positive views. Inspectors found that the use of homework is generally consistent across the school and that extra-curricular activities are good and improving. Inspectors agree that the school should provide reasonable opportunities for parents to see their children’s work.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

*(Pupils' **attainment** is what they know, understand and can do at a particular point in time e.g. at the end of Year 6. Pupils' **achievements** are the progress they make in relation to their initial attainment. Therefore, a child starting school with low attainment may achieve well but still not reach the nationally expected standard of attainment by the end of Year 6.)*

Overall, pupils' achievements are **good**.

Strengths

- Children get a very successful start to school in the reception class
- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science and reach standards that are better than would be expected
- Pupils achieve well in art, design and technology and religious education
- The great majority of pupils who have special educational needs make good progress

Areas for development

- Pupils do not present their work to the same standard as its content

1. The children settle quickly into the reception class, partly owing to good links with pre-school groups, but largely because it is a welcoming and caring environment and an interesting place for learning. The curriculum is very well planned, with lively and varied activities well matched to the children's needs, encouraging them to be confident and interested in their learning. The quality of teaching is good, with some very strong features. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are particularly well taught, but the full range of work recommended for this age group is covered imaginatively through a series of themes that ensure the children's learning is cohesive. Staff have high expectations of what the children can achieve. Relationships between adults and children are very good ensuring that children get the good-quality support they need to take the next step in their learning. The children enjoy their work and respond enthusiastically to constant encouragement from adults. Very good systems for assessing each child's progress allow the staff to tailor their teaching to pupils' needs. As a result of the good provision in the reception class, children have a very successful start to school and, by the time they join Year 1, almost all reach the standards expected for their age and about a third exceed them in all, or most, of the areas of learning.

2. Grangefield is a relatively new school, so it is not possible to measure pupils' achievements based on the school's past record of results in national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Until 2003, only a few pupils took the tests, so the results were not a valid measure of the school's performance because the result of one pupil could have an undue effect on the average score used to compare all schools. In 2003, however, the first full year group of pupils took the Year 2 tests and, whilst these results have yet to be validated against those of all schools nationally, they show a favourable picture. Assessments of these pupils' attainment when they started school were about average overall; the 2003 test results in English, mathematics and science show that attainment is now above average, and this was confirmed by an examination of pupils' work. The situation is more favourable still when the results of the 16 pupils in Year 2 who started school at Grangefield are compared with those of the eight pupils who joined the school more recently. Taken as a whole, pupils' achievements have been good during Years 1 and 2, and the pupils who originally started school at Grangefield have achieved very well. This success is largely owing to the good quality of teaching in all the classes in the infants, and to good leadership and management during the early stages of the school's life.

3. The situation in Years 3 to 6 is more complex. None of these pupils joined Grangefield in the reception class, and many have joined the school since it was opened in September 2000. For example, in the current Year 5 and 6 class, a few pupils have had two years' education at the school, whilst some have had a few months. In addition, a significant proportion of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 joined the school because of difficulties at previous schools, often to do with their learning, so that they could have a fresh start. The school has coped well with this shifting situation and has kept a close track of pupils' attainment when they joined the school and the progress they have made. The school's data show that, considering their starting points, the great majority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 have achieved well since they joined the school. In the most recent national tests at the end of Year 6, many of the pupils did better than previous predictions had suggested. Whilst a definitive judgement on pupils' achievements in Years 3 to 6 is almost impossible, the weight of evidence suggests that pupils are doing well. Examination of pupils' work and observations of the quality of teaching and learning corroborated this view. Currently, standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 are close to national expectations, but this represents good achievement for these pupils.

4. Pupils' achievements are at least satisfactory in all other subjects, and they are good in art, design and technology and religious education. To a large extent this is owing to particularly good teaching in these subjects, linked to teachers' good expertise. For example, in art, pupils have tackled a wide range of projects, well linked to the work of famous artists, some of which has been completed in the *Owl Family* groups. The high quality of much of this work is owing to the inspiration provided by the teachers, the good-quality materials used, and collaboration between pupils of different ages. High expectations of what pupils can achieve are evident in the work on display. In design and technology, the curriculum develops pupils' skills systematically and they have many opportunities to work with a wide range of materials for different purposes. Work on display shows the good quality of pupils' finished products. In religious education, teaching methods are imaginative, so the great majority of the pupils have a good factual knowledge of the work they have covered, and they are also able to make connections between ideas from religious education and events in their own lives.

5. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below average, but they make good progress in lessons. The school makes good provision to support these children both educationally and emotionally. Work is largely well matched to their needs, so they make good gains in learning towards the targets set for them. They receive good support from both teachers and classroom assistants. The school does well to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs are fully included in lessons and all aspects of school life.

6. The presentation of pupils' work in their books is a weakness in most subjects. The quality of the content is usually good, but the setting out, handwriting and attention to correcting careless mistakes are not of the same standard. The school has already identified presentation as a weakness, but has not yet done enough to ensure that there are consistent routines to support the good presentation of work. Pupils are not clear about expectations for good presentation and, where it is not good enough, they are not made aware of the shortcomings and how they can put them right. Most pupils are capable of better presentation, as seen in the best examples of their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Overall, standards are **very good**.

Strengths

- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and to learning
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school
- Pupils and staff get on very well with each other

7. Pupils have very positive attitudes and their behaviour is very good. The very good provision the school makes for promoting pupils' social and moral development has a very successful impact on how they behave, learn and relate to one another. Nearly all parents agree that their children enjoy coming to school, and all parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire are justifiably happy with the standards of behaviour.

8. A great strength of pupils' attitudes is the enthusiasm they show for school life in general, and in all the activities the school offers. The great majority of pupils take an interest in their lessons and are keen to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers and readily set to work when requested. When presented with challenging tasks, they respond with confidence and enthusiasm, as for example in a Year 1 literacy lesson, when pupils worked hard to create interesting sentences using words ending in 'ing'. Pupils enjoy contributing in class and learning from one another by sharing their ideas. In an English lesson for the older pupils, they willingly offered their ideas, and were able to comment on the contributions made by other pupils because they had listened carefully. Pupils are encouraged to work independently, and they collaborate and co-operate well, when working in pairs and groups. At the same time, they are not afraid to seek help, and know that they will be listened to. Occasionally, in a few lessons seen, pupils engaged in social chat and showed little urgency in getting their work done. Pupils are keen to take part in extra-curricular activities such as football and recorders. They expressed enthusiasm for events such as the Christmas and end of year productions.

9. Pupils' very good behaviour is a response to, and a reflection of, the positive ethos and strong relationships established by staff. Teachers have very high expectations and, from the time children start school in the reception class, they know precisely what is expected of them. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good or better in all but one of the lessons seen. During assemblies, pupils behave well, listen attentively and show appropriate respect during prayers. At lunchtime they socialise naturally with one another. In the dining hall, pupils of all ages sit together for lunch and in the playground and on the field they play together harmoniously. Pupils are polite and friendly towards visitors and they usually hold doors for adults. There have been no exclusions during the past year.

10. Pupils' personal development is very good. They show a good level of social awareness, for example in their concern for others who are not as fortunate as they are. The school's chosen charity is Leukaemia Research and, each year, pupils and staff raise considerable sums for it through activities such as baking and selling cakes.

11. Relationships are very strong and positive. The school is a cohesive community where each individual is valued and included in activities. Through the *Owl Families*, pupils are given opportunities to enjoy sharing in activities with other members of their 'family'. This helps to develop positive relationships and close friendships between pupils of all ages. Older pupils spontaneously and quite naturally help younger ones. A number of Year 6 pupils said, "We'll miss the *Owl families* when we leave". Pupils work together well and take opportunities to help friends and peers in lessons. They take care of one another. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils showed concern when one of their friends was feeling unwell, and asked if he was feeling better. Staff provide very good role models and pupils respond very

well to the enthusiasm and humour of their teachers. The high quality of relationships throughout the school has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and self-esteem. When asked about bullying at the school, one pupil replied, "We haven't got any bullying", and another said if there were any incidents of bullying, "teachers would really get on to you".

12. Attendance at the school for the last full reporting year was well below the national average. Nearly all pupils attended regularly, but there is a group of children of Show People who had a high rate of absence. Their irregular attendance had a strong impact on the overall attendance figures. There was very little unauthorised absence. This year, attendance has improved and is currently close to the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is **good** with some very strong features.

Strengths

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
- Planning for lessons is of very good quality
- Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught very well
- Teachers use a good range of methods and strategies to help pupils learn
- Teachers and classroom assistants manage and support pupils' learning effectively
- Pupils are interested their work, try hard and get a good amount done
- Regular checks on how pupils are progressing help teachers to plan appropriate work

Areas for development

- The pace of teaching and learning in some lessons

13. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was good overall and had some very good aspects. Its quality was confirmed by pupils' past work, which showed they have made good progress this year. Teaching was at least good in 23 of the 29 lessons observed, very good in ten and excellent in two. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.

