

INSPECTION REPORT

GOMER JUNIOR SCHOOL

Gosport

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116181

Headteacher: Mr R Irving

Lead inspector: Ian Knight

Dates of inspection: 4th and 5th July, 2005

Inspection number: 266880

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	240
School address:	Pyrford Close Alverstoke Gosport Hampshire
Postcode:	PO12 2RP
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Loneragan
Date of previous inspection:	8 th March 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Gomer Junior School is a large junior school in Gosport. Since the last inspection, more pupils have come from outside the school's normal catchment area and the overall socio-economic mix at the school is now average. The school received the School Achievement Award in 2002 and the Healthy Schools Award in 2004. Attainment on entry to the school in Year 3 is average overall. Almost all pupils are White British and none have English as an additional language. Fewer pupils have special educational needs than nationally. The needs in the school include specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Few pupils join or leave the school other than at the usual times.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23031	Ian Knight	Lead inspector	
32690	Julian Webb	Lay inspector	
32197	Mike Dukes	Team inspector	Mathematics, geography, history, religious education
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10053	Janet Simms	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, art and design, design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching based on the key skills of communication, number, information and communication technology, working with others and problem solving, on which the school's good curriculum is founded. The practical application of the 'Gomer Values' ensures that pupils show very good attitudes and behave very well. Very good leadership from the headteacher, supported effectively by other staff and very good management ensure that the school operates effectively. This is achieved at a cost per pupil within the average range: the school offers good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher has an exceptionally clear vision, which, supported by very good management and school self-evaluation, has resulted in a school in which:
 - The 'Gomer Values', including 'respect' and 'responsibility' support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well and produce the very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships in the school.
 - Adults know pupils very well and really care for them.
 - Good teaching, based on the school's identified key skills, results in good achievement.
- Achievement in mathematics, whilst satisfactory, is not as high as in the other core subjects.
- The quality of marking and target setting does not consistently guide pupils in their learning.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection in March 1999. The curriculum is much improved, and satisfactory progress has been made in terms of the role of the subject leader and in improving feedback to pupils. Good improvement has taken place in teaching and learning, and in the leadership and management of the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	B	A	B
mathematics	A	C	B	C
science	A	B	B	D

*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.*

Achievement in the school is good. Standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education are all above expectations in Year 6, with standards in information and communication technology (ICT) in line with expectations. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory because the match of tasks to pupils' needs is not as sharp as in the other subjects. Achievement in English, science, religious education and ICT is good. The other subjects were not foci of the inspection and so secure judgements about standards and achievement cannot be made.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are progressing very well. Pupils show very good attitudes and behave very well. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan very well so as to challenge pupils effectively in lessons. Teaching assistants provide very good support for learning in lessons, helping all to make good progress. Some lessons, however, are allowed to go on for too long and the pace of learning can slacken as a result. Nevertheless, pupils work very hard in lessons and are able to work independently and collaboratively very well.

The school's curriculum is good and is enriched very well by clubs, visits and visitors. Very good arrangements are made for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and they are provided with very good support, advice and guidance. The school maintains good links with parents and the community and very good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, supported effectively by other key staff, especially the members of the strategic leadership team. The governing body operates well. The school is managed very well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school. They say teaching is good and their children make good progress. Some say that they do not receive enough timely information about the school's work, but the inspection team found this view to be unfounded. Pupils are very pleased with the school. They are pleased with how teachers treat them, saying that, although they have to work hard, they get help when needed.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve achievement in mathematics to the same level as in the other core subjects.
- Improve the quality of the use of marking and target setting so that pupils are more consistently challenged and know what they need to do to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the school is good. Standards in Year 6 are above expectations in most of the core subjects, but are in line with expectations in ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in the school is good.
- Standards are improving in ICT.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in mathematics as in English and science.
- Pupils with special educational needs or who are gifted and talented achieve well.

