

INSPECTION REPORT

COWES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cowes

LEA area: Isle of Wight

Unique reference number: 118156

Headteacher: Mr R Montgomerie

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis
20893

Dates of inspection: 10th – 14th January 2000

Inspection number: 188540

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Primary
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Edinburgh Close Cowes Isle of Wight
Postcode:	PO31 8HF
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Nicholls
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D J Curtis	Registered inspector	Information technology	What sort of school is it?
		Under fives	How high are standards?
		Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
		Equal opportunities	What the school should do to improve further
		English as an additional language	
Mrs H Barter	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Mr J Palethorpe	Team inspector	Science	How well is the school led and managed?
		History	
		Physical education	
		Religious education	
Mr M Pipes	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well does the school care for its pupils? (Assessment)
		Music	How well is the school led and managed? (Staffing, accommodation and learning resources)
Mr G Slamon	Team inspector	English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Geography	

The inspection contractor was:

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5 - 8
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9 - 11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11 - 13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13 - 14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	14 - 16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16 - 17
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	17 - 19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	20
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	21 - 24
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	25 - 36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cowes Primary School is situated on the Isle of Wight and takes pupils from the ages of four to nine. There are 234 pupils on roll in 9 classes, with 125 boys and 109 girls. The majority of pupils are white (UK heritage), with 12 pupils coming from other ethnic groups. Nine pupils come from homes where English is not the first language. There are 59 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, including four pupils who have statements of special educational need. Children enter school with levels of attainment which are well below the average for the local education authority.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Taking into consideration the well below average attainment on entry, and that pupils make good progress in attaining average standards by the time they leave the school, Cowes Primary School is an effective school. The outstanding strength of the school is pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The good quality of teaching and the high quality of relationships between staff and pupils contribute to this particular strength. In addition, good quality teaching enables pupils to be very positive in their learning and allows them to make good progress as they move up through the school.

What the school does well

- Standards in information technology, art and music are good.
- Standards in literacy and numeracy are improving.
- The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning.
- The attitudes, values and personal development of the pupils are very good and are an outstanding strength of the school.
- Parents are very supportive of the school and its work.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff is very good and contributes significantly to pupils' very good behaviour and to improving standards.
- The provision for pupils' personal and social development is good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, is good.

What could be improved

- The under fives need regular opportunities for outdoor play adjacent to their classrooms as part of their entitlement to the early years' curriculum.
- The amount of classroom assistant support time needs to be increased for the under fives.
- Pupils need more opportunities to develop the use and application of their literacy skills across the full curriculum.
- In class lessons, higher-attaining pupils need more challenge in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers need to be more consistent in the use of day-to-day assessment.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in July 1996. The school has made good progress in addressing two of the key issues and satisfactory progress in the remaining issue. The special educational needs co-ordinator now has sufficient time to monitor the provision and support for pupils with special educational needs. The management of and provision for special educational needs is a good feature of the school. Good policies and detailed schemes of work are now in place and they contribute well to the systematic development of knowledge, skills and understanding as pupils move up through the school. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving the use of assessment, particularly in relation to the analysis of National Curriculum and other test results to set targets for pupils' learning. However, in lessons teachers do not always assess what pupils have learnt in order to plan their next lesson.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	E	D	E	D	well above average A
Writing	E	E	D	C	above average B
Mathematics	E	E	D	C	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

This table shows the average points score achieved by pupils and includes those who achieved the expected Level 2 or above in the National Curriculum assessments and those achieving the higher Level 3. In addition, it also includes those who achieved Level 1 or those who were still working to Level 1. The above results were affected by there being, in 1998, 39 per cent of pupils in Year 2 on the school's register of special educational needs and in 1999, 30 per cent on the register.

Inspection findings are that for the current group of Year 2 pupils, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average. Standards in Key Stage 1 are improving and the school is meeting its own targets for improvement. Good teaching, together with the successful implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy Hour is having a positive impact on improving standards. By the end of Year 4, standards in English, mathematics and science meet expectations for pupils of this age.