14. Teachers want pupils to be confident in their learning, and they expect them to succeed. Whatever pupils' existing level of attainment, teachers want them to take the next step. This is clear from the interesting activities they provide, the lively discussion they promote, and the way in which they encourage pupils to participate and try hard. For example, an excellent numeracy lesson for Year 2 began with a series of mental tasks adding two-digit numbers, at pace, that really stretched the pupils' thinking. The main activities, interpreting data in tables, were very well matched to varying ability levels, and the teacher and classroom assistant used just the right balance of support and challenging questions to get the best out of the pupils. As a result, the pupils enjoyed the lesson, worked hard and reach a standard well beyond that expected for Year 2. Many of the lessons observed had similar strong features, and encouraged a high level of involvement from the pupils, which helped them to be very successful in their learning. For example, in a very good lesson for the reception children, the teacher asked them to discuss, in small groups, their ideas for a miniature garden. The children rose to the challenge, discussed their ideas sensibly, and fed back to the whole class. Where teachers expect something out of the ordinary, they are often rewarded by high achievement from the pupils.

15. Teachers plan work for the term meticulously and each lesson in some detail. Plans include a clear statement about what the pupils should learn during the lesson, which helps to keep learning on track, and is often shared with the pupils so that they know exactly what they are trying to accomplish. For example, in a good geography lesson for Year 3, pupils were asked to write a postcard from a

location in the world, to show how weather affects human activity. Careful planning ensured that the teacher first modelled writing a postcard from New York, and then checked that the pupils fully understood their task. Well-prepared resources, including a range of travel brochures, caught the pupils' interest and resulted in a productive session. Skilful planning of the lesson helped the pupils to get the most out of the activity and the teaching. Most lessons are equally well planned.

16. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught very well. In literacy lessons, teachers introduce new work systematically, whether learning letter sounds for the youngest pupils, or skimming and scanning text to find information, for the oldest pupils. They reinforce previous learning methodically, such as when Year 2 pupils wrote their own sentences and then checked that they made sense, started with a capital letter and ended with a full stop. The good structures for learning, partly provided by the school's own methods and partly by the National Literacy Strategy, help pupils to build their skills steadily. Reading is taught particularly well, which leads to above average standards by the end of Year 2. Although the school has a clear approach to teaching handwriting, the standard of presentation is weak in many pupils' books. Most numeracy lessons begin with counting and calculating, exploring the various ways in which numbers work. For example, the reception children built their skills in counting to 100 and back well during a clever game in which the teacher counted, then clapped a number of times without counting, and the children had to say what number she had reached. Teachers begin these sessions with fairly simple tasks and then increase the challenge, which keeps the children on their toes. Pupils' good basic skills support their learning well in all subjects.

17. A good variety of teaching methods and strategies keeps the pupils interested and develops a good range of skills. Lively whole-class sessions are well managed and the pupils enjoy this interaction with the teacher. For example, in a science lesson for Years 5 and 6, the teacher drew on the pupils' recent visit to a pond to pose challenging questions about food chains. The pupils offered lots of ideas, which were explored and extended. This was followed by a small group task making food chains, and later by a drama activity. Teachers are particularly good at organising paired or group activities in which pupils have to work collaboratively to complete their task. For example, in a science lesson for Year 2, pairs of pupils made electrical circuits in order to find out what would happen to the brightness of the bulbs when more were added, which prompted considerable discussion. Practical activities motivate the pupils and they generally work very well in these situations. The *Owl Family* groups provide a special experience where pupils of all ages work together. Whilst these are successful socially, which is their primary purpose, the older pupils were not much challenged by some of the activities in the sessions seen.

18. Teachers and classroom assistants know the children very well and support them effectively in lessons. When pupils are working in small groups, teachers and classroom assistants often focus on a particular group. For example, in a literacy lesson for Year 2, the classroom assistant worked with a group of lower-attaining pupils to help them with their writing, providing just the right amount of support but challenging them to complete the task. In the same lesson, the teacher worked with a group on shared reading, helping pupils to build sentences from the text. This focused support led to very good learning. All staff work in the *Owl Family* sessions, and the very good relationships between adults and children are evident for all to see. For example, in a sewing session, both adults and pupils were totally involved in their activity. Because pupils receive good support, they tackle their work confidently and make good gains in learning in most lessons.

19. In response to good teaching, pupils show a good level of interest in all lessons and a high degree of interest in many. They try hard with their work and generally get a good amount done. For example, a literacy lesson for Year 1 began with the teacher and the pupils reading a poem together, and quickly moved on to work on letter sounds such as 'ing' and 'er'. The pupils were fully involved and quick to offer their answers. When the teacher started to spot word endings in the poem, the pupils were very eager to help her. In their written task, the pupils produced lots of interesting sentences including

words with the endings they had been looking for and, by the end of the lesson, a lot had been accomplished. The good quantity of work seen in most pupils' books indicates that they usually complete the tasks set in lessons. Pupils rise to a challenge in lots of learning situations. For example, Year 1 pupils were completely involved in their activity making natural sculptures outdoors and, when the teacher said that time was up, they groaned in disappointment. The pupils' good learning skills are a significant factor in supporting their progress.

20. Teachers check regularly how well their pupils are doing. Sometimes this is through observation of how well pupils tackle a particular activity in class, but teachers also make regular assessment using the school's own system to record pupils' success against the learning objectives for a unit of work. This process of regular assessment helps teachers to know what pupils can and cannot do, and feeds into their planning for future work. During the inspection, there were a number of occasions when teachers had planned learning based on their assessments, such as the lesson on food chains for Years 5 and 6.

21. The following area for development should be set against a strong picture of teaching across the school. In most lessons observed, the pace of learning was good. However, in the lessons that were satisfactory, the most frequent weakness was a slackening of the pace of learning in some parts of the lesson. As a result, the pupils lost concentration, and not as much learning took place. In some cases, this was because the teacher had not been clear enough in the planning about the time allowed for each phase of the lesson, so some parts lasted too long and pupils' attention began to flag. Sometimes the teacher did not stick to the intended timing. In some cases, too much time was spent in organising equipment or managing the pupils, leaving too little time for the planned activities, which were necessary for pupils to learn. Where group work lacked pace, it was often because the teacher did not set a time target, or a target for the amount of work to be completed, so the pupils worked at their own pace.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

Overall, the curriculum is **good**.

Strengths

- The overall quality, range and relevance of the curriculum are good
- The curriculum for children in the reception class is very good
- English and mathematics are well planned and organised
- Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good
- The school meets pupils' special educational needs well

Areas for development

- Improve the provision for music, particularly in lessons
- Improve the range of experiences to develop pupils' spiritual awareness

22. In a fairly short time, the school has established a good quality curriculum for its pupils, which is well planned, broad and meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum effectively. There is an appropriate emphasis on teaching basic skills in subjects such as English, mathematics and science, which results in pupils making good progress in these areas. All other required subjects are included in the curriculum, and good links are often made between subjects, such as developing pupils' literacy skills as part of work in history, or developing their numeracy skills as part of work in science. In a few subjects, the curriculum is particularly strong. For example, good provision for art, design and technology and religious education, allied to teachers' good expertise, enables pupils to reach above average standards. In some approaches to the curriculum, such as the work done in *Owl Family* groups, the school has adopted an imaginative way of organising pupils' learning, which combines a

strong emphasis on pupils' personal and social education with, for example, aspects of the creative arts. This not only teaches pupils how to work in all-age groups to complete collaborative projects, but results in some high quality work, for example in art. The school uses educational visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum and has a good and growing set of extra-curricular activities that are much enjoyed by the pupils. Very good overall leadership in establishing an effective approach to the curriculum, and good contributions from subject leaders, have led to a curriculum that pupils find interesting and stimulating and that is enabling them to achieve well.

23. The curriculum for children in the reception class is particularly strong because it is meticulously planned to ensure that the children have opportunities to develop their skills in each area of learning that is part of the Foundation Stage curriculum recommended for this age group. Very good attention to the children's personal, social and emotional development helps them to become confident and increasingly independent in their learning. All activities involve children in offering their ideas, working with others and improving their levels of concentration. Very good emphasis on developing the children's basic skills in literacy and numeracy ensures that the great majority of pupils become confident in the early stages of reading, writing and calculating, and a significant proportion exceed the standards expected nationally before they join Year 1. A wide range of activities develops the children's interest in science, designing and making things, the past, and other places, such as when children hunted for, and identified, a variety of minibeasts in the copse. In all these activities, adults support the children's learning skilfully so that they gain the most from the curriculum and achieve well.

24. Work for almost all aspects of English and mathematics is well organised because the national strategies for literacy and numeracy are used very effectively to support pupils' learning. Teachers follow the recommended pattern for each lesson and, in most of the lessons seen, there was a good balance of whole class, group and individual activities. Strong emphasis is given to the teaching of basic skills in both subjects. For example, work on letter sounds with the younger pupils is particularly effective in ensuring that they have a solid basis for reading, writing and spelling. The promotion of pupils' speaking and listening skills is another strength, seen in lessons across the school, and in the *Owl Family* sessions. Through the school, however, handwriting is not as well taught as other aspects of English, so the presentation of pupils' work is not always as good as it should be. Numeracy lessons focus well on mental mathematics skills and number work, and include good opportunities for pupils to explore patterns in numbers and shapes. A consistent approach to the curriculum in these two subjects enables pupils to reach above average standards by the end of Year 2, and to achieve well throughout the school.

