INSPECTION REPORT

GRANGE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 126207

Headteacher: Mrs C E Parkyn

Lead inspector: Mr Brian Gosling

Dates of inspection: $15^{th} - 17^{th}$ November 2004

Inspection number: 266901

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 7 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number on roll; 419

School address: Grange Drive

Stratton St Mary

Swindon Wiltshire

Postcode: SN3 4JY

Telephone number: 01793 822405

Fax number: 01793 820571

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of Mrs Caroline Elliott

governors:

Date of previous March 1999

inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Grange Junior School is bigger than most other primary schools. Of the 419 pupils on roll, 223 are boys and 196 are girls. The gender balance is similar in each year group except for Year 6, where there are significantly more boys than girls. The pupils in each year group are taught in four ability sets for mathematics. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are few pupils from ethnic minority families, and no pupil is learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average, and the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is also below average. Some pupil mobility exists, but this is lower than in most schools. The attainment of pupils when they enter Year 3 varies widely but is average overall. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2004. Significant changes to the teaching staff have occurred recently, with nine teachers having been at the school for two years or less. The deputy headteacher and three newly qualified teachers joined the school this term.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team		Subject responsibilities			
2245	Brian Gosling	Lead	Mathematics.		
3	-	inspector			
9646	Geraldine Osment	Lay			
		inspector			
2283	Clive Lewis	Team	English;		
1		inspector	Geography;		
			History;		
			Religious Education.		
1728	Megan Warner	Team	Science;		
8		inspector	Art and Design;		
			Design and Technology.		
3060	Brian Espiner	Team	Information and Communication		
0		inspector	Technology;		
			Music;		
			Physical Education;		
			Special Educational Needs.		

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Grange Junior School is an effective school. Pupils arrive with average standards of attainment, though there is variation from year to year. They leave the school with attainment that is very good in science, good in mathematics and satisfactory in English. Many teachers are new to the school and there are clear indications that the quality of teaching is good and improving. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is very good and contributes significantly to their learning. Leadership and management are good. The school has managed the introduction of many new teachers very well, and they have quickly formed an effective team. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- High standards are sustained in science.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Very good provision has been developed for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- A very productive climate exists for learning, and the school cares for its pupils well.
- Teaching is good overall, and a significant proportion is very good or better.
- The leadership of the headteacher is good and has created effective teamwork.
- Very effective arrangements have been made for the induction of teachers who are new to the school.
- Pupils' progress is not monitored well enough throughout the school.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used sufficiently across all aspects of the curriculum.
- The school development plan does not guide school improvement sufficiently.
- Some parents do not feel that the school takes full account of their views.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The generally good results in the national tests at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The significant number of governors and teachers who are new to the school have been introduced to the school very well, and have quickly formed an effective and supportive team that demonstrates an ability and capacity for further improvement. This has, however, limited the school's full response to the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. The information provided for parents is better than it was, and the role of governors has improved significantly. There has also been improvement in the reference library, teachers' confidence in using computers, and the provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). However, more remains to be done in strategic planning, in further improving the communication with parents and in the use of ICT in other subjects.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National		similar		
Curriculum tests at the end			schools	
of Year 6, compared with:	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	Α	С	С	E

mathematics	В	В	Α	С
science	А	В	Α	В

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.

Pupils' achievement is good. Attainment when they arrive at the school varies widely, but with clear weaknesses in writing. The group who took the national tests in 2004 arrived with unusually high standards. The high standards were sustained in mathematics and science, but these pupils did not make sufficient progress in English. It is not possible to identify clearly the reasons for this, as there are so many new teachers at the school now. However, the school did not use its own assessment information well enough to adapt its curriculum to the different needs of these pupils. Other year groups entered the school with lower attainment, and standards are currently very good in science, good in mathematics and satisfactory in English and ICT.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and attendance is well above average. These very positive attitudes have a significant effect on the pupils' good achievement.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Under the guidance of the headteacher, many teachers who are new to the school have quickly established a good teamwork approach that is mutually supportive. The quality of teaching is good overall, with one in six lessons very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. All teachers insist on high standards of behaviour. They encourage very positive attitudes in their pupils and give clear guidance. The result is that lessons are calm and pupils produce good work, often to a high standard.

The breadth of curricular opportunities is good overall, with good development of the 'Comenius' project in geography, focusing on countries of the European Community. The facilities for ICT are limited at present, but a new computer suite is to be included in the new accommodation currently being built. The care of the pupils is good and their views are sought and acted upon.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is good, and an effective and supportive team has quickly been established amongst the many new teachers at the school. The management of the school is good and has ensured very good induction procedures for teachers new to the school. The leadership of other key staff, many of whom are new to their posts, is satisfactory. However, assessment information is not used well enough to inform strategic planning and to adapt the curriculum to the varying needs of the pupils. Despite the introduction of many new governors recently, overall governance is satisfactory and statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally satisfied with the education the school provides for their children. In particular, they are very pleased that their children like school. They acknowledge that teaching is good and that their children make good progress, are expected to work hard, and are encouraged to become mature. However, a significant proportion of the parents who returned the questionnaire and of those who attended the meeting for parents feel uncomfortable in approaching the school and have concerns about the action the school takes in response to parents' views. Pupils are pleased with the help and support they receive from teachers, and feel secure in knowing that there is an adult they can approach if they are worried at school. They like the new things they learn in lessons and are happy that they are expected to work hard.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve and to raise standards, particularly in English, are:

- Use assessment information more effectively to inform curriculum planning.
- Ensure that the new computer facilities are used effectively to develop ICT across the curriculum.
- Make strategic planning a clear priority and involve everyone in its more effective use.
- Resolve the present concerns of parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good. By the end of Year 6, standards are very good in science, good in mathematics and satisfactory in English.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising in mathematics and science.
- Pupils' attainment is not high enough in English.
- All pupils achieve well, including those with SEN.