Commentary

1. In the National Curriculum tests in 2004, the latest year for which national comparisons are available, standards were above average overall, and well above average in English. If the comparison is restricted only to those schools whose pupils attained similarly four years ago, then standards were above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. Standards in English were so good because high numbers of pupils gained the higher Level 5. Since 2002, the trend in English standards has been one of modest improvement year on year, but there is no secure trend of improvement in mathematics and science. Early indications for this year suggest a modest improvement in mathematics and science, and a maintenance of standards in English.
2. In the table below, one 'point' represents approximately the progress expected in one term. The expected Level 4 is represented by 27 points, and the higher Level 5 by 33 points.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.8 (28.1)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	28.4 (27.4)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	29.4 (29.7)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. However, test results cannot tell the whole story. The data are now a year old and refer to a few subjects. They also represent pupils who have left the school. Moreover, these statistics give few clues about achievement, that is, are pupils doing as well as they should? Inspection evidence can fill some of these gaps.
4. Most pupils come to the school from the adjoining infant school. There is a considerable time between those pupils completing their National Curriculum tests in Year 2 and starting work in Year 3. The school has noted that standards on entry to Year 3 are lower than would be suggested by the results in Year 2 tests, partly because of this time difference and change of school. Research from the local authority also supports the school's view, which is confirmed by the inspection team. Consequently, when pupils arrive in the school in Year 3, their standards are in line with what would normally be expected for that age.
5. Good teaching and learning combine to enable pupils to make good progress in the school so that by Year 6 they attain standards above expectations in English, mathematics, science, and religious education, with standards in line with expectations in ICT. There is a generally

improving picture in ICT, with standards elsewhere in the school being above what would be expected. This has come about because the school has made ICT provision a priority and improved resources. The other subjects were not foci of the inspection, so secure judgements about standards and achievement cannot be made.

6. In most year groups, mathematics is taught in groups based on ability and this helps ensure that tasks are closely matched to pupils' needs. In some cases, however, this is less effective and the progress made by pupils in different classes varies considerably. As a result of these inconsistencies, achievement in mathematics is satisfactory rather than good.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the school and achieve well, as do their classmates. The apparent fall-off in attainment between pupils' national test results Year 2 and the school's own bench-marking of attainment in Year 3 is especially evident in writing, so while pupils appear to make less progress, inspection evidence and the school's own monitoring confirm that progress is good across the school. The use of teaching assistants working in small groups has been particularly effective in enabling these pupils to achieve well. Provision for pupils who have a particular gift or talent is extensive and helps to enrich the curriculum they receive. Because of the very good planning in most classes, and some targeted teaching in small groups, they are given tasks that challenge them well, and consequently, they achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The attitudes and the behaviour of pupils are very good. Their attendance and punctuality are good. The provision for spiritual, moral social and cultural education is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good attitudes and values displayed by pupils ensure a very good climate for learning.
- High expectations result in very good behaviour, with only isolated lapses.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.

Commentary

8. The Gomer Code and Values are prominently displayed in most classrooms. They set clear guidelines and expectations and, as importantly, are enforced and adhered to. All pupils sign up to the code at the beginning of each year. This instils positive attitudes to learning and ensures that pupils and adults alike can enjoy their time at school. Pupils take a pride in their school and are keen to show it off to visitors. The fabric of the school is clearly cared for with no evidence of misuse or vandalism. The numerous and wide-ranging activities outside the curriculum are popular and well supported. The pupils' enthusiasm and positive attitudes are reflected in all that they do, with no indication of apathy. There is a caring ethos within the school; for example, pupils were seen caring for another who had fallen. They show respect for others of all ages and are willing to take responsibility. Volunteers for various duties, including escorting visitors and assisting staff, are plentiful. Pupils are confident, have high self-esteem and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
9. Pupils with special educational needs display the same very positive attitudes and behaviour as their classmates. They participate very well in all school activities, both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. Some pupils, whose needs relate to behaviour when they enter the school, make such good progress and improvement in their behaviour that they no longer need targeted special help. Pupils relate exceptionally well to teaching assistants, benefiting greatly from small-group help in lessons such as English and mathematics.
10. Pupils enjoy school and are anxious to ensure that they arrive on time. There are sound procedures for recording and monitoring absence. Although attendance is well above the

national average it is not as high as it has been in the past. Accordingly, there is a consistent campaign to improve attendance further.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.2
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

11. Younger pupils take some time to adjust their attitudes to match those expected by the Gomer Code. Consequently, conduct in the classrooms improves as pupils progress through the school. Isolated bullying and the few racist comments recorded last year were quickly and effectively dealt with. Such incidents were properly recorded and monitored and appropriate action was taken. The fair and consistent implementation of the Gomer Code enables all pupils to understand what they have done wrong, the impact of their behaviour on others, and how to improve their conduct. This sensitive management of pupils' behaviour instils mutual respect amongst adults and pupils. Serious misconduct is extremely rare, although there was one fixed term exclusion last year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
240	1	0