25. Music is the only subject in which provision, whilst satisfactory, is not as good as it could be. This is largely owing to some teachers' lack of expertise, and hence lack of clarity in curriculum planning. In the lessons seen, and in teachers' planning, there was too little attention to developing pupils' understanding of musical elements such as pitch, dynamics and rhythm, which are at the heart of the music curriculum. The balance of work was too heavily placed on the performing aspect of the subject and opportunities for pupils to listen to and appraise the work of composers, or each other's music, were missed. The school recognises that this is an area that needs to be strengthened by providing a more structured curriculum for teachers to follow.

26. The school is very positive about meeting the needs of all pupils, and provision for those who have special educational needs is good, in almost every case. The staff ensure that these pupils get the most out of activities in lessons, and classroom assistants play a particularly valuable role in supporting learning. The school has implemented the Code of Practice effectively. Pupils' special needs are identified carefully, their progress is monitored and reviews are carried out at appropriate intervals. Pupils' individual plans for their learning are well focused, in small steps, upon what each pupil needs

to learn. As a result of good provision, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets that have been set for them.

27. The care and commitment of staff in providing for pupils' personal development have a very strong impact on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils are taught to know the difference between right and wrong. Expectations are high and, through gentle reminders and careful guidance, pupils become sensitive to the needs of others. The school ethos is one of self-discipline, responsibility and caring for others, and this sets pupils a clear moral framework. Staff exemplify this approach consistently which means that pupils develop within a stable and secure environment.

28. As pupils' needs are considered to be very important in all the school does, every effort is made to foster their social development. They are encouraged to develop self-confidence and appropriate social skills. In lessons, teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work together and to learn to share resources and ideas. They are encouraged to ask questions and express their views and ideas about the school through *suggestion boxes* and *Headteacher's Question Time*. Pupils know that their opinions will be listened to and respected. The *Owl Family* arrangement supports pupils' social development very successfully. Pupils learn to relate to one another and support each other in social groups across the school. They spend the first half hour of the day in *Owl Family* activities such as drama or painting, sit with their family during assembly, and earn *Owl Family* points, which are added up each half term. This creates a climate of mutual support and healthy competition. The good range of extra-curricular activities, annual whole school trip and whole school activities such as country dancing and outside games provide further valuable opportunities for pupils to grow in confidence and relate to adults and to one another in informal settings.

29. Provision for cultural development is very good. Opportunities for pupils to explore their own culture are provided through studying topics such as the Victorians and Tudors, taking part in Christmas services and Harvest festival, and in local events, for example the Bishops Cleeve village fair and the Cheltenham Dance Festival. By studying artists from Western and other cultures pupils learn to appreciate a range of artistic styles. An outstanding feature of pupils' cultural development is the school's annual *Round the World Week*. Pupils design and make passports and flags, then experience the culture, language, and food of different countries. Photographs taken this year show pupils enjoying sampling Indian food, painting in the style of Michelangelo in Italy, and making Greek temples and Japanese fans. The school has also developed links with a school in Prague and welcomed a visitor who spoke about life in the Philippines.

30. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies give pupils a sense of belonging to a whole-community school and the opportunity to celebrate their own and others' achievements. They are planned through particular themes such as talents and kindness to others, often supported by stories from the Bible that convey a suitable moral message. During the inspection pupils sat in rapt attention as the headteacher told them the story of how Jesus fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes. The assemblies seen, however, had too little emphasis on the spiritual dimension of creating a quiet time when pupils could reflect on the ideas being explored. Throughout the day there are occasions when teachers take advantage of opportunities to provide for pupils to share in moments of excitement. The spiritual dimension is, however, not established in teachers' planning. In lessons teachers often miss opportunities to encourage pupils to pause and appreciate fully the exciting nature of the world around them or to reflect on their own feelings.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

The overall provision is **good**.

Strengths

- The school takes very good care of pupils' welfare, health and safety

- Encouragement of high standards of behaviour is very effective
- The school monitors pupils' attendance carefully
- Good systems are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in English, mathematics and science

31. Grangefield is a very caring and supportive school where the welfare and well being of all its pupils are given the utmost priority. The headteacher and staff know pupils and their families very well. Teamwork is a key feature of the way staff work in the school and this shows in the high quality of care they give the pupils and the very good relationships they develop with them. The strong personal, social and health education programme supports pupils' personal development very well. Parents are happy with the care the school provides, and also feel the school is helping their child become mature and responsible.

32. There are good arrangements to help pupils settle in when they join the school, which have been vital during a time of growth. Well established links with local pre-school groups ensure that pupils have a trouble-free introduction to school life. A number of older pupils have transferred to Grangefield from other schools, and staff have managed their transfer sensitively.

33. Arrangements for child protection are very good. The headteacher is the named person to deal with any issues of child protection and she had received appropriate training for this role. The staff have received guidance on how to deal with any situations that may arise and know to report any concerns. The provision for first aid is good, with most staff having been trained, records kept of any incidents or illnesses, and letters home to parents as appropriate. A comprehensive health and safety policy is in place and regular risk assessments carried out.

34. Very good procedures are in place for promoting and monitoring good behaviour. The headteacher and staff make clear to pupils what is not acceptable behaviour, and pupils respond accordingly. If any pupil misbehaves, more often than not a quiet reminder from a member of staff is sufficient to stop them. The effective use of times when pupils gather in a circle to discuss matters such as acceptable behaviour, and well-chosen topics in assemblies, reinforce good behaviour. Good behaviour is rewarded through verbal praise, recognition in class, and *Owl Family* merits. All staff follow a very consistent approach to encouraging good behaviour.

35. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The impact of these is that nearly all pupils attend regularly and arrive at school on time. The Education Welfare Officer regularly reviews those pupils who have especially poor attendance and takes action as appropriate. The school ensures good punctuality by closing the doors a few minutes after the official start of the day, so that late arrivals have to use the main entrance.

36. Good whole-school procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress enable teachers to plan work that usually meets pupils' needs effectively and helps them to take the next step in their learning. When children start school in the reception class, their initial attainment is assessed to find out what they already know and can do, and this helps the teacher to plan appropriate activities. At the end of the reception year, a re-assessment helps the school to measure the progress the children have made. From Year 1, end-of-year assessments in English and mathematics, alongside information from national tests in Years 2 and 6, enable teachers to find out what the pupils know, and if there are any aspects of the curriculum where extra teaching is needed. The information gathered helps the school to track individual pupil's progress and to act if there appear to be problems. It also allows the school to set challenging targets for the standard pupils should reach in national tests.

37. Alongside these whole-school procedures, teachers have good, regular systems to assess pupils' achievements, for example following a unit of work. Each term, teachers meet with parents and

children to set targets for progress in literacy, numeracy, personal and social development, and perhaps an issue across the curriculum. Each pupil has a *portfolio* that records progress and teachers make regular entries. Over the last year, the school has developed its assessment procedures considerably, led by a very able co-ordinator. Whilst staff report that they find the current systems manageable, the school recognises that care will need to be taken to ensure that the amount of assessment and recording does not become counter productive.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

The school has a **good** partnership with parents.

Strengths

- Parents think very highly of the school
- Parents contribute effectively to their children's learning and to the life of the school
- The school provides good information for parents

38. In their response to the questionnaire and at the pre-inspection meeting, parents registered strong support for the school. Almost all say their children enjoy being at school; they are complimentary about the teaching and feel that their children are making good progress. They say the school is well led and managed, and they would feel comfortable about approaching staff with any questions or concerns. Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. A small number of parents do not think there is an adequate range of activities outside lessons, and are not happy with the amount of homework provided. The inspection team concluded, however, that there is good and developing provision for extra-curricular activities, and that homework throughout the school is appropriate and supports pupils' learning well. At their meeting, a few parents felt that the school had not dealt well with specific, individual problems, particularly to do with pupils' special educational needs; inspectors found that, in general, the school deals well with such issues and the great majority of parents have had no cause for complaint.

39. Many opportunities are created to encourage parents into school, especially in the reception class where a significant proportion of the parents provide extra help in class. Parents of the reception children are provided with supportive guidance on how they can help their child learn at home. The impact of parents' involvement with school is good. Parents want their children to do well and give good support for their learning at home by listening to reading or helping with homework activities. There is very strong support for school events such as class assemblies and school productions. Pupils accompany their parents to consultation evenings, and these are well attended. A high point of the academic year for parents, pupils and staff is the graduation ceremony where pupils in reception, Year 2 and Year 6 'graduate' to the next stage of their education. Parents respond willingly to any requests from the school for their help and support. A significant number of parents help in classrooms, on trips and projects such as improving the school grounds. All the parent-governor positions are filled, and parents run the school association GIFT (Grangefield Independent Fundraising Team) which is currently raising money for an adventure trail.