Commentary

The attainment of pupils when they start at the school varies widely but is generally average.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.9 (26.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.7 (27.9)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.4 (29.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 111 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- 1. The school's results¹ in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were well above the national average in mathematics and science and close to the national average in English. However, this group of pupils arrived at the school with attainment that was higher than usual. Consequently, when compared with those of schools whose pupils attained similar standards at the end of Year 2 in 2000, Grange's results were above average in science, average in mathematics but well below average in English. The results were lower in English because, although most pupils attained the nationally expected Level 4² in all three subjects, far fewer pupils attained the higher Level 5 in English than did so in mathematics and science. The reasons for pupils' lower achievement in English are difficult to establish. It is not possible to establish any links with the quality of teaching and learning because most teachers arrived at the school after 2000.
- 2. The trend in the school's results is above the national average and is rising broadly in line with the national trend. Little difference exists between the attainment of boys and girls, although girls tend to do a little better than boys in English and mathematics. The

¹ On the school's results: An average points score provides schools with a single statistic with which to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in other schools. At Key Stage 2, the National Curriculum Levels of attainment are given a score. For example, in mathematics Level 3=21 points and Level 4=27 points, and so on. The average test score achieved by a school is calculated by adding up all the scores achieved by the pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. These comparisons are the ones used in the figures printed in the summary of the report. When the percentage of pupils attaining a particular level is compared to that in other schools, this is stated clearly in the text.

² On Levels: The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that, by the end of Year 6, pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 5 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels.

school collects information about pupils' attainment in a wide range of assessments throughout the school. However, this information is not linked to National Curriculum Levels of attainment until the end of Year 3, and their progress is not tracked clearly until the end of Year 4, when targets are set for their attainment by the time they reach the end of Year 6. This results in some anomalies. For example, the proportion of pupils that the school expects to attain Level 5 at the end of Year 6 in 2005 is much lower than the proportion of pupils who attained Level 3 at the end of Year 2 in 2001. These targets, both in English and mathematics, are achievable and are realistically based on attainment at the end of Year 4. This indicates that pupils' progress has been less than satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. It is not possible to establish the extent to which teaching and learning are responsible for this lack of progress because so many of the teachers are new to the school; half of the eight teachers in Years 3 and 4 arrived at the beginning of the present school year.

3. The judgements of the inspection are that standards are very good in science, good in mathematics, and satisfactory in English and ICT. Pupils' achievement is good in mathematics and science, and satisfactory in English and ICT. The school has introduced a number of initiatives to improve pupils' achievement in English. Standards in ICT are constrained by the limited resources available for the subject, although a new computer suite is currently being built. Pupils with SEN achieve well, and the school's results in national tests show that very few pupils do not attain Level 4. This is a good profile for pupils with SEN when compared with the national picture.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also very good. Attendance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are high standards of behaviour throughout the school.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- The rate of attendance is well above average and the school takes appropriate action to promote it.

Commentary

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian
background
Chinese

No of pupils on roll
381
1
<u>2</u> 5
5
1
1

Number of fixed period exclusion s	Number of permanen t exclusions
4	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	27	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

4. Parents are pleased with pupils' behaviour, which is very good. The school insists on high standards of behaviour. Four temporary exclusions from the school were made for unacceptable behaviour in the last year. The pupils devise their classroom rules with the teacher. As a result, they are committed to these rules and respond very positively to the interesting lessons that their teachers plan for them. They have very good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic and work well in lessons, both independently and collaboratively, which has a positive effect on their learning. Breaks and lunchtimes are good-natured occasions, and pupils of all ages play happily together despite the restricted space available as a result of the extensive building works.