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

12. The school is very successful in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' self-knowledge and spiritual awareness are very good. Appropriate assemblies and a strong religious education programme contribute greatly to pupils' understanding. This is helped by very good relationships which enable staff to deal effectively with difficult aspects like the symbolism of light. Other lessons enable pupils to reflect on the wonder of the world; for example, in an art and design lesson for pupils in Year 3 when they observed flowers very carefully. Once again the Gomer Code and Values contributes immensely to pupils' understanding of right and wrong, of the importance of rules and of the existence of prejudice and intolerance. This very good provision is reflected in the standards of behaviour and attitudes of pupils and so the overall moral and social development of pupils is very good. Although there are virtually no other cultures represented among the pupils and staff in the school, imaginatively planned lessons with good links to other subjects provide a variety of interesting opportunities, resulting in good cultural development. For example, the experience of a member of staff in Zambia was very well used in a number of different subjects to broaden pupils' knowledge of dance on the African continent. The music room gives pupils experience of a wide range of cultures. The school goes to great lengths to supplement the dearth of multi-cultural influences in the area and does so successfully.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good, based on a good curriculum and sound assessment. The school makes very good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and maintains good links with its partners.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning in the school are good. Good assessment procedures are used satisfactorily to ensure that pupils are challenged well in lessons and make good progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good planning supports teachers' high expectations of what pupils can do to ensure the good achievement in the school.
- Teaching assistants are used very well to support pupils who need a little extra help.
- The quality of marking varies and does not always tell pupils what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	10	9	4	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

13. Teachers know their classes well, which means that they can set tasks that challenge individuals effectively in most lessons. This happened in a very good mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 6, in which pupils reinforced their knowledge of fractions and percentages and applied that knowledge. This work was very challenging and the teacher encouraged pupils very well, so that they used calculators effectively, discussed their work sensibly and made personal 'aides-memoire' of formulae. Because of the level of challenge, some pupils began to struggle, but this was dealt with effectively as the teacher stopped the activity to remind pupils, for example, how to calculate the area of a circle, so that they were able to continue working independently. Achievement in this lesson was very good because the teacher skilfully maintained a high level of challenge and a brisk pace through lively teaching. This led pupils to be highly interested and very well behaved so that they made very good progress. However, lessons are occasionally too long and this means that the pace of learning slackens and consequently, in these lessons, pupils achieve only satisfactorily.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent 'picnic enquiry' by a top set of Year 6 pupils in a science lesson

A group of eight pupils predicted what would happen if they set up their picnic areas in various locations on the Isle of Wight. They had already learned about landslips and coastal erosion. The teacher reviewed their knowledge through questioning that was of a high quality and that motivated and inspired pupils. After extensive discussion in groups, pupils chose their 'best area'. They thought carefully, saying, for example, that 'the less the gradient the less the risk of landslip'. All pupils were fully engrossed in the activity as a result of the teacher's knowledge and expertise in delivering the lesson. Using clay, sand, water and blocks, pupils devised fair tests that would support their hypotheses. Pupils set up their own experiments with the teacher intervening with skilled questioning to take the learning forward. Time was used very effectively; the pace was brisk and resulted in pupils achieving the lesson aims very well and making huge strides in understanding because of the teacher's high expectations and the challenging task. The inspiring teaching enabled pupils to challenge their own hypotheses and learn much about scientific enquiry, as well as about safe picnicking!

14. The school makes very good use of teaching assistants. They lead small groups effectively but also support very well in lessons. In a very good English lesson for pupils in Year 6, two assistants made an outstanding contribution to the lesson as they supported lower attaining pupils in promoting a point of view in a debate. During the introduction, they discreetly paraphrased the teacher's words for their pupils and acted as an audience for those who were a little diffident. This ensured that their pupils had a clear understanding of the context of the lesson and of their tasks. This was further reinforced through the large amount of high quality

interaction that was possible with small groups led by skilled practitioners. Pupils with special educational needs learn as well as their peers. In many lessons they are very well supported in small groups by teaching assistants, so benefit from highly targeted one to one help. They learn well because adults plan well-targeted work which extends and challenges pupils with special educational needs and because of their own very positive attitudes.

15. The school has effective systems of tracking pupils' learning over time, and makes good use of this in prioritising its work. There is a clear understanding in the school of the strengths and weaknesses identified over this long term. The adaptation of medium term planning in response to analysis is becoming increasingly embedded. However, the use of assessment results in the short term to modify planning is less well developed. This was seen in the analysis of completed work where the quality of marking varied considerably. Whilst some teachers made it clear to pupils how they were doing and how to improve, much marking was celebratory and did not challenge pupils' to improve their work. The use of targets for pupils to ensure they know exactly what they need to do to achieve even better is, in most classes, embryonic and is not yet effective in driving achievement beyond its current good level. The school recognises this and it appears as a priority in the current strategic plan.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum, which is enhanced very well by links between subjects and by visits, visitors and clubs. Overall, accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's vision, has developed a good, innovative curriculum.
- The enrichment of pupils' classroom experiences is very good.
- Pupils are prepared very well for the next phase of their education.
- Non-teaching staff support pupils' needs very well.

