

Gomer Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116176
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312201
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	168
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	59
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs H Ward
Headteacher	Mrs D Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	9 May 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Pyrford Close Alverstoke Gosport PO12 2RP
Telephone number	02392 580808
Fax number	02392 589549

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Gomer is an average-sized infant school where over half of the pupils come from outside the school's catchment area. The school currently takes children from up to 20 Early Years Providers. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or with English as an additional language is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with specific learning difficulties, including those with statements of specific need, varies but is broadly average. There are some pupils with particular behaviour problems, but the largest groups have specific or moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication problems. The school has achieved the Enhanced Healthy Schools Award, and Activemark in 2007. It is also Investors in People (IIP) accredited.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Gomer Infant is an outstanding school. One parent summed up the views of almost all by saying, 'Gomer is a fabulous school. My children say, 'It is the best school in the world and great fun.' The highly effective staff team, led by the outstanding headteacher, are responsible for the school's consistent success in providing high quality education. For the last three years, the national test results show the pupils to be achieving outstandingly well. Behind the impressive results are high quality teaching and the outstanding care and guidance that enable pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to make substantial gains in their learning.

When children start school, their skills and understanding are a little below those expected for their age. By the time they enter Year 1, they have made excellent progress and have achieved very well. Standards are in line with or above those expected for children of their age. National assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 show that standards have never been less than significantly above average in the last three years. In 2008 the proportion of pupils who reached the expected levels in reading, mathematics and science was well above average, as was the number achieving the highest Level 3. The school's provision for those pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is exceptional, and as a result they make excellent progress. In particular, the care and diligence of the staff who run the nurture group for pupils with particular social or behavioural needs are exemplary. As one parent wrote, 'Very quick to relate to child and offer support when child has emotional/behavioural issues. Not patronising, just caring and informative.'

Pupils develop excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural qualities. They respond with great enthusiasm to all the school offers and are attentive and hard-working. Even the youngest children have a strong awareness of the part they play in the school and beyond. The school misses no opportunity to involve pupils in their school community. An outstanding example is the work of the lunchtime supervisory assistants. Their promotion of pupils helping each other and taking part in a shared experience leads to the assembly award of the soft toy 'Clarence'. This reward is much coveted by all pupils, as the display of Clarence's weekend adventures, pointed out by the school ambassadors, testified. The school has very thorough procedures in place for safeguarding pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe and happy, and they also have a good awareness of how to eat and live healthily. They are eager participants in all of the school's physical activities. Behaviour from the vast majority of pupils is exemplary and the pupils say that if they have a problem, they feel that the adults working with them will sort it out. The school's excellent systems also enable attendance levels to be consistently above the national average. The pupils' well-above-average skills in all subjects, excellent relationships and enjoyment in working together prepare them extremely well for the next stage of their education.

Academic guidance is outstanding. Pupils' progress is tracked closely and they are set challenging, individual, learning targets. There are very good systems to check their ongoing progress towards these targets. The rich curriculum covers all subjects very well and is enhanced by an extensive range of additional activities. The staff are constantly looking for ways to engage pupils and, in particular, to enhance their thinking skills. The lesson observed using the P4C (Philosophy for Children) techniques was exceptional. The motivation of pupils is enhanced further through their use of information and communication technology (ICT) and this is now outstanding. To see a number of Year 1 and 2 pupils preparing multimedia presentations about their 'favourite things' was inspiring. The staff are continuing to refine the curriculum by

ensuring the outside learning areas for the older pupils are used to the best effect and lessons continue to be as exciting and relevant as they can make them.

The headteacher's leadership is outstanding. The staff's full and shared commitment to meeting the needs of all are at the heart of the school's success. All staff work exceptionally well in partnership with each other and all respond eagerly to new initiatives and responsibility. The excellent governing body is fully involved in the school, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where necessary. The wide range of skills they bring to their work is currently focusing on the implementation of their plans to provide better outdoor learning facilities. All those involved with the school have this determination not to rest on their laurels and the school has an excellent capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children make an excellent start to their education in the Reception classes. The huge level of commitment and care shown by the staff is evident in the way that all children settle into the school so well and immediately begin to learn. A parent wrote, 'I was anxious at the start of term due to my child's negative experience at pre-school. He has settled wonderfully and really enjoys the time he spends at school. He has built good relationships with staff and children. This is due to the dedicated staff that teach him.'

Staff work especially hard to give the children a real sense of determining their own way forward, which guarantees their full involvement in all activities. Children make rapid progress because all adults have high expectations, provide very clear routines and enable children to build strong, positive relationships. The enthusiasm and enjoyment of the children as they made their 'feet' pictures and began their body topic was spellbinding. Classrooms provide a stimulating learning environment and resources are used exceptionally well, as children move from one to another. The outside areas for the Reception classes, designed by the children, provide the same exciting level of challenge and stimulation. Staff get to know the children very well. They make a careful note of all responses and feedback. The information collected about children is used particularly well to ensure that the least able and most vulnerable settle well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Enhance the outside learning areas and so further refine the curriculum for older pupils to ensure that lessons continue to be as exciting as possible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

From the moment they enter the school, children progress exceptionally well. Standards are consistently well above those expected for the pupils' ages by the time they leave the school and their achievement is outstanding. In the 2008 national assessments, pupils reached standards that were high in speaking and listening, well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. They exceeded their challenging targets with a high proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics. The school is especially good at assessing how well its pupils are doing so that gaps and weaknesses are identified straight away and tackled speedily.