By the end of Key Stage 1, and Year 4 when the pupils leave the school, standards in information technology exceed national expectations. In art and music, standards exceed expectations for pupils of this age. In science, standards are average. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; makes a strong contribution to learning and progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils behave well at all times, especially when moving around the school, at playtimes and lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils relate very well to each other, to their teachers and to all adults they meet. They are very friendly, polite and well mannered.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

The attitudes, behaviour and personal development and relationships are an outstanding feature of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good overall. In one per cent of lessons it was excellent, with 18 per cent very good. Good teaching was seen in 49 per cent of lessons, with 31 per cent satisfactory. One lesson (1 per cent) was unsatisfactory. Excellent teaching was observed in Years 3 and 4 in a literacy hour. Examples of very good teaching were seen in the under fives, in Key Stage 1 in literacy and music and in Key Stage 2 in mathematics, science and physical education. Examples of good teaching were seen across the school and in most subjects. The one unsatisfactory lesson was in science in Key Stage 1 and related to the organisation of pupil groupings in the lesson.

The teaching of literacy is good across the school. In Key Stage 1, the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory; in Key Stage 2, it is good. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, receive good-quality teaching and support. In lessons, higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged.

The main strength of teaching is the quality of relationships between teachers and pupils; this contributes significantly to very good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning. However, teachers do not always make sufficient use of day-to-day assessment to plan future lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, with the exception of the under fives where there are insufficient opportunities for regular outdoor play.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the management and organisation of provision is led effectively by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Class teachers, specialist teachers and classroom assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning and good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; the specialist support teacher provides good teaching and effective support. There is good liaison with class teachers and classroom assistants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good; a strong feature of the school. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development is very good and good for cultural development; this has a positive impact on pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for its pupils.

The school works very effectively with its parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good; there is a strong emphasis on raising standards and on the monitoring of teaching and learning. Subject co-ordinators are effective in raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective in carrying out its statutory responsibilities. It has a good awareness of standards in the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Through regular monitoring of assessment data and other available evidence, the school is effective in evaluating its own performance; it is aware of areas for improvement and development.
The strategic use of resources	Good; they are used effectively to support pupils' learning.

With the exception of insufficient outdoor play facilities and insufficient support staff for the under fives, the school has adequate staffing, accommodation and learning resources to support effectively pupils' learning.

The strength of leadership and management is the commitment to raise standards, but also to the development of pupils as citizens of the future.

The school applies the principles of best value well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour is good. • Children like school. • Children make good progress at school. • Teaching is good. • The school has high expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of extra-curricular activities in Key Stage 1.

Eighteen parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection meeting and 123 parents returned the questionnaire. Inspection findings support the positive views of parents. The school is looking at ways in which it can provide more extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 1.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The assessments made when children enter school show well below average levels of attainment. By the age of five, children meet the expectations of the Desirable Learning Outcomes¹ in all areas of learning, with the exception of language and literacy. In addition, as part of their physical development, children have insufficient opportunities for regular outdoor play.
2. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were average for the proportion achieving the expected Level 2² or above in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was average in writing and mathematics, but below average in reading. In comparison with similar schools³ nationally, the proportion achieving Level 2 and above was average in writing but below average in reading and mathematics. The proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average in reading, but average in writing and mathematics. In the 1999 teacher assessments in science, the proportion achieving Level 2 or above was below average, with the proportion achieving Level 3 average. In comparison with similar schools, the results were below average at Level 2 or above and average at Level 3.
3. Inspection findings are that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average. Standards in the school, particularly in literacy and numeracy are improving steadily in line with the school's own targets. The school has set targets to increase the percentage achieving Level 2 or above in reading and writing by three per cent each year and by five per cent in mathematics. Inspection evidence together with the analysis of the school's National Curriculum test results show that the school is meeting its targets for improvement. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together, the trend in reading and mathematics has been below average and in writing, well below average. However, in 1998, 39 per cent of pupils in Year 2 were on the school's register of special educational needs and, in 1999, 30 per cent of Year 2 were on the register. Taking these figures into consideration, together with well below average attainment on entry, the school is doing well.
4. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in information technology exceed national expectations; in art and music, pupils achieve standards that are higher than expected for their age. Standards in science are average. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education, pupils achieve standards that are expected for their age.
5. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, standards in literacy and numeracy meet expectations for pupils of this age. In literacy, most read aloud fluently and accurately. They retell the main events of the plot and most explain characters' actions. In literacy lessons, pupils gain a good understanding of how settings influence events and incidents in stories and they develop good prediction skills. In writing, pupils have an appropriate vocabulary and have a good understanding of the use of nouns, adverbs and adjectives. Their factual accounts are clear but are mainly brief. Pupils have insufficient experience of using their literacy skills in other subjects. In numeracy, pupils show a secure understanding of the four rules of number.
6. By the end of Year 4, standards in information technology exceed national expectations; in art and music, pupils achieve standards that are higher than expected for their age.