Commentary

16. The school's curriculum is good. It is underpinned by the headteacher's very clear vision of the benefits of enriching pupils' classroom learning with as extensive a range of other experiences as possible. Inclusion of the school's values, key skills and thinking skills is a regular part of all planning and development, creating an innovative approach to the curriculum. Cross-curricular references are very good, creating strong understanding in pupils of how ideas and subjects link together.
17. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all aspects of the school's curriculum. Support is provided in accord with the requirements of pupils' individual education plans and is fully compliant with the demands of the very few statements. Needs are assessed properly, most often by the special educational needs co-ordinator in liaison with the main feeder infant school. Any requirements for pupils to have additional curricular help are well analysed. Suitable support is allocated, with frequent review and monitoring for its effectiveness. Teachers create different levels of work for all their pupils, including lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.
18. Enrichment of the curriculum is very good. Pupils and parents support and enjoy the many clubs, performances, visits, residential experiences and visiting specialists across a rich range of interests. Personal, social and health education is well planned, founded on the same sets of values. These promote very good levels of confidence and self-esteem amongst pupils. One of these values is the clearly evident commitment to including all pupils into all school activities. The governing body ensures that this is successfully achieved, for instance, through extra funding.

19. The school has a good match of suitably qualified teachers and non-teaching staff to provide this curriculum. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. These pupils benefit greatly from the very good numbers of well qualified non-teaching staff. Accommodation is good. Whilst some classrooms are small, the school has invested wisely in extending these recently, thus providing pupils with more space. Outside space provides a very good learning environment and a resource for play and relaxation. A refurbished music room extends curricular and other opportunities well. The centrally located library is a stimulating space for many different activities and is a very good learning resource centre. The numbers and quality of books here and elsewhere are good, as is provision for ICT hardware and software. Resources overall are good and are very good for ICT and science.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. There is very good support, advice and guidance available for pupils. There are satisfactory arrangements for considering the views and ideas of pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' personal development is very well supported by the assessment and monitoring of their standards against the Gomer Values.
- Good and trusting relationships enable adults to utilise their detailed knowledge of pupils to provide very good care and support.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for, and drive the agenda of, the school council.
- The focus on living a healthy and safe life permeates all that the school does.

Commentary

20. Pupils are very well supported in their personal development by their termly self-assessment of where they are, judged against the Gomer Values. This 'How do I shape up?' assessment is conducted by all pupils with the same teacher thus ensuring consistency and close monitoring. Individual pupils whose assessment of themselves causes concern or surprise are appropriately supported and monitored. This is valued by pupils, who confirm that they view the self-assessment process seriously and therefore find its results meaningful. The values, which include respect, responsibility, kindness and hope, are the foundation upon which so much of all that is good in the school is built.
21. A wide range of initiatives enable pupils to consult and work with adults. Adults know that pupils are striving to meet high expectations and value their efforts. Pupils know their efforts are appreciated. Accordingly there is an effective partnership, allowing information to be freely shared thus enabling adults to provide very good care and support. One example of where the very good relationships work well is the 'Time for a chat' facility. Pupils can speak privately with the school nurse about any issues. This is a very well used service and a real strength.
22. Pupils are responsible and confidently talk about what they like in school and show real enthusiasm for wanting to help shape the future of the school. The opportunities to do so are limited by a school council structure that is currently led by adults. Although suitable topics and budgets are considered by properly elected representatives, pupils do not have the opportunity to take the roles of chair or minutes secretary or to help set the agenda.
23. Having secured the 'Healthy Schools Award' in 2004, the school continues to take health and safety issues seriously. Risk assessments are thorough and at the fore of activities in class, around the school site and beyond. The site is safe, secure and well maintained with plenty of shade. All adults are trained in basic first aid, and child protection procedures and the related training are sound. There is a very good level of supervision at break times. The school

actively promotes healthy and safe living. In an assembly, pupils spontaneously confirmed the need to 'play safe'.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are good links between the school and parents. Links with the community are good, and very good with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with other educational institutions enhance the education of the pupils and professional development of the staff.
- Parents are strongly supportive of the work of the school.
- Arrangements for informing parents about their children's academic progress are very good.