- 5. Pupils are encouraged to work in pairs and small groups, and they are able to co-operate with one another very successfully in lessons. A good example was seen in a Year 5 physical education lesson, where the pupils worked together very well as they developed their gymnastic skills. Teachers and pupils have very good and mutually trusting relationships. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, almost all pupils said their teachers are fair to them and they feel secure that there is an adult they can consult if they are worried. Pupils with SEN are included well in classes and have the same positive attitudes as their classmates.
- 6. Pupils' spiritual awareness is promoted well in assemblies and in lessons. For example, in a science lesson the teacher demonstrated seed dispersal in a very inspiring way, following upon a recent visit to an arboretum, and this increased pupils' awe and wonder of the natural world. Through discussions in PSHE lessons, the pupils develop a sense of empathy for the feelings and needs of others. Pupils' awareness of social and moral issues is also cultivated very well. The school gives pupils opportunities to take responsibility for themselves and others. For example, the headteacher talked through a playground incident with a group of pupils during the inspection. She helped them to understand the need for rules and the importance of everyone keeping to them. Pupils move around the school sensibly between lessons and, as prefects, Year 6 pupils organise the tuck and stationery shops. There are representatives on the school council from each class, and younger pupils have classroom jobs. Pupils make collections for charities, including harvest gifts for homeless people in Swindon and for 'Operation Christmas Child'.
- 7. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own heritage. A range of visits is organised to the steam museum, Bristol Science Museum, the Imperial War Museum, Cotswold Wildlife Park and St. Margaret's Church, and there are visits to the school from church and theatre groups and musicians. Pupils are becoming aware of cultural diversity through the visitors that are invited into school. These include teachers from Italy and Finland as part of the 'Comenius' project, Indian dancers, and the 'Drum Crazy' workshop. In religious education, the pupils study Christianity, Islam and Judaism, and they have visited a Sikh temple.
- 8. The attendance rate is well above the national average. The school has good procedures in place to monitor absences and, because of this, is becoming increasingly concerned about the number of families who take their children out of school for holidays during term. Pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence			
School data:	3.5		
National data:	5.4		

Unauthorised absence				
School data :	0.1			
National data:	0.5			

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is also good and the school provides a suitably broad range of curriculum activities. The school cares for its pupils well, but there are weaknesses in the school's partnership with parents.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The use of assessment is satisfactory but needs to be used more consistently across the school

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good or better in a significant proportion of lessons.
- Teachers plan lessons well and ensure that they are taught in a calm and purposeful atmosphere.
- The quality and the use of assessment are variable.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 47 lessons

٠	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactor y	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
	1 (2%)	7 (15%)	28 (60%)	11 (23%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

- 9. The quality of teaching is good or better in three out of four lessons, and it is very good or excellent in one out of six lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
- 10. A significant change in the teaching staff has occurred recently, with all but two teachers arriving since the last inspection. Most teachers have been at the school for no more than two full years, with five teachers, including the deputy headteacher and three newly qualified teachers, starting this term. The headteacher, who has also arrived since the last inspection, has established very good procedures for inducting new teachers into the school. This includes the detailed planning of the curriculum with other teachers, under the guidance of the year group leader. This is an effective practice that ensures that all lessons are planned well. A variety of teaching methods is employed that accommodates the various learning styles of the pupils. These include practical investigations and experiments that stimulate pupils and add to their enjoyment of learning.
- 11. Teachers explain clearly to pupils the learning intention and objectives of the lesson, which helps them to understand what is expected of them and why. Lessons are orderly and purposeful because all teachers insist on very high standards of behaviour, and they give very good encouragement to pupils. This helps pupils to maintain concentration and apply themselves to their tasks well. They work well both independently and when working collaboratively with other pupils. Although there are few teaching assistants in the school, the ones employed provide effective support for pupils, especially those with SEN.

12. The school has focused on the use of assessment to plan tasks that are sufficiently different to meet the learning needs of three ability groups. The effectiveness of this arrangement varies between classes, because some teachers make better use than others of their assessments of pupils' learning in order to plan tasks for the next stage of learning. Pupils are organised in four ability sets for mathematics, and the best practice organises work in further ability groups within the class. This allows teachers to plan tasks that more precisely meet the particular learning needs of individual pupils. In other classes, and in other subjects, the tasks planned are not sufficiently

different, both to support pupils of lower ability and to challenge those pupils who are capable of higher attainment. It is probable that the failure to secure a consistent use of assessment is responsible for the lower standards in English, where fewer pupils achieve the higher levels of attainment.

The curriculum

13. The broad curriculum is enhanced and enriched by the many interesting opportunities that are provided both within the curriculum and by a range of activities offered to pupils after school. The quality of accommodation is good and the range of learning resources is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The broad curriculum is enhanced by the 'Comenius' project.
- There is good provision to ensure equality of opportunity and inclusion for all pupils.
- Pupils with SEN are supported well.
- A good match of teachers to the needs of the curriculum has been secured, but there are few teaching assistants.
- Limited resources are available for ICT.

- 14. The broad curriculum is planned and based firmly on national guidelines. This ensures that pupils' learning experiences are continuous and progressive as they move through the school. A two-year cycle of topics for the non-core subjects is also in place. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. It also provides very effectively for pupils' PSHE, including sex and drugs awareness education. A good level of equality of opportunity exists for all pupils, and the school's policies and practices ensure that all pupils are fully included in its educational provision. The school has been successful in establishing secure cross-curricular links through its membership of the international 'Comenius' project. This makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of the wider world, particularly other countries within the European Community, and the school hopes this will lead during the year to the 'International School' award.
- 15. The provision for pupils with SEN is good. Pupils' needs are identified quickly, and relevant individual education plans (IEPs) are issued quickly by class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), with the help of outside agencies when necessary. These plans are reviewed regularly. Where this is relevant to their needs, some pupils with SEN are withdrawn from lessons to take part in additional literacy support groups.
- 16. The positive atmosphere of the school promotes the very effective inclusion of all pupils, including those with SEN, into every aspect of the life of the school. There is a suitable range of interesting and relevant after-school clubs, and these are well attended and enjoyed by the pupils. The number of after-school clubs understandably varies during the year owing to changing weather conditions. Only six such clubs were on offer at the time of the inspection. Nevertheless, a good range of activities related to the arts is provided, and a satisfactory range of sporting and cultural visits linked to the curriculum is organised to extend pupils' experiences. A helpful range of visitors who work in the school during the year supports these activities.

