

Gomer Infant School

Pyrford Close, Alverstoke, Gosport, PO12 2RP

Inspection dates 4–5 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' achievement levels are outstanding. This includes those few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- A whole-school focus on sustaining high-quality learning is extremely successful; teaching is outstanding and contributes significantly to the high levels of pupils' progress.
- The headteacher gives a very clear and uncompromising vision for sustaining improvement which effectively guides school development.
- The inspired leadership of the headteacher has ensured the sustained success of the school. A highly effective senior management team has been established with the deputy headteacher and inclusion manager sharing the headteacher's extremely detailed and rigorous approach to assessing the effectiveness of school actions on pupils' outcomes.
- The vision for improvement has been successfully shared with staff and governors. Lunchtime supervisors, for example, take assemblies and play a full part in the life of the school.
- The behaviour of pupils both in lessons and around the school is outstanding. They display an exceptional maturity for their age and adopt very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. A highly effective distribution of responsibilities, backed up by most appropriate professional development of staff, has ensured that all leaders play an active and full part in checking the work of the school.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and work extremely well together. There is an obvious sense of mutual respect between pupils and with adults.
- Underpinning the high levels of pupils' progress is the very effective use of tracking data. This quickly helps the school to target pupils who are underachieving, and is used by teachers to set challenges for pupils.
- The external area of the school has been well developed since the last inspection, particularly regarding opportunities to support literacy. The natural next step is to extend this to mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, including linking sounds and letters (phonics) sessions. They visited three other lessons, including an intervention session for pupils in need of further support.
- They listened to a sample of readers from Years 1 and 2.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at attainment and progress data, the school's development plan, curriculum plans, governing body documentation and policies and procedures. Those relating to health and safety and safeguarding of pupils were carefully scrutinised.
- The inspectors took account of 42 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire.
- Discussions were held with senior and other leaders, teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, pupils and a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Michael Pye, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julie Sackett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is of average size.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background. The next largest group is of White Asian heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and supported under pupil premium funding, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children from service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The main needs of these pupils relate to speech, language and communication difficulties.
- Privately run breakfast and after-school clubs use the school hall during the school week. These clubs were not inspected on this occasion.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maximise the opportunities in the external areas of the school to reinforce and extend the pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 has been significantly above average in four out of the last five years.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below the expected levels with particular weaknesses in aspects of literacy and numeracy. Prompt assessment enables the reception teachers to quickly challenge pupils at the appropriate level. They consequently make good and often better progress.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, such as those with speech, language and communication difficulties, make similar good or better progress and by the end of Year 2 achieve outstandingly. For example, in the 2012 assessments pupils at school action plus attained at levels well above the national average.
- Pupils' current work and the school's detailed tracking data show the consistently strong progress of pupils in all years. They are on track to attain at well above average levels at the end of Year 2.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2012 was overall average as a consequence of a cohort issue, especially regarding numeracy. Given pupils' starting points this still constituted at least good progress and school data show that for a majority of pupils their progress was in line with previous years.
- Reading standards in 2012 are well above the national average. The phonics screening check results for Year 1 pupils were below average. The school rapidly put into place highly effective changes and it appears that this year pupils will attain at well above average levels. The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils naturally separate and sound out their words when reading and have a good level of understanding about what they read. Pupils spoken to enjoy reading.
- In the 2012 assessments, the small numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or of service families and supported through the pupil premium attained at well above average levels overall, doing especially well in writing and mathematics. Their rate of progress was in line with their peers.
- Any previous gaps in the attainment of boys and girls have been closed.
- The effect of the varied interventions can be seen in the excellent progress that pupils make during these sessions. For example, in the 'Every Child a Reader' sessions, the pupils are expected to quadruple the (already high) expected levels of progress.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Since the last inspection senior leaders have sustained, through their effective observations and coaching, a very high level of teaching; a third of lessons observed were judged outstanding.
- A strength of the teaching is seen in the exceptionally high-quality relationships and mutual respect shown in lessons. Consequently pupils engage with the work and enjoy their learning and the humour which is a natural part of many lessons.
- Another strength lies in the excellent expectations of work and behaviour that adults have of the pupils; this applies whatever their ability. Pupils respond extremely well to this approach. In a Year 2 English lesson the teacher presented challenges to the pupils to improve their sentences. One boy responded to the task and excitedly said, 'I've put a simile in my complex sentence!'
- Opportunities for the pupils' moral and social development are exceptionally good in lessons. Pupils work exceptionally well in teams or with their talk partner. Pupils are encouraged from an early age to make sure that all are included.
- Pupils' outstanding progress is a consequence of teachers using assessment information very effectively to set highly challenging work. They use some very good resources and approaches

that meet extremely well pupils' individual learning needs. Learning is delivered with good pace which motivates pupils. A Year 2 English lesson saw pupils enthusiastic and enjoying the challenge of recognising and sounding out phonics in 24 seconds, thereby beating the record.