40. The information produced by the school for parents is good. Weekly newsletters provide parents with valuable information about school activities and visits. The governors' annual report to parents and prospectus are useful documents, but both lack detail on statutory requirements such as attendance data and national test results. Meetings with teachers, both formal and informal, provide parents with good information about how well their children are doing. Reports of pupils' academic and social progress are issued annually. While these reports provide parents with helpful information on what their children have achieved during the year, in each subject, teachers use the same comments for a group of children, so the reports are not as personalized as they could be.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Overall, the standard of leadership and management is **good**.

Strengths

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and a clear vision for the development of the school
- All key staff make a good contribution to the management of the school
- The school's aims and values shape the education provided and are evident in its day-to-day work
- All staff are committed to what the school is trying to achieve, which creates a very good capacity for future improvement

Areas for development

- Governors need to be more involved in planning future developments
- The need to ensure that management systems are efficient and sufficient, but do not over burden the staff

41. The headteacher leads the school very well. Her very strong leadership and very clear vision for the future development of the school are based firmly on the aim that all pupils should succeed. Since the opening of the school, she has worked with clear determination to provide the best possible provision for each pupil. Her good management skills have ensured that the school has run smoothly and purposefully, despite changes and uncertainties. Her expectations of teachers and support staff are very high. She provides a very good example of how these expectations should be achieved by her own hard work, high quality teaching and relationships. She is respected and valued by parents, staff and governors.

42. The staff respond well to the headteacher's high expectations. The deputy headteacher sets an example for others through her own very good teaching. As the assessment co-ordinator, she has established a clear focus on evaluating how well pupils are doing, by very carefully and regularly measuring the standards they attain and tracking their progress. As a result, subject co-ordinators fully understand their responsibility to ensure that provision in each subject should enable the best possible progress. The role of subject co-ordinator is being developed very well and the majority are working effectively. In line with the plan for school development, some subjects have yet to be a priority focus but, even so, co-ordinators have worked well to ensure that subjects such as physical education, geography and ICT have developed appropriately. Co-ordinators' good work is ensuring that standards in many subjects are above average. Leadership and management in the Foundation Stage, English and mathematics are particularly strong and pupils' achievements in these areas are often very good.

43. The school's aims and values are very well reflected in its work. The school evaluates its work well, enabling very clear priorities to be set for further improvement. The headteacher does not hesitate to deal with any issues that may hinder the academic and personal aims for pupils, and this has been evident in her monitoring of teaching and learning, and dealings with the local education authority. All staff are equally committed to fulfilling the aims of the school. They have been carefully selected for their roles, and have the appropriate skills, knowledge and motivation to guarantee very good capacity for further improvement.

44. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are effective in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. They offer very good support and commitment to the headteacher, staff and pupils. In a short time, they have worked very well to establish the school's

good reputation and coped with the building work and staffing issues that are part and parcel of a new school. At present, however, their understanding of *why* aspects of the school are stronger or weaker is not as well established. This means that they cannot plan effectively to maintain the things that are done well, and make necessary plans for improvement, without relying heavily on the headteacher. For example, governors are very aware that standards in literacy are high, but have no strategic overview of how these standards can be maintained when pupil numbers rise and the demands on teachers are greater. Governors are not involved in formulating the school development plan from its inception, though they do make some contributions through their committees and agree the plan when it is finalised.

45. A variety of procedures and systems have been introduced throughout the school to ensure that day-to-day management is good and the school runs smoothly. For example, whole school procedures for planning the curriculum, special educational needs' work and assessment are very thorough and followed rigorously. However, there is a danger that some systems will soon become unmanageable because of their complexity and the time they take to carry out. There is not yet a full understanding that one piece of succinct and clear information is more useful than many different examples that all lead to the same conclusion. Assessment procedures, in particular, while being generally good, are too time consuming to use in depth for all subjects.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. To maintain the existing good standards, and to aim for further improvement, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- ◆ Improve the presentation of pupils' work in their books, as planned, by:
 - ensuring the pupils are very clear about the standard of presentation that is expected;
 - improving classroom routines so that pupils are reminded how they ought to present their work;
 - reviewing marking practice to ensure that pupils know when they have presented something really well, when there are weaknesses, and how these can be put right;
 - improving the quality of pupils' handwriting.

(paragraphs 6, 16, 24, 61, 63, 72)

- ◆ Improve provision for music, by:
 - ensuring that planning for music, and teaching materials support teachers who do not have particular expertise in the subject;
 - ensuring that, in lessons, there is appropriate emphasis on teaching pupils the key elements of music and that a good balance is struck between listening and appraising, and composing and performing.

(paragraphs 25, 92-94)

- ◆ Increase the governors' involvement in monitoring the work of the school and in planning future developments.

(paragraph 44)

In addition to the key issues, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. Each is followed by a reference to the paragraph(s) in which it is discussed.

- Improve the pace of teaching and learning in some lessons. *(21)*
- Improve the range of experiences to develop pupils' spiritual awareness. *(30)*
- Ensure that management systems are efficient and sufficient, but do not over burden the staff.

(45)

- Update the school prospectus and governors' annual report for parents to include all statutory requirements (40)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	10	11	6			
Percentage	7	34	38	21			

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	131
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	7.6
National comparative data	5.4

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2) and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Normally, this page shows the school's results in National Curriculum tests for the year prior to the inspection. In this case, however, the results are not included because less than 10 pupils took the tests in Year 2 or Year 6. Where very few pupils take the tests, the results are not considered to be a valid measure of the school's performance because the result of just one pupil can have a significant effect on comparisons with national averages.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
91		
3		
1		
1		

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.45
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	57

FTE means full-time equivalent

Financial information

NB Based on 96 pupils

Financial year	2002-2003
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	£
Total income	226,104.00
Total expenditure	229,505.91
Expenditure per pupil	2390.69
Balance brought forward from previous year	62,249.91
Balance carried forward to next year	58,848.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.45
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

69%

Number of questionnaires sent out

124

Number of questionnaires returned

86

Percentage of responses in each category

Totals may not add to 100% owing to rounding

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	18	2	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	32	0	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	38	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	45	12	1	0
The teaching is good.	66	28	5	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	44	7	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	16	2	3	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	24	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	52	35	9	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	20	2	3	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	28	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	26	13	4	5

Twenty parents attended the meeting and they were positive about almost all aspects of the school's work. They were particularly pleased with the values the school promotes, and the way in which the Owl Families enable children of all ages to mix and form good relationships. Almost all are pleased with the progress their children are making. Parents of the youngest children feel they are kept very

well informed about what their children will be learning in lessons, but some parents say this is not so good in other classes. Parents agreed that consultations with teachers and annual reports provide good information about their children's progress, but some would like to see their children's work when they visit school to see teachers, which is not the case at present. If there are concerns, almost all parents said that staff are very approachable and respond sympathetically and quickly. Parents say that they feel involved with the work of the school. A significant number help in school, and many support the work of the school through GIFT, the fund-raising association. Parents said that the pupils' behaviour is very good in all situations. Most parents at the meeting were happy with the amount and type of homework, but a few feel that it is not set consistently throughout the school. Some parents would like to see more clubs and activities outside lessons for the younger children.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

47. Children get a very successful start to school in the Foundation Stage (reception class). Lively and varied activities, well matched to the children's needs, encourage them to be confident and interested in their learning. The children enjoy their work and respond enthusiastically to constant encouragement from adults. As a result, children's achievements are good in all areas of learning. The staff monitor each child's progress very carefully, which enables them to meet individual needs effectively, as well as providing a good level of challenge for the whole class.

48. Children join the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will have their fifth birthday. There are currently 30 children in the class, all attending full time. A good induction programme helps parents, children and staff to get to know each other, and there are particularly good links with Little Hoots, the pre-school group attached to Grangefield, from which the great majority of the children transfer. In discussion with parents, by carrying out initial assessments of the children's skills, and through careful observations, the staff evaluate each child's particular needs. Overall, children start school with attainment that is about that expected for their age, though some have higher attainment.

49. The quality of teaching is consistently good in all areas of learning, with some very strong features. As a result, children's achievements are good and particularly strong in their personal and social development and in acquiring early skills in literacy and numeracy. The three adults who work in the class are a strong team of teachers, who work together very effectively and all have very good relationships with the children. Whole-class sessions are lively, interesting and fun, which results in the children offering their ideas confidently and learning quickly. For example, a literacy session began with work on letter sounds, followed by a song with actions about growing plants in a garden, and then a story *Jasper's Beanstalk*. Throughout these activities, the emphasis was on learning skills such as predicting what might happen next, sequencing a story, and reading with the teacher, which all contributed to strengthening children's literacy skills. The adults encourage a high level of involvement and most children respond accordingly though, on occasion, the work becomes too difficult for the younger or less able children. Where there is a range of activities, some of which children can choose, this is carefully planned to develop a variety of skills, and adults working with children are very clear about the learning objectives. For example, in a numeracy lesson where the children had been thinking about measuring, one group used large plastic bricks in the outdoor area to make tall towers and long walls, and the adult continually reinforced the vocabulary needed to compare them. Another group was challenged to estimate how far a programmable toy would have to travel to reach a cone. Such activities are very carefully planned and skillfully used to encourage children's learning. Adults have

high but realistic expectations of the children's growing independence and of what the children can learn.