17. There is a good number of teachers. The number of non-teaching staff available to give support is smaller than usual, but those currently in the school are conscientious and make a good contribution to the education of the pupils, particularly those with SEN. The quality of the accommodation has been improved since the last inspection and continues to improve. At the time of the inspection, building work was in progress. When this is completed, later in the school year, it will allow the replacement of the three temporary classrooms in the playground and will provide a

new computer suite and an enlarged staff room. Although the range of resources overall is satisfactory, resources for ICT are poor at present. The school has encountered significant problems with the laptop computers it purchased after the last inspection, and there are currently no computers available in classrooms.

Care, guidance and support

18. Procedures to ensure the care, guidance and welfare of the pupils are good. Pupils' achievement and their personal development are monitored satisfactorily. The involvement of the pupils in the school's work and development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school takes all necessary steps to ensure that the pupils are safe.
- The very good relationships between pupils and adults help the pupils to feel secure in school.
- Pupils have very positive and complimentary views of their school.
- Pupils' academic achievement is not monitored well enough from the time they start at the school.

- 19. The school's formal procedures for dealing with matters of health and safety, child protection, and first aid are in place and well understood by all members of staff. Health education and drugs awareness are well planned and, through the good PSHE programme, the pupils are learning to keep themselves safe and healthy. The school nurse, road safety and police officers, and the 'life caravan' support the PSHE programme very well. The pupils are supervised well at break times, and routines, such as the way lunchtimes are managed, are helping pupils to develop good social skills.
- 20. Very good relationships are maintained between pupils and adults. Teachers listen to pupils well during lessons, and pupils feel they are valued. For example, during a literacy lesson in Year 3, pupils had the confidence to offer answers even if they were unsure and might be wrong. In PSHE lessons and circle time³, pupils are able to discuss concerns with their teachers and classmates, and this is also helping to build strong and trusting relationships throughout the school.
- 21. In their responses to the questionnaire, pupils said they like being at school. They feel that teachers listen to their ideas, trust them to do things on their own, and give them help when they are stuck. Parents also agree that their children like the school, and it was very obvious during the inspection that the pupils are happy there. They are kind and considerate towards each other and very polite to adults.
- 22. There are good systems in place to monitor pupils' personal development. Praise from their teachers, along with nominations as prize winners, is helping pupils to be proud of their efforts in school. Pupils are well aware of what is expected of them in lessons and, by revisiting the learning objectives at the end of the lesson, gain a good idea of how much they have learned. Pupils' attainment is assessed at the end of each year through a range of tests that include optional national tests, reading ability tests, and cognitive assessments. However, the school does not use the assessment data provided by the infant school to inform the planning of lessons. In the absence of any other assessments of their attainment when they start at the school, it is not clear how much progress pupils make as they move through the school. The range of assessments employed by the school does, nevertheless, provide clear evidence that pupils have made good progress in Years 5 and 6.

³ On 'Circle time' - this is the provision of a discussion period which provides good opportunities for pupils to talk about issues that face them in everyday life.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

23. The school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory because a significant proportion of parents does not feel sufficiently involved. Links with the community and other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some parents do not feel sufficiently involved as partners in their children's education.
- Good arrangements have been established with other schools to prepare the pupils for the next stage of their education.
- Links with the community enhance the curriculum.

- 24. Parents' responses to the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting showed that there are concerns about some aspects of the school. A significant proportion do not think that the school seeks their views or takes account of their suggestions, and they do not feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. Parents who have brought concerns to the attention of the school are not always informed of the outcome. Governors canvass the views of parents, and their recent survey showed that communication between school and home is an issue for some parents. Governors interviewed during the inspection acknowledge that this problem remains since the last inspection. Some parents spoken to during the inspection felt that they do not get sufficient information about the school's philosophy and approach. They expressed the view that it would be helpful if they were told how things are organised, as these are very different from those in the infant school. Some parents reported that they feel 'distanced' from the school now that they have to wait outside the school gates for their children, and they do not feel that they can easily and informally speak to teachers if there is a problem that might affect their child.
- Some parents also said that they do not feel well informed about their children's progress. The inspection team found the information provided for parents to be satisfactory. The annual reports of progress to parents state what their children know, understand and can do, and note the next steps needed for improvement. National Curriculum Levels of attainment are discussed at the consultation meetings in the autumn and spring terms. Newsletters from the headteacher keep parents informed of events, and the termly letters from each year group let parents know what topics their children will be studying and of arrangements for homework. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, but a homework policy is not shared with parents as recommended in the last inspection report. Parents are consulted when IEPs are drawn up for pupils with SEN and, although not all are signed by parents, the plans are discussed at meetings with parents. The school has organised curriculum workshops for parents but these have not been well attended, so they are not currently part of the school's routine. At the moment, only Year 6 have a homework This makes it difficult for parents of pupils in other year groups to share reading and homework activities, as they are unable to have a regular dialogue with teachers or note any problems as they arise. The governors now provide all the required information in the prospectus, but the governors' annual report does not report sufficiently on the progress in implementing the action plan drawn up following the last inspection.
- 26. Pupils have opportunities to take part in sporting activities against other schools, including football, netball and athletics. Parents are happy with the ways in which their children are helped to settle into the school through its partnership with the infant school. The school has satisfactory links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. For example, mathematics teachers from the secondary school visit to take lessons, and pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 are invited to spend time there. The school's very good development of pupils' personal and social skills is also effective preparation for the next stage of their education.