Commentary

24. Very successful managed links with the local secondary school result in a smooth transition for the older pupils. There is good formal exchange of information to ensure that the pupils' needs and abilities are known. Pupils in Year 6 are able to gain early experience of the local secondary school with a number of taster lessons. They meet with pupils from other primary schools and work together to produce a joint musical production with staff and pupils from the secondary school. Pupils say that they are very well prepared for the next stage in their education and look forward to it with confidence. The curriculum is enhanced by active collaboration with the cluster schools on staff development. The good link with a mentoring special needs co-ordinator enhances the special needs support available in the school. Links with local universities to aid teacher training are strong.
25. Parents are very active and vocal in their support of the school. Some help to run after-school clubs, and through the Friends of Gomer School contribute significantly to the provision of resources with fundraising. Overall, parents have positive views of the school. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the parents' meeting, only limited concerns were expressed. A minority of parents were concerned about behaviour, learning at home and the quality and frequency of information. Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour overall is very good and that the good procedures for behaviour improvement work well. Workshops have been held to support parents in helping their children to learn at home especially in mathematics, reading and ICT, but they were not particularly well attended.
26. Monthly newsletters are detailed and provide a wide range of appropriate information about areas of learning, celebrations and important events and dates. The timetable for parental consultations is carefully considered so that there is initial contact at the start of the school year and then an invitation to target setting. Thereafter an open day in the spring term enables parents to view their children's work in some detail prior to the main parent's consultation evening. This ensures that parents can carefully reflect on what they have seen and ask considered questions of staff. Reports are clear and detailed though they lack targets in all core subjects. Parents may follow up reports requesting an appointment with staff if they so wish. The 'open door' policy is very much appreciated by parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very good personal leadership supported well by other key staff and the governing body. The school is managed very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school which underpins everything that happens there.
- The school knows itself very well and uses this information very effectively in strategic planning.
- The governing body is well informed. It challenges and supports the school effectively.

Commentary

27. The headteacher joined the school in 2001. A thorough audit of the school's needs became the basis for the first strategic plan under his leadership. This contained appropriate priorities based on the data and evidence available and was implemented effectively. The headteacher brought with him a very clear vision for the school. This was based on what have become the Gomer Values: Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Kindness, Fairness, Hope. These have become embedded in most classrooms and form the basis of the school's agenda. Pupils and parents alike are familiar with the values and their meanings because they are regularly reinforced. For example, during the inspection a pupil wearing a charity wristband was allowed to continue doing so provided he could explain how the wristband's message supported the Gomer Values. A further development focused on the 'key skills' that the school believes to be important. These key skills of communication, application of number, ICT, working with others and problem solving are intended to ensure that pupils leave the school as well rounded individuals, with not only knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum but also the more generic skills of powerful thinking and learning. These are similarly well embedded and are, for example, the focus of the school's celebration and achievement assemblies. Communicating this vision has taken time, but almost all staff now share it with the headteacher and there are signs that the school is improving further. The headteacher and the other two members of the strategic leadership team work together very effectively to secure the school's vision and purpose. Other subject leaders also provide good support to the headteacher and lead their areas well, and very well in science. The co-ordinator for special educational needs was recently appointed, but has made a good start, supported by her committed and skilful staff.
28. However, the existence of a shared vision alone is not enough to ensure that a school operates effectively. The school is very good at evaluating itself. The headteacher carries out regular visits to lessons which result in advice for the individual as well as more general comments for the whole staff. Subject leaders look at completed work and hold discussions with pupils about their work. Assessment data is carefully and thoroughly analysed. As a result, the headteacher and leadership team know the school very well, and this information is shared with governors. The school's own judgements about its work were almost all in agreement with those of the inspection team and its high quality analysis forms a secure foundation for the school's good quality strategic planning and future improvement.
29. The governing body are knowledgeable about the school and know its strengths and weaknesses well. The chair and vice chair of governors form an effective team with complementary skills, and much of the challenge to the school takes place between them and the senior managers. The strategic task groups within the school include governor representatives. Moreover, governors also visit the school to obtain first-hand knowledge to compare with that reported by senior managers to ensure that the governing body are able to carry out their statutory duties effectively.
30. The school's finances are managed well. There is a good understanding of the principles of best value, both in terms of shrewd purchasing but also in terms of ensuring that the education provided by the school is as good as it can be. The school strategic plan is carefully costed and prioritised to ensure that it is a realistic document. The school's overall effectiveness is good and the cost per pupil is within the average range - indications that the school provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	669636
Total expenditure	658314
Expenditure per pupil	2743

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	23898
Balance carried forward to the next	35220

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above expectations.
- Teaching is good, enabling all pupils to achieve well and to enjoy their learning.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Marking and assessment do not consistently provide enough information about how pupils can improve.