50. Work in the Foundation Stage is led and managed very effectively. The curriculum recommended for this age group is implemented skillfully. Systems for assessing and recording children's progress are very good and help the staff to provide suitably challenging work. Observations show that almost all of the children have reached the standard expected when they join Year 1 (the Early Learning Goals) and about a third are exceeding this standard in all, or most, of the areas of learning. The accommodation indoors is good. Staff make best use of the current outdoor area, though it lacks space and variety, particularly for physical activities. A much better outdoor area will be available when the current building programme is completed.

Personal, social and emotional development

51. Most children join the class with good personal and social skills, and the staff build on these effectively. The children are interested in learning and offer their ideas confidently because the staff give them plenty of opportunities to do so. For example, when the teacher read *Mary made a garden*, the children were full of ideas about what might happen next. The children concentrate very well for their age, as was seen in a long, whole-class session learning about measuring; the clever way in which the teacher varied the activities helped to keep the children focused. Children have good relationships with adults and other children. In a number of activities, such as measuring objects, making miniature gardens or playing in the garden centre, the children worked co-operatively, took turns and shared ideas and resources. No activities were seen when children discussed their feelings, but they talk about their likes and dislikes openly, such as when a group visited the copse to search for minibeasts. Children behave very well, and they understand the rules of their classroom, which was evident when they all helped to tidy things away after a messy practical session. The children's independence and self-help skills are impressive, as was seen when those playing in the garden centre organised their activities efficiently.

Communication, language and literacy

52. The children listen carefully and express themselves clearly in a wide range of situations. For example, during a session when the children made their own miniature garden, the teacher asked them to discuss in small groups what they liked about their work so far, and then to report back to the whole class. The standard of small-group discussion was well beyond that expected for this age, and the children reported back clearly and confidently, whilst the rest of the class listened very carefully. Children make good progress in the early skills of reading, supported well by their parents. The higher attainers are already reading simple books fluently, and almost all can read successfully a simple story with repetitive text. All the children have a good knowledge of letter sounds, which the teacher reinforces systematically. Children are enthusiastic about books. The teacher's expressive reading of stories provoked complete involvement in the plot and the characters. Children also know that some books contain facts and are organised in a different way to story books. In writing, almost all children write a few words, with varying degrees of support, such as, "Sunflowers can grow up in the air", though one or two do not yet have the physical control needed. The higher attainers write simple sentences confidently, as was seen in their butterfly books. Very good support from adults, and help from displays of words around the classroom, enabled the children to write thank you letters following their recent visit to a garden centre.

Mathematical development

53. Children are developing their mathematical vocabulary well, as seen in a number of sessions where teaching focused on length, and children used 'longer than' 'not far enough' 'estimate' quite naturally as part of discussion. Almost all the children count objects reliably to 10 and beyond. About half of the children have moved well beyond this stage and are confident working with numbers to 100, as was seen in games involving children counting on in their heads beyond 79, or back from 24. Some of these children can count in 2s. About half of the children can add and subtract numbers to 10 and record their calculations. All the children recognise a range of simple shapes. Around the classroom, lots of displays with a mathematical theme re-enforce learning. It was particularly noticeable that, as part of activities such as board games and construction, the staff are very skilful in encouraging the children to count, measure and look for patterns so that mathematical development is enhanced.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. Children achieve well in this area of their learning because they are encouraged to ask questions and investigate. At the time of the inspection, the theme was Gardens, with a strong emphasis on science. The children were observing the growth of a variety of plants, learning about roots and shoots. When the teacher showed them how much some grass seeds had grown over the weekend, there were gasps of amazement. Observing and learning about minibeasts was also an important part of the topic. The children have a good early knowledge about plants and animals. When the children made miniature gardens, they showed good skills in choosing materials and evaluating their work, and were very inventive in their choices of features. One child said, "I want to add some shiny pebbles in my pond". Teachers create opportunities such as the recent visit to a garden centre to stimulate learning. Children have good basic skills in using the computer, as was seen when two children used a simple graphics program, completely independently, showing good mouse skills when selecting colours and drawing pictures. With help, children programmed a toy to test out their estimates of how far it would travel. Previous topics on Homes and Ourselves have introduced children to a range of work in geography and history, such as looking at types of houses in the locality, and photographs showing how they have grown and changed since they were born. Celebrating festivals of various religions, and taking part in the whole-school *Round the World Week*, introduce the children to other cultures.

Creative development

55. Children develop their creative skills well through a range of activities. Pastel drawings of flowers, collage in primary colours on the theme of *The Rainbow Fish*, and paintings to illustrate the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* all show that the children have good skills in using a variety of art materials. Art activities are purposeful and well linked to other aspects of the curriculum. The children enjoy singing, as was seen when they sang the Garden Song, with actions, and there is a box of musical instruments with which they can experiment as part of self-chosen activities. Play also develops the children's creative skills, such as in the garden centre where children wheeled barrow loads of soil to and fro, took orders for plants, and were very enthusiastic in watering plants using a spray gun.

Physical development

56. Less physical activity was observed than would normally be the case in a Foundation Stage classroom because the current outdoor area is not designed to enable children to climb or use ride on toys. The new reception area will provide better facilities. Nonetheless, the staff make best use of the current situation, including physical education sessions in the hall. In the physical activity seen, the children were meeting the standards expected. Activities in the classroom develop the children's control of finer movements such as making objects with construction kits or writing with pencils. The fine control shown by some children in making their miniature gardens was outstanding, such as wrapping small stones in silver foil to make a water feature.

ENGLISH

57. By the end of Year 2, attainment is above average and pupils achieve well. Current standards are better than the results of the Year 2 national tests in 2002 when only a few pupils were involved. At that time, results for reading were not as good as for writing, so the school has worked hard to improve the provision for reading, while maintaining strengths in writing. Priority has been given to developing pupils' knowledge of letter sounds, and pupils are now confident reading new words using these skills. Early indications of the 2003 national test results, gained by the first full year group that started school at Grangefield, show above average attainment in both reading and writing.

58. By the end of Year 6, attainment is average, but pupils' achievements are still good. Numbers are growing in the juniors, and only a few of the Year 6 pupils have been at the school for a good length of time, whilst some joined very recently. A significant proportion of these pupils have some learning difficulties. However, because numbers are relatively small, and because of the very good quality of teaching in English, particularly in Years 5 and 6, pupils have made good progress and achieved well over a short space of time. Early indications of the 2003 test results show that almost all pupils reached the expected Level 4 of attainment, and many made very good gains on the levels they attained at the end of Year 2.

59. Currently, many pupils enter Year 1 with above average speaking and listening skills. These skills are further developed by good teaching and regular opportunities to answer questions and give ideas. By the end of Year 2, many pupils speak in well-structured sentences and communicate information and ideas clearly. Most attain above average standards and some well above average. Pupils with special education needs are supported well to develop their confidence and skills. They feel confident to speak, even when their vocabulary is limited. Other pupils are respectful of these contributions and listen carefully. In an *Owl Family* drama session, young pupils learnt from their older friends by working in small groups with them and listening to the way they spoke. In role, the pupils talked as a man might talk to the cat. The younger pupils mirrored the language used by the older boys and attained well above average standards for their age. In a lesson for Year 2, pupils composed very effective questions from statements, showing their skills with vocabulary and grammar. In a lesson for Years 5 and 6, pupils commented appropriately on the contributions made by individuals because they had listened carefully. They explained whether the homework done by individuals demonstrated all the criteria needed for their reflective writing.

60. Reading skills are well developed and are above average. Pupils have a very good knowledge of letter sounds and blends and apply this well to unfamiliar words. In a Year 1 lesson, all pupils knew the sound of the first letter in words, and confidently read the letter sounds from cards. These skills have been very well taught and pupils' achievements are very good. They were just as confident with more complicated sounds made by combinations of letters. When looking at word endings, pupils' spelling skills were developed as they listened carefully to the sound and could say the letters it contained. The pace of work was very good and pupils were fully attentive. In Year 2, pupils understand the use of language in the texts they read. They explained that the use of a *subheading* was to give a little more information about the *main heading*. While standards in reading are average for most pupils in the current Year 6, it is very evident that they have made good progress in the time that they have been at the school. All pupils are achieving well. They make good use of a well-equipped library to access information to support their work in other subjects. Books are seen to be a source of knowledge and improvement and this is a positive aspect of the pupils' learning.

61. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are above average, and average by the end of Year 6. The strongest aspect of pupils' work is their knowledge and use of a very wide range of styles of writing for different audiences. The main weaknesses are the quality of presentation and handwriting.