27. The school uses the local and wider community satisfactorily to enrich the curriculum. Harvest gifts are collected for the homeless in Swindon; the local vicar leads assemblies in school, and pupils visit St. Margaret's Church to support the religious education curriculum and for services. Pupils visit local places of interest, and members of the local community come into school to support learning, particularly in PSHE.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the headteacher is good and the leadership of subject leaders, many of whom are new to their roles, is satisfactory. The governance of the school is satisfactory and the governing body is led well by the chair of governors.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective management teams have been set up and teachers new to the school are supported well.
- Very good induction procedures are in place for both staff and governors.
- Subject leaders inspire and motivate their colleagues well.
- The school has very good self-evaluation procedures, which are used satisfactorily to direct the work of the school.
- The school development plan does not sufficiently guide school improvement.

- 28. The headteacher is leading the school well through a period of change, as many teachers and governors are new to the school. She has a clear vision for the future of the school, focused on the achieving of high standards through a wide range of learning experiences. She understands how the expertise of different teachers can be used to influence and support others. To this end, year group teachers form effective teams, under the guidance of year group leaders, to plan lessons and consider other matters that affect the year group. The headteacher monitors these groups well, and has ensured that good support is provided for teachers new to the school, particularly the newly qualified teachers. She has established good teamwork in the school, and teachers share a commitment to improvement. The deputy headteacher took up his post this term and has quickly formed a supportive, working relationship with the headteacher. Through daily meetings, she provides him with a clear view of the school's development.
- 29. The school is managed well, and the introduction and induction of teachers new to the school has been managed very well. The headteacher effectively monitors teaching and the curriculum; performance management has also been established securely. Issues relating to the quality of teaching have been dealt with effectively by the headteacher, with the support of the local education authority. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has taken responsibility for the management of assessment. This is an important area for development because the school does not sufficiently monitor pupils' progress from the time they enter the school; secure information is available only from the end of Year 3. The deputy headteacher is approaching this task with enthusiasm and commitment. The monitoring role of subject leaders has been identified, and they are given sufficient time to carry out their duties. However, not enough priority is given to the monitoring of teaching to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to raise standards where they are not high

enough. Additionally, many subject co-ordinators are new to their role and some of them are also new to the school. Nevertheless, many subject leaders manage their subjects well and inspire others through planning meetings and classroom support.

- 30. The school has very good procedures for consulting governors, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, and pupils, with the results used to inform the writing of the school development plan. The school has, in the past, held a professional development day for staff and governors, specifically for this purpose. However, with the current focus on team building, not enough attention has been given to the use of the school development plan. Consequently, the school development plan is not a fully effective working document that is shared regularly with staff, or evaluated regularly by staff and governors. It is not used sufficiently to move the school forward and evaluate what has or has not worked well. It contains many areas for development, but gives no order of priority. A three-year strategic plan is proposed, but members of staff do not have a clear understanding of this long-term plan, which makes strategic planning in their own areas of expertise extremely difficult. Whilst there have been satisfactory improvements since the last inspection, when strategic planning was a key issue for development, areas remain which need to be developed further now that a new team is in place. However, the headteacher is fully aware of the need to address this important aspect of the school's development, and has plans to do so.
- 31. The governing body is led well by the chair of governors, who is knowledgeable and supports the school well. Many of the governors are new to their roles. enthusiastic and keen to resolve long-term problems, such as those relating to communications with parents. Good systems are in place to induct new governors into their roles, and the committee structure and procedures are effective in ensuring that governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Many very effective systems are in place that enable the governing body to carry out its work systematically. school has appointed a bursar since the last inspection, when this was identified as an area for development, and day-to-day financial control is now good. The governors' finance committee reviews the budget regularly and is kept well informed by the bursar and Whilst governors are satisfactorily involved in the process of writing the headteacher. school development plan, and use best value principles well in forward planning, they do not sufficiently review and evaluate the results of spending decisions. teachers, many of the governors are new; their overall effectiveness at the present time is satisfactory and their capacity for improvement is good. Statutory requirements are met.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		
Total income	897,791.00	
Total expenditure	886,781.00	
Expenditure per pupil	2,068.00	

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	26,806.00
Balance carried forward to the next	37, 816.00

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is currently good.
- The school does not use assessment information well enough.