Commentary

31. Pupils' standards in 2004 national tests for eleven-year-olds were well above average and continued the recent trend of improvement. They were above what might be expected given the pupils' attainment when they were seven. Pupils did better in English than in mathematics or science.
32. Current standards in Year 6 are above expectations, especially in reading. Writing is good but less strong than last year, when it was a particular strength. Standards on entry to Year 3 are average, somewhat lower than the same pupils' National Curriculum test results in May of Year 2, particularly in writing. In all English skills, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well across the school because teaching is good. Pupils' own very positive attitudes and behaviour contribute effectively to learning because they become confident and keen to learn.
33. Pupils participate very well in formal opportunities such as debates or structured argument, listening to others very attentively and articulating ideas confidently. Progress is often very good in such lessons. Standards in pupils' speaking and listening are above expectations. They are well prepared for these aspects of secondary education. In writing, pupils produce high standards in genres such as poetry, which they often perform with equal confidence.
34. Achievement and standards in reading are good. More pupils than usual are at the higher levels in reading and by Year 6 the work of very few pupils is below expectations. Very good contributions from support staff in all years ensure good progress for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The inclusion of guided reading in the timetable has had a positive influence on achievement in reading. The library is a very good, well-used learning resource so pupils come to enjoy reading of all types.
35. Pupils' handwriting script is good, which means that most are not hindered by technical difficulties in getting their thoughts down on paper. Occasionally when they are, staff employ very effective methods of overcoming these obstacles - for instance by writing down pupils' ideas from what they say. The content of pupils' written work is above expectations, properly representing the range of writing for different purposes expected for their ages. Standards and achievement in writing have improved most since the time of the last inspection report.
36. Teaching and learning are good. Some very good lessons were observed and all teaching was at least satisfactory. Teachers plan very well, particularly for the wide range of abilities within classes. Grouping by ability, particularly in Year 6, has also had beneficial effects on achievement. Teaching assistants are deployed very well, especially in group-work phases of lessons. Expectations are very high and very well matched to pupils' needs to ensure stretch

and challenge for all. Pupils use ICT programs well - for example, for vocabulary development. New techniques for marking and assessment have been introduced recently and are timely because these aspects of teaching are weaker. Marking is not always helpful in enabling pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work. Although encouraging and confidence building, written assessment does not consistently provide short-term, measurable targets for pupils to aim for. This also applies to the otherwise very useful additional teaching for abler pupils in Years 5 and 6.

37. Leadership and management are good. Monitoring occurs regularly and the subject leader is aware of issues which need improvement. High standards have been maintained since the last report and improvement has been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

38. Pupils use their English skills well in other subjects. Handwriting is mostly neat and legible, with pupils using pens and joined writing properly. Reading is good so pupils can understand texts for other subjects well enough to apply what they read effectively. They are well accustomed to using the library as a learning resource and as a pleasant place to browse. Speaking and listening are promoted very effectively through all teaching, so pupils of all abilities are confident to contribute to class and group discussions, as well as to stand and perform orally in formal situations. They also speak politely and articulately in informal discussions with their classmates and with adults. Pupils use ICT programs well, both in lessons and for research into other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In most classes high quality, interesting teaching captures the imagination of pupils and helps them progress well.
- Pupils do not achieve as well as they do in English and science because teaching is inconsistent.
- Good procedures are firmly established to ensure that the subject is led and managed well.

Commentary

39. Standards in mathematics are above expectations in Year 6, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Although standards have remained largely static over recent years, they represent a modest improvement in the subject because pupils now enter the school with lower standards. Achievement across the school is satisfactory, whereas in English and science it is good. The lower achievement in mathematics is largely due to inconsistencies in teaching. However, following a whole-school focus on the subject, led by the knowledgeable subject leader, teaching in mathematics has begun to improve in many areas and as a result pupils often achieve well, but this is not yet consistently the case. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, progress and achieve as well as their classmates.
40. Teaching and learning are good across the school which is an improvement since the last inspection. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of their pupils; the teaching is lively and interesting and very well matched to pupils' abilities, providing them with high levels of challenge. As a result, pupils are keen to work hard and they make very good progress. The less successful teaching is marked by lower expectations of what pupils are capable of. Consequently, pupils work below their capacity and their progress is slowed. Evidence of further inconsistencies in teaching is apparent in the quality of work and marking in pupils' books and in the use of homework. As a result, the progress made by pupils in different

classes varies. Teaching is enhanced by a lively lunchtime club run by the subject leader that challenges more able mathematicians to conduct research. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants who use their very good relationships to provide extra explanation and encouragement to make sure that pupils learn well. ICT is generally used satisfactorily to support learning in mathematics. Interactive whiteboards are particularly successful in making the subject interesting and fun.