In a Year 2 lesson, average attaining and higher attaining pupils, approximately two thirds of the class, wrote complicated sentences, with correct punctuation and accurate spelling. Standards were above average. However, there was not a high enough expectation that these pupils should present their work neatly and use joined writing. In samples of work that showed above average attainment for content, structure, spelling and grammar, handwriting was unsatisfactory. In a lesson for Years 3 and 4, pupils had a good grasp of poetry form and wrote confidently using ideas compiled in an earlier lesson. They read their partner's work fluently and with confidence. Presentation of work was, however, variable. Presentation skills improve by Year 6 and there were some examples of good joined handwriting, particularly in the lessons observed. However, in pupils' past work, standards are not high enough.

62. Teaching and learning are very good. Since the appointment of the co-ordinator, rigorous attention to planning and assessment, and very useful monitoring and evaluation of lessons, have resulted in good development of teaching and learning. All teachers have the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to promote fast progress and good achievement. Teachers' relationships with pupils are very positive and teachers inspire pupils to do well. In Years 5 and 6, the teacher clearly explained to pupils, "I want quality". Pupils tried their hardest to provide this quality and the teacher supported them with very good demonstration, and help for the lower attaining pupils. Teachers are very good at matching work to pupils' needs. In a Year 2 lesson, independent tasks were very well matched, not only to pupils' attainment levels, but also to their ability to concentrate. Pupils with special educational needs were given the opportunity to work on the computer to play a game that reinforced their ability to construct sentences. The teacher worked with the lower attaining pupils on a task focused on a book they had enjoyed reading. She reinforced spelling and grammar through a text that the pupils enjoyed.

63. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has exceptional enthusiasm and a determination that pupils will do well, which are transmitted to the staff. She has a very good awareness of current strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning. Her management skills are very well developed and an example of good co-ordination practice. She has presented a very useful overview of English work to the governors. Handwriting and presentation skills are a priority for action in her development plan for the autumn term.

MATHEMATICS

64. Until 2003, very few pupils took the national tests at the end of Year 2 or Year 6, so past results are not a reliable measure of the school's performance. Early indications of the Year 2 results for 2003 show that attainment is above average. All of the pupils who originally started school at Grangefield gained the expected Level 2 of attainment, and most of those who joined the school more recently reached the same standard. In addition, about a third of the pupils reached the higher Level 3. Few pupils took the tests at the end of Year 6, and the results show a wide spread of attainment.

65. Inspection evidence showed that attainment in the current Year 2 is above national expectations. Almost all of these pupils work confidently with numbers to 100, ordering them, adding and subtracting, and knowing multiplication facts for 2, 5 and 10. For example, most of the pupils add 2 two-digit numbers mentally and the higher attainers add 5 two-digit numbers accurately. A few lower attainers work well with numbers to 20 but find larger numbers difficult. In the lesson seen, all the pupils collected data for a simple table and recorded it accurately. Responding to the teacher's very good questioning, most pupils interpreted what the data meant. The higher attainers, in particular, have good strategies for finding their own solutions to problems. Pupils' past work in number, measuring, identifying shapes and handling data is better than the standard expected for pupils' ages, with almost all pupils reaching the expected standard and a significant proportion showing a high degree of accuracy.

66. Attainment in the current Year 6 is close to national expectations, though there is a wide range of attainment within a small group of pupils. A few higher attainers are very competent in their understanding of number, such as working accurately with fractions, decimals and percentages. About half of the rest of the group is working at the expected standard, calculating correctly with numbers to 10,000, and showing a good grasp of other topics, such as work with shapes and data handling. In number work, the lower-attaining pupils are still building their understanding of value of digits, so their work is not so consistent or accurate. In the lesson seen, all the pupils investigated lines of symmetry in quadrilaterals, with the higher attainers being able to identify these quickly and the lower attainers using tracing paper to cut and fold the shapes. This lesson was well adapted to match the range of attainment in the class, for example when the teacher extended the work to planes of symmetry in three-dimensional shapes.

67. The standards attained by groups of pupils at the beginning of Year 1 have varied, but have been about average overall. Until 2003, the year groups of pupils were too small to make an overall judgement about pupils' achievements but, based on attainment in the current Year 2 and early indications of national test results, these pupils have achieved well. It is not possible to judge the achievements of pupils in the current Year 6 based on their attainment when they were in Year 2 at Grangefield, because the school was not open then. However, assessments of these pupils' attainment when they joined the school, and their performance in Year 2 tests whilst at other schools, indicate that most have exceeded the expected progress and have achieved well. Pupils' good achievements across the school are a result of good, often very good, teaching. Work is usually well matched to pupils' existing attainment, which means that pupils of all abilities do well.

68. In the three lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in two and satisfactory in one. This evidence, together with that of pupils' work in all classes, shows that the overall quality of teaching is good with some very strong features. Basic skills are taught very well. For example, in a lesson for Year 2, the pupils added two-digit numbers mentally, and the teacher helped them to explore the strategies they might use to find the answer swiftly. Mathematical vocabulary is introduced systematically, and consolidated well. For example, when Year 5 and 6 pupils investigated symmetry, the teacher explained the terms horizontal, vertical and planes of symmetry, and then asked the pupils to use them in the correct context. Lessons are planned very carefully, with tasks that are generally well matched to the pupils' needs. The mental activities at the beginning of lessons move at a brisk pace, with the pupils fully involved and enjoying their learning. As a result of all these strengths, pupils make good, often very good, progress in lessons. Where teaching was excellent, the teachers' very good subject knowledge, and their high expectations of what the pupils could achieve, resulted in the pupils being completely involved in their learning and trying very hard with their work. A weakness in one lesson was that the individual and group activities did not challenge the pupils sufficiently, particularly the higher attainers.

69. The National Numeracy Strategy is used very well, and is effectively supported by a commercial scheme of work. These provide a well-balanced curriculum. Inventive strategies such as 'finger books' enable pupils to do number calculations easily and was consistently seen in use across the school. The school has good systems for assessing pupil's progress through tracking their attainment, and teachers use the information to set appropriate work for the pupils. Targets are set for future attainment and are shared with parents. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have come from a wide range of schools, and gaps in their learning have been clearly identified. Teachers have worked hard to boost these pupils' confidence in learning mathematics and, as a result, they now see themselves as 'successful mathematicians'. Senior staff model successful lessons to ensure a consistently high standard of teaching. Leadership and management of the subject are very good because the co-ordinator monitors the quality of lessons and pupils' work consistently, and has very clear view of existing strengths and what needs to improve. Very good overall provision results in pupils who are highly motivated and enthusiastic about the subject.

SCIENCE

70. Until 2003, too few pupils took the national tests at the end of Year 2 or Year 6 to allow valid comparisons of the school's performance with the national average or similar schools. This year, the first complete year group that started school at Grangefield reached the end of Year 2, and early indications are that the results of teacher assessments are above average. Almost all the pupils reached the expected Level 2 of attainment and about a quarter gained the higher Level 3. Only a few pupils took the tests at the end of Year 6, but almost all of them reached the expected Level 4, which was a good result considering that a number of these pupils joined the school having found learning difficult at their previous school.

71. Pupils' work showed that attainment in Year 2 is above national expectations because nearly all the pupils are reaching the expected standard and a few are exceeding it. For example, in the lesson observed, all the Year 2 pupils had a good grasp of how a simple electrical circuit works, and most understood that adding more batteries or bulbs to the circuit would affect the brightness of the bulbs. The higher attainers correctly predicted the outcome of a series of different circuits, and explained why they thought the changes were happening. Pupils' past work showed that an emphasis on investigating and experimenting is having a beneficial effect on developing scientific skills. For example, pupils tested a range of toy vehicles to see which would travel the furthest when released down a ramp. They made a prediction, carried out a series of tests making sure that they were fair, and reached a conclusion based on the test results. Although many of these pupils are not at the stage where they write detailed conclusions, when asked, the higher attainers used their wider scientific knowledge to explain why a particular toy might travel the furthest. However, expectations of this type of thinking being part of drawing conclusions are not high enough.

72. Attainment in Year 6 is close to national expectations. Almost all the pupils are working at the level expected for Year 6. In the lesson seen, pupils used their knowledge of food chains to explain the relationship between various plants and animals in a pond environment. The higher attainers could explain what would happen if the food chain was put out of balance, showing a good understanding of the interdependence of living things. Pupils' past work showed a good emphasis on investigation, for example being scrupulously fair when setting up an experiment to find out which material muffles sound the best. A weakness is that findings are not always explained in detailed conclusions, drawing on pupils' scientific knowledge, a task that would challenge the higher attainers more fully. For example, for the sound experiment, a higher attainer concluded that foam rubber was the best muffler but did not attempt to explain why. Throughout the school, the presentation of work does not match the quality of the content.

73. When pupils start school, the standards they attain are average overall. In relation to these initial levels of attainment, pupils' achievements are good through to Year 2. For example, pupils in Year 1 needed considerable adult support to carry out their experiments about sounds, but Year 2 pupils were much more independent in their investigative work, and much more aware of tests needing to be fair. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about achievement in Years 3 to 6, but pupils' work shows that they have made good progress during the current year. Across the school, a minor weakness is that the pupils generally carry out the same work and, in some instances, this is not made challenging enough for the highest attainers. Pupils complete a good quantity and range of work, and apply their knowledge and skills in a variety of situations.