- 32. Although pupils' attainment on entry to the school varies, they currently enter with broadly satisfactory literacy skills overall, with some weaknesses in their writing skills. There have been significant improvements recently in the quality of teaching and in the planning of the curriculum, and these have resulted in improved standards in reading, spelling, handwriting and presentation, but standards in writing remain only satisfactory, and overall standards are broadly average.
- 33. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. The results of the national tests indicate that standards in some aspects of English are unsatisfactory, but these results were obtained before the appointment of a large group of newly appointed staff. Significant staff changes and a number of successful curriculum innovations have resulted in an improvement in the rate of pupils' progress. The good teaching observed during the inspection was characterised by teachers' encouragement of the pupils, who were fully engaged, and by skilled classroom and behaviour management. This approach leads to a high level of application and productivity by the pupils, who are now making better and more consistent progress. However, these improvements to the curriculum and to the quality of teaching take some time to be fully effective and the improvements have not yet had the full impact on pupils' attainment. For example, pupils in Year 6 are currently making good progress, but their progress in earlier years has been barely satisfactory. Teachers show good subject knowledge and effective classroom control that allow most lessons to progress at a good pace, and they use day-to-day assessment well to match tasks to pupils' abilities and learning needs. This was demonstrated effectively in a very good lesson in Year 5. The teacher had amended her detailed daily lesson plans to reflect progress in the previous lesson, and she used questioning very skilfully to challenge pupils and develop their speaking and listening skills. The very good pace of the lesson, coupled with very good relationships and high expectations of work and behaviour, resulted in very good quality learning and very good progress during the lesson. Pupils with SEN are included in lessons well. Where support is available, this is provided effectively by conscientious teaching assistants.
- 34. The leadership for the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has given good leadership in many ways but, despite much improved systems for assessment, not enough use is made of the information. The co-ordinator has organised a number of in-service training sessions for teachers and teaching assistants on topics such as 'Good Writing', and she has overseen a whole-school focus on improving standards. As a direct result of these initiatives, the standard of

reading, spelling, handwriting and presentation has improved significantly. Systems for assessing pupils' progress are now good, and a good deal of information is available on pupils' progress as they move through the school. However, the school does not yet use the assessment information well enough in order to amend the curriculum for individuals or groups of pupils. For example, despite an awareness that a significant number of pupils in Year 6 would benefit from additional

support, no additional 'booster' activities are planned for these pupils during the current year. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. The library is well stocked, and although its situation is not ideal the pupils have access to a good range of information and fiction books. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

35. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their language skills in other subjects because of the school's current emphasis on writing skills. This includes work in history and geography, and particularly in religious education lessons, recounting stories, diaries and reports about events from the Bible.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics are above average.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Tasks are matched well to the learning needs of the pupils.
- The subject is led well.

- 36. Standards are good, and results in the national tests have been above or well above average for the last four years. Pupils' achievement is also good. This maintains the good standards shown in the national tests at the time of the last inspection.
- 37. By Year 6, pupils have a very good grasp of the number system. They tackle number problems with confidence and enthusiasm, and this is helped significantly by their very quick mental recall of number and multiplication facts. Although pupils arrive at the school with high attainment in the national tests, the mental recall of number facts by many pupils is neither quick nor secure. The school works well to establish this knowledge of number facts securely, by regular practice at school and as homework. There are many practical activities that the pupils enjoy. These help them develop a secure knowledge and understanding of shapes and their properties, and accuracy in measuring. Teachers insist that pupils use the correct mathematical language, and this helps to build their confidence well.
- 38. Teaching is consistently good, and often very good. Teachers plan lessons well in year groups and pupils are organised in four ability sets for mathematics. An additional class is organised in Year 4, where there are only three classes. Although the use of assessment is variable in planning lessons, many teachers ensure that, within the set they teach, the learning tasks are planned at different levels of difficulty they to meet the learning needs of the pupils more precisely. Consequently, planning is focused on the learning needs of individual pupils and there is a good level of challenge even for the most able pupils. This has a significant effect on the good standards of attainment. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils. The learning objectives of the lesson are shared with pupils to help them understand what they are learning and why. The pupils write this

attractively and clearly.	

objective in their books as a title, and their work is neat, well presented and laid out

39. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides good support to colleagues. Her monitoring role is well developed, which enables her to have a good understanding of the strengths in pupils' learning as well as the areas that can be improved. However, more of the time available for this role needs to be used to monitor teaching by observing lessons. With so many new teachers in the school, this is essential to ensure that the good standards in the subject are maintained and further improvements are achieved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

40. The pupils' good knowledge of mathematical terms is helpful when using their skills in other subjects, as they are able to adapt their knowledge and understanding to different contexts. Good use is made of pupils' numeracy skills across the curriculum, particularly in science, ICT and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is very **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science are well above average.
- Pupils' written work is very well presented throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use imaginative methods.
- Subject-specific vocabulary is introduced very well by teachers and used well by pupils.
- Extra-curricular activities support the subject well.