There is a trend of high achievement across a wide range of subjects and there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their creative, sporting and musical talents. ICT is used

excellently across the whole curriculum and pupils are achieving exceptionally well. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties, such as those with speech, language and communication problems, is excellent, as is the provision for those pupils with special gifts or talents. Both of these groups achieve highly and make excellent progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils speak warmly about their school and are polite, well-mannered and confident when talking with each other and adults. Attendance is above the national average and all pupils participate fully in lessons and behave exceptionally well. They feel safe at school and show great confidence in asking any adult for help if they need it. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay healthy by eating sensibly and enjoying the many physical activities.

The pupils are respectful of each other, follow the school's clear moral code, and relate exceptionally well to each other and adults. Pupils participate in a wide range of activities that help them to understand about the beliefs and lives of people from different cultures. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding. In addition to fund-raising for different charities, the Pupil Voice opportunities enable them to put forward ideas that are making a real difference to the quality of their own school. Pupils are learning the necessary skills that will enable them to settle into their future schools very well, and become good citizens.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are never less than good and often excellent. Teachers' planning is exceptional and in all subjects firmly based on the use of careful, but simple, assessments. This ensures that tasks are pitched at the right level for all pupils. Learning is fun. Lessons move forward at a very good pace and pupils' attention is held throughout. The use of resources, such as the interactive whiteboards, inspires pupils to try their hardest. High expectations of pupils' behaviour are evident in all classrooms. Teachers and teaching assistants are very skilful at creating a learning environment where pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and work together to meet the exacting challenges they are given. Most marking is carried out with the pupils, and is used very well to give very clear and immediate pointers about what they need to do reach even higher standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Through the excellent curriculum learners enjoy and benefit from a wide range of activities inside and outside the classroom, but outside activities could be improved for older pupils. The outstanding range of physical activities resulted in the school achieving the Activemark. Approaches to learning match the needs of all pupils, including those who have learning difficulties or have particular talents. Resources are very well used. There is a very good range of high quality additional activities that enrich the curriculum and promote pupils' development and enjoyment. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health development is excellent and the school uses an exceptional range of community and other links to enhance learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a very high level of care for its pupils, and related procedures, including child protection, are very good. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are firmly in place and carried out thoroughly and regularly. Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount at all times, ensuring that the school is a very safe and supportive place to be. Children settle into the Reception classes particularly well because of the outstanding care taken over the induction process. From this early start staff members know all pupils really well and treat them with respect and fairness at all times. The partnership with parents is exemplary. As parents recognise, the home-school liaison worker provides unstinting support and is a real asset to school.

Linked to the exceptional practice in pastoral care are the robust procedures in place to assess the pupils' academic progress. Comprehensive assessment information is regularly updated and pupils' strengths and weaknesses are accurately identified, so that appropriate support or extra challenges are provided at all times.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school provides a warm, caring environment where the excellent welfare for each pupil ensures the outstanding development of their personal qualities. Teamwork is of the highest quality and all staff are ambitious for the pupils' success in their personal and academic development. The school knows itself very well. All staff are clear about the school's strengths and areas for development because of rigorous self-evaluation. Priorities are sharply focused and staff are held to account in meeting challenging targets. Data analysis, high quality monitoring of pupils' work and lesson observations also provide staff with evidence of where support is needed. These rigorous systems illustrate the school's excellent capacity to continue improving provision and to raise standards even further.

The administrative and caretaking teams play a central role within the school. Their work is much appreciated. Governors hold the school to account very well. They have excellent systems in place to ensure they monitor the school's performance. Governors have successfully promoted the school and continually seek the views of pupils and parents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which 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	1

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Gomer Infant School, Gosport, PO12 2RP

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school. We really enjoyed our time with you and would now like to tell you what we found out about your school. We agree with what many of you told us - Gomer Infant is an excellent school.

We think you make outstanding progress and really try hard at all times. We were especially impressed that you knew what to do to make your work even better. We saw that you know you are especially lucky to have so many different activities both during and after school. We also saw how keen you are to take part and how well you behave. Many of you told us how much you enjoy being at school, and how proud you are of what you can do. We are sure that you will continue to try hard so your school can be the fun place that you like and where you can all learn.

Your teachers and support staff work hard to help you to do as well as you can. We agree with the Pupil Voice representatives and we have asked them to look again at the outside area to see if it can be made even better.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help. We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall

Lead Inspector