74. In the three lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good overall, and this was confirmed by an examination of pupils' work. Lessons are planned carefully, with a good range of activities, which catch pupils' interest and encourage them to question and explore. All the lessons observed had practical activities that motivated the pupils effectively. For example, Year 1 pupils carried out tests, using containers and pasta pieces, to find out how the type of container, or the number of pasta pieces,

affected the loudness of the sound. In doing so, they encountered a number of experimental problems that had to be solved. Teachers ask searching questions and pose problems for pupils, which make them think. They are constantly encouraging pupils to predict what might happen ...“What do you think will happen when you put another battery in the circuit?” ... and then to see if they are right. The pupils are inquisitive and make a good effort with their work. Teachers explain new ideas well and make sure that pupils learn the correct scientific vocabulary, such as herbivore, carnivore and omnivore which, in turn, makes a good contribution to pupils’ literacy skills. Minor weaknesses were having too many practical activities, so pupils could not focus on the science learning, or allowing the pace of work to slow, so that some of the pupils did not maintain attention on the task. Activities such as accurate measuring, and recording results in tables and graphs, make a good contribution to developing pupils’ numeracy skills.

75. The curriculum is well planned, covers all aspects of science, and includes a strong and appropriate emphasis on experiment and investigation. Good leadership and management of the subject ensure a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the school. Procedures for assessing pupils’ attainment are good, which enables teachers to track pupils’ progress across the school and to identify any weaker aspects of attainment. Information and communication technology is currently used too little to support science work, but the school has appropriate plans to remedy this. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of strengths in teaching and learning, and areas for development, because she regularly monitors teachers’ planning, pupils’ work and test results. She has, however, had too little opportunity to monitor lessons. The school grounds, which include an extensive copse, are a developing asset for studying science.

OTHER SUBJECTS

76. Evaluation of other subjects of the curriculum is based on limited evidence. This table shows the number of lessons observed in each subject.

Art	Design and Technology	Geography	History	ICT	Music	Physical Education	Religious Education
1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2

This is normal for the inspection of a small school because the team is present for only a few days and should only observe each teacher for about half of each day. In these subjects, inspectors' evaluations are based largely on a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers.

ART and DESIGN

77. Pupils achieve well and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is better than the standards expected nationally. The work completed in the *Owl Family* groups is of particularly good quality because it draws on the work of a range of famous artists, and uses a variety of techniques and media to produce striking finished pieces. In all classes, pupils tackle a broad range of work, and so their knowledge, skills and understanding develop steadily.

78. In Year 1, pupils consider the work of Andy Goldsworthy as a starting point for their own sculptures. They make paper sculptures and, during the inspection, they made imaginative natural sculptures, such as a ship with feathers for sails or a spider, using a range of found materials. Pencil sketches of local buildings, by Year 2 pupils, are of good quality, and these skills have been extended in history where pupils have painted impressive Tudor houses as part of their display about the Great Fire of London. Year 2 pupils also looked at the work of Georgia O'Keefe and reproduced her flower designs in drawings, collage and work with an ICT graphics program. In the current term, art was not a main focus for Years 3 and 4, but past observational drawings of a chair draped with material, and subsequent sculptures of chairs show that they can develop art ideas imaginatively, using a range of media. Carefully-observed charcoal drawings of spider plants, high-quality sewn pictures showing the creation story, and attractive pattern printing, all show that pupils in Years 5 and 6 reach above average standards in art. Their collage death masks of Tutankhamen, linked to work in history, are a good example of the way in which, across the school, art is used well to enrich other subjects.

79. The work produced by pupils in all-age *Owl Family* groups is particularly impressive. Collage of a northern industrial landscape, in the style of L S Lowry, shows close attention to the shapes of buildings and figures. The bright colours and multiple images characteristic of the work of Andy Warhol have been captured well. Particularly striking are the seascapes inspired by the work of Andre Derain in which the pupils have used a range of bright papers and fabrics, embossed with a shiny finish, to capture the movement of the waves. A minor weakness is that pupils do not make much use of sketch books to develop their skills by experimenting with a range of techniques and media. Based on pupils' work, the quality of teaching is good because teachers make sure that the pupils have a wide range of experiences and develop their skills well. The pupils enjoy the subject, which shows in the quality of work on display. In the one lesson observed, the quality of teaching was very good. The initial discussion, including lots of examples of famous artists' work, caught the pupils' interest. There was a strong emphasis on the pupils making their own decisions about making their natural collages and, with good support from adults, the pupils were soon fully engrossed in their work. They produced imaginative pieces and were very disappointed when the lesson ended.

80. The curriculum provides a good balance and range of experiences, and teachers have the knowledge and skills to interpret national guidance so that it best meets the needs of the pupils. Fabric work is a particular strength. Art from a diversity of cultures is part of the curriculum, for example the work inspired by Aboriginal art and, alongside good opportunities to work with pupils of all ages, makes a very good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. The attractive art work on display throughout the school celebrates the pupils' successes and provides an interesting visual environment. Pupils' work had recently been displayed successfully in a local exhibition. Management of the subject across the school is good because the co-ordinator has a clear overview of standards and knows how they can improve further. The school has very good resources, which support teaching and learning effectively.

DESIGN and TECHNOLOGY

81. Pupils' achievements are good and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is above national expectations. Although only one lesson was observed, it is clear from work displayed around the school and discussions with pupils that teaching and learning are good. This was the case in the Year 2 lesson seen, where pupils were evaluating the wind-up toys they had made. They worked with a partner to discuss the strength and weaknesses of their finished designs and suggested ways to improve their work. Good speaking skills supported clear and precise feedback to the whole class.

82. The curriculum is good because it develops pupils' skills systematically. They have many opportunities to work with a wide range of materials for different purposes. For example, in projects linked to work about countries and cultures around the world, pupils in Year 1 made costumes for Japanese dolls, Year 2 made Italian pizzas and Years 5 and 6 used a range of fixing techniques to create a miniature Eiffel Tower. Focused practical activities are regularly used to assess the development of pupils' skills. For example, in Year 3, pupils were observed sawing balsa wood after careful measuring as part of their creation of *monsters with moving mouths*. Design and technology contributes well to pupils' cultural, personal and social development. There are good chances for pupils to work together collaboratively and cooperatively. Pupils are taught to learn from each other. Although they are sometimes disappointed that their own ideas do not always work, they persevere and use the ideas of others to reach a more positive end result. This was the case with Year 5 and 6 buggy making. Pupils had many original ideas, such as creating a buggy from a shoe, but in practice it was very hard to secure an axle to the shoe. Pupils went back to the drawing board to rethink their original intentions. Giving up was not an option. Pupils in Year 6 won a place in the final of a technology challenge to build a structure that would hold a two-kilogram weight.

83. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has created a teaching and learning model that ensures that all pupils work with clear making criteria and well-established procedures for designing and making. A very good focus is placed on evaluating work, which enables pupils to learn from their own successes and failures. This ability to evaluate influences their work in many other subjects. Staff are confident and capable, and the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator is key factor in sustaining such positive attitudes. Resources for the subject are good and well organised.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

84. Pupils' achievements in both subjects are satisfactory and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is close to that expected for pupils' ages. The school follows nationally recommended schemes of work, but enriches them well with additional experiences, such as the *Round the World Week*, which introduces pupils to life in a number of other countries.

85. In geography, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about their own locality, for example looking at the different types of houses in the vicinity and the way in which the land is used for different purposes. They begin to draw simple maps. In Year 2, the pupils start to make comparisons between their own locality and a contrasting one when they find out about life on the fictitious Isle of Struay, off the coast of Scotland. Their work shows that they have identified a number of similarities and differences between island life and their own life in Bishops Cleeve, and they are beginning to understand the reasons for some of the differences. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to investigate the geography of localities around the world, such as using photographs, documentary evidence and their own research to find out about life in a village in India. There is a good emphasis on pupils posing their own questions and seeking answers from the evidence they have. Pupils also consider ways in which people improve or damage the environment, and they investigate geographical issues, such as when Years 5 and 6 carried out a survey about traffic congestion in Bishops Cleeve and debated possible solutions.

86. In history, pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their understanding of past and present by considering events in their own lives and looking at things from the past such as artefacts and photographs. They learn about famous people and events from the past, for example the Great Fire of London, and have a good factual knowledge of the work they have covered, with older pupils also able to say why the people or events were important. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn about various periods in history, such as the Tudors, and they can discuss why Henry VIII was a powerful monarch and what happened to his wives. Work in Years 5 and 6 about Britain since 1948 is supported by a very interesting display of photographs and artefacts from the post-war era, which has helped to bring the topic to life, and which pupils have used to find out about the period. Adults with memories of that time have visited the class to provide fascinating first-hand accounts of life then, which have provided valuable evidence for the pupils' enquiries. Discussions with these pupils showed that they have a good appreciation of what life was like following World War II, such as rationing, and how life changed in the following decades.