- A phonics session in Reception saw children highly motivated by the teachers' use of imaginative and stimulating approaches to help them learn. They were asked to write letters on the carpet, in the air and on a friend's back before in their books – a good mix of independent and group work.
- Questioning by adults is focused and challenges pupils to explain the thinking behind their answer. A Year 1 mathematics lesson saw pupils asked, 'How did you check your answer?' Pupils, in keeping with their positive attitudes to learning, then went on to challenge themselves with harder sums.
- Learning support assistants are deployed well and play a very proactive role in supporting pupils in lessons and during interventions.
- Marking is impressive, consistently giving clear guidance to pupils about how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are extremely well behaved, keen to learn and want to do their best.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying, just 'positive relationships'. They say they feel safe and that any issues are dealt with by the school promptly and effectively. All parents and carers who completed the online survey believe that their children are safe and happy at school.
- Attendance has further improved and is above average.
- Pupils, for their age, have a secure understanding of the different types of bullying and are aware of the dangers associated with computers and cyber-bullying.
- A very caring ethos underpins the life in the school. All adults, including administrative and caretaking staff, actively listen to pupils, value their views and encourage them to share their ideas. The pupils respond extremely well in this environment, show personal and social skills beyond their age, and demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning.
- Adults, including the proactive lunchtime supervisors, adopt a consistent approach to behaviour management.
- Circle time becomes an opportunity for pupils to put themselves forward. The class votes for their representatives who sit on committees to discuss different aspects of school life. The school is edging closer to the point where pupils will have a formal voice in strategic planning.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities to discuss their learning. Around the school are references to the 'learning powers' and pupils refer naturally to such aspects as the character 'SEGER' for perseverance and the 'Reflective Detective'. Typically for this school, the effect of such learning powers is checked by school leaders.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- High achievement levels are the result of an extremely high focus on improving teaching through coaching, improving the skills of leaders through effective professional development, and in highly developed approaches to checking the school's work. Adults share the vision of constantly seeking to improve pupils' outcomes.
- Subject leaders and managers of other aspects of school life oversee their area and evaluate and identify highly relevant development priorities. An annual 'Impact Statement' has to be written for senior managers and governors. After 2012 the school rigorously analysed mathematics. The 'Achievement for All' initiative was introduced using discussions and diagnostic assessments to ensure that the individual needs of the pupils are met. Such forensic and rigorous approaches to checking and evaluating the work of the school are consistent characteristics of school leadership.

- The professional development of staff is given high priority. For example, teachers' approaches to termly pupil progress meetings and half termly reviews have become more focused and refined as a consequence of coaching and the sharing of good practice.
- Performance management is extremely well used to support both personal development and the needs of the school. The process has resulted in improving the teaching of phonics and the teachers' subject knowledge of mathematics. Unequivocal messages go to teachers about the expectation of good and better teaching.
- The highly effective curriculum manifestly meets pupils' needs, and has an excellent emphasis on individualised learning. Topics give very good support for literacy and numeracy and pupils' cultural development. However, opportunities are missed to maximise the use of the external areas to reinforce the pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge.
- Excellent links with parents, carers and other partners have a direct and significant effect on pupils' experiences. The 'Dad's Club' is increasingly well attended and coffee mornings enable parents and carers to express views and make suggestions. The rather unique pupil-led parents' evening is an outstanding contributor to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and leads to meaningful discussions about learning.
- Safeguarding arrangements are secure.
- The link with the local Education Improvement Partnership supported the 'keep on talking' reading project. Links with local schools ensure the sharing of good practice. Work with the nearby junior school is aiming to develop a common calculation policy. Local secondary schools send back data to allow the school to track the long-term achievements of those pupils eligible for free school meals. Support from the local authority has been, most appropriately, light touch.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors use a very wide range of strategies, including visits, headteacher reports and 'Impact Statements', to check on the work of the school in order to build an evidence base from which they can challenge the school to do even better. These are then triangulated with data, their own observations and the development priorities to establish whether the school is on track to meet its targets. They proactively set up monitoring meetings to investigate the mathematics standards after last year. Statutory duties are met and the budget is secure. Governors know about the different groups of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and have knowledge of how they are doing. Performance management at this level helps ensure that challenging development targets are set for the school. Also, it allows the governors to know where the best teaching is and where it needs to be further developed. There is an uncompromising focus on wanting the very best for the pupils and a commitment to give them the best preparation for their futures.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	116176
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	412534

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nayrise Storey
Headteacher	Debra Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	5–6 November 2008
Telephone number	02392 580808
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