- 41. Standards are well above average and have improved since the last inspection. Boys and girls reach similar standards. Attainment was above average in Years 3 and 4 and well above average in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are achieving very well.
- 42. During the inspection, pupils in Year 3 were learning about seed dispersal. Pupils had recently visited the nearby Westonbirt Arboretum, and teachers built very well on what pupils had learned on this visit, using diagrams, discussions and demonstrations. Each class watched with amazement as the teachers, after first taking appropriate precautions, pierced balloons. 'Seeds' were scattered afar on the playground, carried both by explosion and by the wind. In these lessons, assessment was used very well to evaluate pupils' understanding. The life cycle of a plant was taught very well in Year 4, where there was also exceptionally good teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistant. While the teacher focused very successfully on asking questions and listening to the pupils' answers, the teaching assistant sorted and placed flash cards on the board at given intervals, slowly revealing how the cycle was formed. The support for different groups and individuals, both by the teacher and teaching assistant, was also well planned and effective. In Year 5, teaching was very good in lessons where pupils were testing parachutes. Their use of scientific vocabulary was exceptionally good in one lesson, where pupils used such terms as

'upward thrust' and 'air resistance' with considerable confidence and understanding. One class was taken by a supply teacher, and the learning in both lessons seen was very good. Supply teachers are supported very well, and pupils achieved well, and sometimes very well, in these lessons. In all lessons, pupils work very well with partners and in groups. Year 6 pupils were planning an investigation during the inspection, and they produced work of a high standard. They worked out how to separate four different substances from one another, a challenging task which they thought through with confidence. Their secure knowledge showed that they have been taught very effectively over a series of lessons. However, a scrutiny of Year 6 pupils' work showed that the standard of work varies, as the writing of investigations is not always completed.

- Throughout the school, the presentation of pupils' work is markedly better than is usually seen with pupils of this age. Good cursive handwriting, neat layout and the accurate use of diagrams and labelling all contribute to the high standards that pupils achieve. Investigative work and demonstrations by teachers are strong contributory factors to the high standards that pupils reach. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and introduce pupils to scientific vocabulary progressively very well, using it constantly throughout a lesson. Teaching and learning, overall, are very good. No lesson was less than good, and one lesson was excellent. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Where teaching was excellent, the pace of the lesson was excellently matched to the age of the pupils. Visual as well as verbal teaching styles were planned and used to good effect, so that pupils who learn in different ways could do so successfully. Throughout the lesson, every opportunity was taken to develop pupils' literacy skills. In lessons where teaching was good, teachers had good subject knowledge and developed pupils' vocabulary well, but further opportunities to develop their speaking skills, and thereby help them explain their investigations in more depth, were not always sufficiently exploited. In almost all lessons teachers plan well for pupils of different levels of attainment, providing challenging work for the most able and good support for lower attaining pupils.
- 44. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader is a scientist, and although he has only recently taken on the management of the subject he has, over three years, worked with teachers in their classrooms, shadowing the previous subject leader. He has analysed test results, monitored pupils' books and identified which weaknesses need still to be addressed. A science theatre group has visited the school, and the subject leader regularly runs an after-school science club. The pupils' confidence in discussing forces reflects the knowledge gained from a recent visit from the theatre group.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are planned well to overcome the poor provision of resources.
- Formal assessment is unsatisfactory, but informal assessment ensures that pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used well enough to support learning in other subjects.

- 45. The requirements of the National Curriculum are met fully and standards in Year 6 are in line with expectations. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although not enough time is given to the subject to ensure that pupils have sufficient practice to consolidate their knowledge and understanding fully and raise standards of attainment.
- 46. The school is very short of computers, with only one computer for every 21 pupils, which is well below the national recommendation of one computer for every eight pupils. The computers are wireless laptops, concentrated in the area between the Year 6 classrooms. All pupils are timetabled to use these for one hour each week. The computers themselves are unreliable and, in one lesson observed, five of the 23 available were not working. Moreover, different computers break down in different lessons, so it is not simply a case of a few unreliable ones. A new computer suite is being built and equipped to open in May 2005, and the school plans to install further computers in each classroom then.

- 47. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The last inspection report recommended that teachers' subject knowledge should be improved, and this has been done well. After the appropriate training, teachers are now competent and confident, and planning is effective and systematic. Pupils are enthusiastic and engage well with tasks. A member of the school office staff is effectively employed as a teaching assistant to support work in ICT. The interactive whiteboard is put to good use, and pupils are encouraged to use it themselves, which they do with confidence. Good teaching was seen during the inspection, managing the limitations of the resources well.
- 48. In ICT lessons, teachers know their pupils well, and informal assessment is used to determine what pupils need to do to improve and to give them extra work to challenge them. However, formal assessment is limited to what is required for annual reports to parents. Although there are plans to assess progress formally at the end of each topic, this is not in place, and assessment is unsatisfactory, as it is not used sufficiently to guide curriculum planning. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, who is new to the post, is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and hard working. However, he has not yet had the opportunity to observe lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

49. This is unsatisfactory. Although the curriculum is planned so that other areas of the curriculum are used to teach the skills of ICT, pupils' ICT skills cannot be used throughout the week to support learning in other subjects because of the lack of computers in classrooms.