87. In the one geography lesson seen, the quality of teaching was good. Pupils were asked to write a postcard, sent from a place in the world with a different climate to England, including information about how the climate affects what the people do. The teacher's good knowledge of the subject and enthusiastic introduction caught the pupils' interest. As a result, they worked hard throughout the lesson, and the teacher was able to maintain a good pace to pupils' learning that ensured they completed the task successfully. The quality of teaching was also good in the one history lesson seen. Pupils were asked to find out which statements about the Tudors were true and which were false. This tested the pupils' factual knowledge at the end of their topic and provoked a good deal of useful discussion. Pupils went on to write their own true or false statements. The teacher planned and organised the activity well, providing support where needed, and using probing questions to explore the depth of pupils' understanding. In both subjects, imaginative teaching strategies ensure that pupils enjoy their learning and develop their knowledge, skills and understanding steadily.

88. Both subjects make a good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development, widening pupils' appreciation of different places, times and people. There are good links between the subjects and with other subjects, such as art. Leadership and management of the subjects are satisfactory because the co-ordinators have a sound grasp of what is taught across the school and potential areas for improvement, such as more opportunities to visit local places of historical interest. They have not, however, had much opportunity to observe teaching and learning in lessons. Resources are generally good and support pupils' learning well.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

89. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory and, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in ICT are in line with national expectations. As only two lessons were seen during the inspection, both taken by

the ICT co-ordinator, judgements rely on work seen around the school and discussions with pupils. In both lessons, teaching and learning were good, but an overall judgement about teaching and learning throughout the school cannot be made. In the lessons seen, pupils developed a good understanding of how computer technology can be used to convey information. In one lesson with Year 5 and 6 pupils, ICT was well used to develop ways of presenting results in a scientific experiment. Pupils quickly recognised the usefulness of technology in creating graphs that helped them to draw conclusions about the effect of insulation on the temperature of water. They understood that the computer increased accuracy and saved time. The use of a digital thermometer increased the accuracy of temperature measurements, as readings could be taken to tenths of a degree.

90. The curriculum is planned and implemented suitably to ensure that pupils have regular and progressively more challenging opportunities. In Year 2, pupils use simple programs to create bar charts having measured the heights of their growing seedlings. ICT supports them in observing results over time. In Year 3, pupils send and receive e-mails, create electronic music and develop their word processing skills by changing font size and colour, and adding pictures to text. In Year 4, pupils make good use of a program that controls the movement of a device. In all year groups, pupils learn that the Internet is a source of new and interesting facts. In Years 5 and 6, pupils use a design program successfully to plan a new adventure playground and alter the layout of their bedrooms.

91. The school does not yet have an ICT suite, but resources in classrooms are used well to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the ICT curriculum. For the current number of pupils, there are sufficient machines and software, but pupils in Years 5 and 6 have to move to another classroom for their lessons. As pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and behave very well, this is not an issue. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has kept up to date with changes and monitored curriculum development. She is clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the subject, but has so far not been able to implement improvements fully, as ICT has not been a priority for development. It is a priority for next term. Leadership is, therefore, satisfactory, but the capacity to improve is good overall.

MUSIC

92. Very little evidence was available during the inspection. The one lesson observed, two music sessions during *Owl Family* time, and pupils' singing in assembly suggest that standards are close to those expected for pupils' ages. It is not possible to make a judgement about pupils' achievements across the school, or about the overall quality of teaching and learning.

93. Although the quality of teaching in the three sessions seen was satisfactory, there were weaknesses. There was an appropriate emphasis on pupils playing instruments, which they enjoyed, but there was too little attention to developing pupils' understanding of musical elements such as pitch, dynamics and rhythm, which are at the heart of the music curriculum. The balance of work was too heavily placed on the performing aspect of the subject and opportunities for pupils to listen to and appraise the work of composers, or each other's music, were missed. In one lesson, the pupils enjoyed composing and then performing sound effects for a story about a haunted castle. They found it difficult to compose in small groups, unless an adult helped, but they performed their sounds well during the telling of the story. Teachers provide stimulating musical experiences, but with insufficient focus on developing pupils' skills. This is largely owing to their lack of knowledge about teaching music. Although a few of the current staff have some expertise in music, overall the school recognises that this is an area that needs to be strengthened. A teacher from a partner secondary school provides some specialist teaching for one hour each week, but was not observed during the inspection.

94. In other activities, staff do well to encourage the pupils' musical skills. In assembly, pupils' singing was of the expected standard, despite having no accompaniment. The recorder club has been meeting

for quite a short time, and the more able group are enjoying their music making, even though their skills are, as yet, well below those often seen in Years 4 to 6. Whole-school musical productions and singing in local festivals give the pupils good opportunities develop their interest in music. There are, however, fewer extra-curricular music activities than found in many schools. Overall, the curriculum is unsatisfactory, because insufficient emphasis is placed on developing pupils' musical skills in lessons. Leadership and management of the subject is satisfactory because the co-ordinator knows that aspects of the subject need to be strengthened, such as the introduction of a scheme of work to support colleagues, and has appropriate plans to tackle them.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

95. Only one physical education lesson was observed during the inspection, in addition to a mixed-age after-school club for gymnastics. Pupils' attainment in the lesson seen was in line with that expected for their ages and they made satisfactory progress; it is not possible, however, to make judgements about pupils' overall standards and achievements, nor the quality of teaching and learning.

96. In the one lesson seen, for Years 5 and 6, teaching was satisfactory. The strengths of the lesson were the good use of previous learning to devise a warm-up workout, good opportunities for teamwork and good focus on practising and improving skills. However, too much time was spent on organising the running track, so pupils spent too long waiting to start work. Pupils' behaviour was very good and they supported each other with encouraging and kind words during relay practice. In this lesson, girls were more agile and faster than boys. Boys had particular problems in doing a gallop movement along the track. The teacher did not demonstrate, or use a higher attaining pupil to do so, to improve the boys' performance.

97. Developing the subject has not been a recent priority, but is next in line on the school development plan. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has sound subject knowledge and relevant past experience. She has a clear understanding of those areas of the curriculum in which she needs better skills and knowledge, in order to influence the work of others. Good use is made of national guidance for the subject, in conjunction with a programme of work from the local authority, and a positive start has been made in assessing pupils' levels of attainment. There are good links with visiting specialists for football, and the school participates in the Cheltenham dance festival. The whole school celebrates the achievements of talented pupils. One girl has participated in national trampoline events. The school has good resources for physical education and, despite the ongoing building work, makes good use of the indoor and outdoor facilities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

98. By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This is because the great majority of the pupils have a good factual knowledge of the work they have covered, and they are also able to make connections between ideas from religious education and events in their own lives. Across the school, pupils' achievements are good.

99. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and are taught about other world faiths such as Judaism and Islam. Younger pupils know many of the stories Jesus told and understand the importance of special celebrations and ceremonies. In a lesson seen, Year 2 pupils showed a good understanding of, and empathy for, ceremony in the Jewish faith. Due respect was shown as the pupils took part in a role play set in a synagogue, reading from the Torah and singing 'Shalom' at the end of the service. The pupils' sensitive response to this experience, and their perceptive questions, showed their good appreciation of the significance of religious ritual. Older pupils explore the differences between the secular and religious aspects of Christian festivals and explain why people hold differing

views. They have a good knowledge of other world faiths, for example recognising the significance of sacred texts such as the Qu'ran, the importance of prayer, and of special rituals such as washing before entering the mosque.

100. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good in one and satisfactory in the other. In a good lesson for Year 2, the teacher's imaginative choice of methods helped the pupils to gain a good understanding of ritual in the Jewish faith. Pupils' previous knowledge was consolidated very well because they needed to recall a wide range of vocabulary and facts from previous lessons and apply them to a role-play situation. The teacher cleverly introduced ideas such as varying approaches to worship by different groups of people within the Jewish faith, and made useful parallels between the Bible and the Torah. High expectations of what the pupils could learn resulted in a stimulating experience. In a satisfactory lesson for Year 3, the teacher's good knowledge of Islam ensured that the pupils grasped the idea that 'respect' is a central part this faith, and good links were made with respectful relationships within pupils' own families. Following useful small-group discussions, the teacher chose to record the pupils' ideas using the computer, but this slowed the pace of the lesson and led to many of the pupils becoming restless.

101. The curriculum is well planned, broad and firmly based on the locally Agreed Syllabus. Teachers' planning is comprehensive and identifies clear learning intentions for lessons. Assemblies contribute well to pupils' religious education, following a moral theme each week and often drawing on stories from Christianity and other religions, such as *The Good Samaritan* used in the week of the inspection. Leadership and management of the subject are good, and the co-ordinator has provided support for colleagues with long term and medium term planning. She has a good overview of what is taught and the quality of pupils' work. Assessment procedures are sufficient for teachers to identify any weaker areas in pupils' learning.