41. Leadership and management are good. There are thorough systems for gathering and analysing data which is used well to track the progress of pupils. The subject leader recognises the findings of this inspection and plans for improvements in the subject are well advanced. In this, good use has been made of outside specialists and special projects. Resources for the subject are adequate. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

42. Pupils use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects satisfactorily, and most teachers are beginning to plan activities in a structured way. All age groups use a range of graphs, charts and diagrams in other subjects - for example, graphs showing parents' occupations in Year 4 geography.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A strong focus on scientific enquiry is leading to rising standards across the school.
- Very good subject leadership and management are resulting in higher standards.
- There are some inconsistencies in marking.

Commentary

43. Standards are in line with expectations in Year 6. Although the provisional 2005 national test results are slightly lower than those of 2004, they accurately reflect the abilities of the current Year 6 cohort. Good teaching and learning, and pupils' very good attitudes, are enabling all pupils to achieve well.
44. Teaching and learning are good overall, and at times excellent. In the most successful lessons, teachers have high expectations and make sure that pupils find things out for themselves. Adult support in these lessons is used effectively, through questioning, talking, and developing scientific vocabulary. Planning is sound but is inhibited by inconsistent marking. At its best, marking provides constructive comments, informing pupils how well they are doing against clear objectives. In a few classes, teachers follow up previous comments, but in many they do not and this has a negative effect on the progress pupils make. Where marking is used effectively planning of lessons better matches pupils' needs. Assessment is a developing area of science.
45. Leadership and management are very good. The school's links with the local secondary school enrich provision. The managers understand the strengths and weaknesses in current provision, and have appropriate plans for raising standards. The school's focus on developing scientific enquiry is already having a positive impact on standards across the school. This approach is creating young scientists. The quality of the provision, however, still depends too much on the strengths and weaknesses of individual teachers, and more remains to be done to ensure that teaching and learning are regularly monitored by the subject leaders. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement since the last inspection and standards have risen.
- The subject is well managed.
- Whole school assessment procedures are being developed.

Commentary

46. By Year 6 standards are in line with expectations in all aspects of the subject. However, the picture is improving and standards in Years 3, 4 and 5 are above expectations. All pupils are achieving well. This shows good improvement since the last inspection. The school recognises that assessment procedures have yet to be fully developed in order to further raise standards and achievement. Sometimes teachers lack confidence in teaching the subject and this also holds down standards.
47. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. In well-prepared lessons, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and, as a result, pupils settle immediately to the lesson and their tasks. During independent work learning is very productive. The ICT technician provides very good support in lessons and is actively involved in teaching and learning rather than just keeping a check on what pupils are doing. The lack of a consistent record of assessment to provide a clear indication of the levels at which pupils could be expected to work restricts their progress to an extent. Although lesson planning does indicate how pupils of differing ability will be challenged and supported in order to raise achievement, these plans refer to groups of pupils rather than to individuals.
48. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The ICT suite is well planned and used effectively. Lessons are regularly timetabled for all classes, with opportunities both for pupils to be taught skills and to apply them to other subjects. Resources are very good: classrooms are equipped with their own computers all linked to interactive white boards. Pupils confidently use digital cameras both at school and at home. The subject leader and technician run extra-curricular clubs for pupils and families; these are highly successful. The close links with the local secondary school enrich provision. Some informal monitoring has taken place that has helped to identify key areas for development. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

49. Curricular planning takes increasing account of the uses of ICT to support learning, and appropriate resources are used. The school has a good range of both hardware and software resources used for English, mathematics, science, history and geography. Pupils are confident in searching the internet for information to support their learning.

HUMANITIES

50. **History** and **geography** were not foci of the inspection, and no secure judgements on achievement, teaching or provision can be made. One lesson was seen in each subject. There is every indication that standards are above expectations in both subjects, which is an improvement since the last inspection. In both lessons seen, the teaching and learning were very good. The teaching was lively and interesting and interactive whiteboards were used well to capture the interest of pupils and help them achieve well. For example, large coloured images of the Isle of Wight coastline were displayed in geography and portraits of Elizabeth I in history.

51. In both subjects it is clear that a range of visits, visitors and special events play an important part in making the work interesting and relevant. For example, in geography pupils undertake fieldwork on the Isle of Wight, Alver Valley, the River Meon and Gosport waterfront and participate in events such as Cool Planet Week and Environment Week. In history, pupils enjoy themed events linked to the Romans, the Greeks and the Victorians and visit local museums including Search and the Mary Rose. Pupils' work shows that they are covering a suitable range of topics in both subjects.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The knowledgeable and very experienced subject leader has established good plans and resources which help the pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is a strength but there are weaknesses in some teachers' knowledge because training is not yet complete.