HUMANITIES

- 50. Two lessons were seen in geography and one lesson was seen in each of history and religious education. Teachers' planning and pupils' work were examined. Pupils were asked about their work and teachers were also consulted.
- 51. In **history**, Year 5 pupils learn about the 1960s, and they collaborate well in discussions, identifying fashion trends, living conditions and key events of the period. In a geography lesson, Year 4 pupils used atlases confidently to identify the key geographical features of the United Kingdom. In a Year 6 lesson pupils researched Christmas customs in Finland, comparing them to those in the United Kingdom. They explained the reasons why and how places are both similar to and different from other places elsewhere in the world. There are whole-school schemes of work in place for history and geography, based on national guidance. Both subjects are 'blocked' into alternate units of work over a two-year rolling programme, allowing pupils to concentrate on each topic or unit of work in some depth for half a term. A range of fieldwork activities and visitors to the school enhances the curriculum, and a particularly strong contribution to the geography curriculum is made by the school's involvement in the international 'Comenius' project.
- 52. The school follows the latest locally Agreed Syllabus for **religious education** and the school complies with requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. During their time in the school pupils study the Christian religion, together with other religions; Judaism is studied in Years 3 and 4 and Islam in Years 5 and 6. In the one lesson observed, pupils showed a satisfactory understanding of the word 'Messiah' and a

satisfactory understanding of what is involved in belonging to a faith community in terms of belief, practices and values. Although a detailed co-ordinators' file was presented, the long-term subject co-ordinator had actually retired a few weeks before the inspection and, at the time of the inspection, no co-ordinator for the subject had been appointed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

- 53. Three lessons were observed in design and technology, and pupils' work and teachers' planning were examined. No lesson was seen in art and design, but a workshop in the hall was noted during the pre-inspection visit, and the subject leader's file was scrutinised in the course of the inspection, along with photograph albums of art work and a scrutiny of work on display.
- 54. In art and design there are examples of work that are above average, and this reflects the varying confidence of teachers, as shown in the subject leaders' analysis. The school has a biannual art exhibition, and work displayed in the photo albums of this event shows that some pupils reach very good standards. There are particularly effective paintings of storms, inspired through literature, flower compositions completed after an arrangement has been photographed with a digital camera, and work on Tudor explorers. Work includes pictures inspired by the study of artists such as Georgia O'Keefe and Kandinski. Pupils know about Seurat and the pointillist technique, and paint lovely sunsets after studying Turner. They experiment with various media and different compositions. They use their sketch books well to learn new techniques such as shading, and for sketching still life compositions. Pupils also design costumes for historical characters or for characters in a play, such as 'The Tempest'. Art is used to illustrate poetry, fairy tales and legends. The technique of marbling is learned, and used in design and technology when pupils make carrier bags. Pupils learn about Islamic patterns in religious education, and art is used particularly well in geography, where a large wall mural has been made, with the help of two visiting artists, linked to the 'Comenius' project.
- 55. In design and technology, standards were good in the lesson seen in Year 4. Pupils worked quickly and carefully, designing the face of a puppet from plans that showed a range of emotions, and the clothes the puppet would wear. Pupils' learning and achievement were good because of good teaching. Standards were satisfactory in Year 6 where pupils were designing a box for a Christmas cake. They used different techniques well, such as nets and their knowledge of origami. Pupils used their imaginations to good effect to make their prototypes, with individuals in both classes putting forward original Teaching and learning are generally good, with teachers encouraging pupils to improve their work. Pupils have books in which to design their products, and they use diagrams well when planning the products. For example, in Year 6, the stages of planning, making and evaluating a flagpole pulley were clearly written up. Pupils in all years study food technology; in Years 5 and 6 they made biscuits and summer drinks and looked at different cereals on the market. In Year 3 they designed edible Christmas decorations. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily and the subject is satisfactorily led, but it is not at present a priority for development.
- 56. **Music** has a high priority on the school development plan. Only one lesson was observed, so no overall judgement can be made of standards or teaching. The lesson observed with Year 6 pupils was good. Pupils really enjoyed conjuring up images from the gunfight in Copland's 'Billy the Kid' suite and translating the sounds into sketches.
- 57. Only three lessons were seen in **physical education**, two of which were in gymnastics and one in netball skills. All three lessons were good, providing pupils with plenty of exercise in enjoyable and well-managed situations. Records show that virtually all pupils can swim 25 metres unaided by the time they leave the school, and almost all can do this by the end of Year 3.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in PSHE and citizenship skills is very **good** and is a strength of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a whole-school commitment to developing pupils' personal development.
- There is a strong sense of school community.
- Very good relationships are encountered throughout the school.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how their own actions affect others.

Commentary

58. This aspect of pupils' education is given a high priority by the headteacher and all members of staff, and there is clear evidence of the success of this approach in the very good attitudes and behaviour observed throughout the school during the inspection. Adults provide a secure and happy environment where all are valued. Pupils learn to accept each other and recognise that some pupils need special support. teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors and other adults working in the school treat pupils with respect and provide very good role models, to whom pupils respond positively. Provision for PSHE is both formal and informal. Formal sessions, such as through circle time and discussions in class assemblies, allow pupils to deal with their emotions and feelings. PSHE is provided informally by means of the very good relationships and day-today interactions between pupils and adults. Equality of opportunity for all pupils is good, and the school is very inclusive in all its policies and practices. There is imaginative use of visits and visitors to the school during the year to support PSHE. These include the 'Lifestyle Caravan', a 'Drugs and Alcohol Awareness' presentation for Year 6 pupils, and a range of whole-school activities linked to and supported by the 'Comenius' project. These opportunities make a very positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development, as do the linked themes of assemblies, such as 'Ourselves', which was the theme during the inspection week.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement	Grade
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	5
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).