

Grangefield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131784
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	315869
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Peacey
Headteacher	Lynne Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2003
School address	Voxwell Lane Bishops Cleeve Cheltenham GL52 8GL
Telephone number	01242 671003
Fax number	01242 671003

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. Pupils come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Nearly all are from White British heritage and very few are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features. The school provides a good education for pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

Children enter the school with the skills expected for their age, although their language and communication skills are often less well developed. Good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures children achieve well and get a good start to their education. Pupils continue to achieve well in all other year groups because of consistently good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching. As a result, standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. However, standards in science lag behind those in other subjects because pupils do not have regular opportunities to develop the skills associated with scientific investigation.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are keen and eager to learn and have an outstanding community spirit. They describe their school as a happy and friendly place where pupils feel part of one big family and try hard to do well. Their enjoyment of school is outstanding and this is reflected in their good attendance. They take on the responsibilities they are given seriously and realise the need to make healthy choices, especially about what they eat. Their understanding of the importance of adopting safe practices is excellent. Pupils say they feel very safe and secure and know there is always someone to turn to should the need arise. Whilst their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, their moral and social development is outstanding and this is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour and outstanding attitudes towards others.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers and learning support workers work well together to ensure a consistency of approach to learning. They make sure that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those whose first language is not English, are well supported and make good progress in all year groups.

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and enhanced by a range of activities that further develop pupils' skills and their enjoyment of learning. Procedures for care, guidance and support are outstanding and contribute well to pupils' sense of well-being. The way the school has developed the 'Owl' system of family groupings for pupils has successfully encouraged pupils of all ages to work and play together well and to support and care for each other should the need arise.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, staff and governors work well as a team and have displayed the drive and determination to continually evaluate the school's performance and have successfully implemented strategies aimed at raising standards. This has been a key factor in maintaining and improving pupils' achievement since the last inspection. It is a clear indication that the school has a good capacity to carry out further improvement. The governing body fulfils its duties well and offers the school a good level of support and challenge.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage class because teaching is good and caters effectively for the needs of all children, regardless of their abilities. The classroom is a colourful, vibrant place, which encourages learning. The Foundation Stage teacher works well with learning support workers and other adults to ensure that lessons are interesting. Together, they

effectively blend opportunities for children to learn both independently and with adult direction. Tasks are well matched to children's abilities and usually provide them with just the right amount of challenge. As a result, children enjoy lessons and are keen to learn. The outdoor area is used well to help children build up the skills associated with outdoor play, especially when the weather is fine. However, the lack of a suitable dedicated covered area in close proximity to the Foundation Stage classroom limits opportunities for outdoor activities during inclement weather.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in science by providing pupils with regular opportunities to develop the skills associated with scientific investigation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are often above those expected for their age, although their language skills are less well developed. They achieve well throughout the school because of good teaching and a curriculum which meets their needs effectively. As a result, standards in Year 6 are above average and pupils are on course to exceed the appropriately challenging targets set for them in the 2008 national tests. However, standards in science lag behind those in mathematics and English in all year groups. Recent initiatives to improve achievement in this subject have met with only partial success. Older pupils list science as one of their least favourite subjects, one reason being that they feel it involves a lot of writing and not enough experimental work. The school is aware that there is still a need to provide pupils with structured opportunities to develop their investigative skills in science if standards and achievement are to rise.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils say that they really enjoy school with some pupils even admitting they try to come to school when they clearly feel ill. As one older pupil put it. 'I'm really going to miss this school when I leave.' Pupils are extremely friendly, very polite and show a great deal of respect for adults and each other. The school's unique grouping of pupils into six mixed-age groups, known as 'Owl' groups, ensures pupils of all ages mix well together and encourages older pupils to take very good care of younger ones. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the school's very good links with the community and fully understand the importance of the fund raising they carry out for charitable causes. They enjoy taking part in the wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities provided for them. Pupils say they are well aware of healthy living issues and understand the importance of keeping fit. The school ensures pupils make good progress in developing their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in preparation for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Consistently good, and, on occasions, outstanding teaching is the key to ensuring pupils make good progress and achieve well in all year groups. Learning support workers work very effectively with class teachers to ensure that pupils of all abilities are provided with appropriate activities and with the help they need to succeed. Teachers use a variety of approaches to make learning

interesting and to ensure pupils are involved in learning activities. Lessons are well structured and enjoyable, although there are occasions when the pace of learning slackens and pupils' interest starts to wane. Pupils particularly enjoy teachers using interactive whiteboards to introduce and reinforce new learning. They appreciate that the quality of teachers' marking is good and consistently shows pupils how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they are provided with activities that meet their needs and interests well. The curriculum is enriched through a good range of extra-curricular activities and through themed weeks and interesting visitors to the school. Visits to places of interest, such as the Holst Birthplace Museum, help pupils to gain an understanding of life in the wider world.

Provision for personal, social and health education is good and ensures that pupils become well aware of the importance of fitness, well-being and leading a healthy lifestyle. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good, as is provision for pupils whose first language is not English. Whilst provision for music, criticised by the last inspection, has improved, the school is aware that provision for science is presently in need of development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is a pleasant, family atmosphere about the school and parents say they value the outstanding level of care their children receive. 'I couldn't have asked for a more supportive school' is a typical comment from parents' questionnaires. Pupils say they feel extremely safe and very well looked after. Younger pupils talk enthusiastically about how the mixed-age 'Owl' family groups help them to become friends with older pupils. Induction and transfer arrangements are very good and help pupils settle quickly into new routines. Pupils with different learning needs receive very effective support and so make the same good progress as others. The school meets fully all requirements for health and safety. The school's child protection procedures meet all current requirements. The school has developed very effective assessment and tracking systems to check how well individual pupils are doing and uses these extremely well to ensure pupils always know what they have to do in order to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher is a very effective leader who has ensured that all staff share her vision of placing pupils' needs and equal opportunities at the heart of school life. Working together with her staff and school governors, the headteacher has ensured the school has continually analysed its performance and has developed a successful approach to raising achievement.

The governing body fulfils its duties well. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fully involved in school life. The role of the school's senior management team has increased in the last year as the school has continued to grow in size and the headteacher and deputy headteacher have delegated more responsibilities to other senior staff. However, the school is aware that there is still a need for all senior staff to become more involved in decision making and monitoring provision. Links with external agencies support

pupils' learning well, particularly for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Resources are good and the accommodation has improved since the last inspection.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Grangefield Primary School, Bishops Cleeve, Cheltenham GL52 8GL

Thank you for making us feel very welcome during our visit to your school. We really enjoyed our two days and especially liked talking to you about what you like the most about your school and seeing you work in lessons.

Here are some of the things we particularly like about your school:

- Yours is a good school that gives you a good start to your education and makes sure you make good progress in learning.
- Your personal development and behaviour is outstanding and you really enjoy being at school.
- Your teachers and the other adults who work in the school care for you extremely well and make sure you are always safe and well looked after.
- Your headteacher, her staff and your school governors are working well to make sure that your school continues to improve in the future. We believe your headteacher and teachers can do something to make your school better. We have asked them to:
- Help you to improve how well you do in science by giving you regular opportunities to carry out experiments.

You can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron

Lead inspector

7 March 2008

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GL52 8GL**

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Yours sincerely

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Lead inspector