Commentary

52. By Year 6 the standards reached are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Evidence from lessons and assemblies seen, from an analysis of pupils' work and from talking to pupils and staff, show that achievement is good for all groups of pupils. By Year 4, pupils know about several Bible stories, and about the main features and uses of Christian churches. They are also beginning to develop an awareness of Hinduism and the faiths of Native Americans. As they progress through to Year 6, their knowledge of Christianity deepens. They have a good awareness of features of Roman Catholicism through history work on the Tudors and they can give a reasonable explanation of what it means to be a Christian. They also develop a basic knowledge of Sikhism, Buddhism and Hinduism.
53. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons seen were of high quality. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on light as a religious symbol, the teacher used great skill and creativity to encourage pupils to consider their own inner feelings. As a result, pupils reflected thoughtfully and responded in a mature and sensible fashion. They confidently expressed their thoughts, such as feeling 'warm, tingling, shiny and peaceful' and showed they had achieved very well, particularly in spiritual development. Until recently, most teaching was undertaken by a subject specialist. Currently, teachers are being trained to take responsibility for their own religious education lessons, while the teaching role of the specialist has reduced to two lessons per week. As a consequence, some staff are not yet fully confident in their teaching. However, the current training programme is proving successful in supporting teachers and is likely to remedy the problem in the near future.
54. The very well qualified subject leader provides good leadership and management. She has built up a wide range of good quality resources and she ensures that plans are up to date and in line with legal requirements. Working only a half day a week currently places limitations on her role. However, she is training and supporting staff to plan for her succession next term. The subject has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

55. These subjects were not foci of the inspection and so no secure judgements about achievement, teaching or provision can be made. One **art and design** lesson was observed and sketchbooks and work on display were scrutinised. In the Year 3 lesson observed, pupils achieved well, teaching and learning were good and standards above expectations. The school's investment in good quality sketchbooks has led to pupils developing good habits in

using these as a record of visual investigations. Pupils make good progress in direct observational work, such as sketches and colour studies of flowers. They learn properly about famous artists' work and the balance of two-dimensional and three-dimensional work is good. Pupils' artwork, including good illustrations for other subjects, provides stimulating, good quality display throughout the school.

56. No **design and technology** lessons were observed, but work was scrutinised. Pupils understand and practise all the elements of the subject satisfactorily. By Year 6, they design items such as model theme-park rides with due regard to health and safety, learning about the practicalities of the mechanisms involved. Links with other experiences such as their visits to theme parks are well used. Science work on light is reinforced well through design and technology projects such as Year 4's transparent boxes, which reflect light through cellophane from foil inside. Modification and evaluation aspects are included properly.
57. No lessons were seen in **music**. However, since the last inspection the school has benefited from a refurbished music room and this has impacted positively on the quality of the learning environment. In assemblies, pupils sing confidently and with enthusiasm. There are good links with a local secondary school as pupils join a choral festival. There is a good range of clubs using the expertise of the staff. The upper school choir was highly commended for their performance at another local festival. The friends of the school have purchased good quality musical instruments, and this is leading to higher standards in instrumental tuition. The range of musical experiences for pupils has improved since the last inspection when they limited progress; the subject leader has developed schemes of work and has raised the profile of the performing arts.
58. In **physical education**, one lesson was seen. Pupils actively engage in physical activities which are timetabled for two hours each week. Residential visits in Years 5 and 6 promote further outdoor and adventurous activities. Resources are good. The school is involved in a successful sports initiative with other local schools that has improved teachers' knowledge and includes regular local tournaments and a fun run. There are good opportunities for pupils to participate in a good range of sports such as sailing, hockey, rugby, cricket and tennis. Well-qualified visiting sports coaches enrich the provision. The school meets the statutory requirements for swimming.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

59. This was not a focus of the inspection and so no secure judgements on achievement or provision can be made. However, the school does meet all statutory requirements. The Gomer Values underlie the provision that takes place both in designated lessons, but also in many other lessons across the curriculum in which the values are referred to explicitly. In a lesson for pupils in Year 6, pupils considered transitions in life, particularly in the context of how to help the new intake in Year 3 in September. Year 6 are to run activities on a 'Taster Day', and to help pupils currently in Year 5 to become 'buddies' to the new intake. This lesson was successful, with some pupils showing an impressive range of thought, demonstrating caring attitudes and values.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
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	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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