¹ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education'. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five. There are six areas of learning: language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal and social development.

² The national expectation is that at the end of Key Stage 1 pupils should achieve Level 2.

³ Schools with more than 20 per cent and up to 35 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Standards in science are average. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In design and technology, geography, history and physical education, pupils achieve standards that are expected for their age.

7. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve good standards in relation to their prior attainment and to the targets set within their individual education plans. They receive good support from class teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator, specialist teachers and classroom assistants.
8. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and achieve good standards. They are supported effectively by a specialist teacher who visits the school for one morning per week. There are good links between the specialist teacher, class teachers and classroom assistants to enable pupils to meet the targets which have been set for their learning.
9. In lessons, higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged which results in them not achieving the standards of which they are capable. However, in Years 3 and 4, pupils receive good support in the teaching of numeracy when taught as a group by the headteacher.
10. The school has made good progress in reducing the underachievement of boys in comparison with girls. Parents commented on the beneficial effects of having male classroom teachers as good role models. In addition, careful targeting of the curriculum provision for boys has reduced the significant gap that existed previously between the performance of boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. This aspect is a strength of school life and makes a very significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and to the progress that they make. The school continues to be the orderly community described in the last report. Pupils demonstrate self-discipline, work well together and have excellent relationships with each other and with their teachers. The school promotes positive attitudes to work, good behaviour and makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils respond very well in all these areas.
12. Parents are very pleased with what the school provides for their children in this aspect of the school's work and support the school's efforts to achieve good standards in both attitudes and behaviour. Nearly all parents report that behaviour is good and that the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible people. They feel that pupils are caring, friendly and enthusiastic. They report that their children are keen to come to school and be punctual. Parents say that there are very few incidents of unpleasant behaviour and that, if there are any, they are dealt with very effectively by staff.
13. Pupils are very happy to come to school. However, due to pupil illness and a trend of seasonal employment in the area which means that parents take pupils on holiday in term time, attendance is only in line with national averages and has remained so in the last three years. Most pupils arrive in good time for school and are ready and keen to learn. There are some pupils who are frequently late, however, even though the school often reminds parents about the importance of punctuality. Pupil absence and unpunctuality, which is condoned by parents, was also noted at the last inspection and continues to be a focus for improvement by the school.
14. The development of the children's personal and social skills is a strength of the provision for the children under five years of age in the reception classes. The teaching concentrates on promoting good attitudes to school and reinforces consistent expectations of behaviour. The children are very well settled into the routines of school. They are happy to come into class and are keen to take part in the wide variety of activities that their teachers have prepared. On a visit to Carisbrooke Castle during the week of inspection, the children behaved very well throughout. They were sensible on the bus and while eating their picnics; they participated enthusiastically in the lesson and handled the toys provided with care. The

personal development of the children is also good. Most of them know how to wait their turn and listen to others when they speak, for example, when showing toys and pictures from when they were babies. They are developing in confidence and make contributions to assemblies by singing songs or answering questions about the displays in the hall.

15. Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have positive attitudes and are enthusiastic about their work. They are cheerful and concentrate on their tasks, maintain interest and work at a good pace. They show pleasure and pride in their work and persevere until it is complete. They talk willingly to visitors about their work and are proud of the things that they have achieved. These positive attitudes have a clearly beneficial impact on the progress that they make. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, or who have English as an additional language, work well together in groups. They are keen to learn and to extend their knowledge through questions or by listening to their teachers explaining things to them. When required to concentrate very hard, they respond very well. Pupils in a music lesson gave rapt attention to their compositions and were captivated by what they were doing. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were so engrossed in learning multiplication facts that they asked if they could carry on when it was time for the lesson to end. Although there are some instances when pupils are less enthusiastic and become fidgety or noisy, these are rare. Overall, pupils have very good enthusiasm for school life and take part willingly in extra-curricular, fundraising, sport and musical activities which are also provided.
16. Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour is very good. Pupils show high levels of self-discipline, which is fostered through the school's consistent approach to behaviour and its emphasis on positive praise for each pupil. Pupils know what is expected of them and understand the difference between right and wrong. They are polite and friendly and make visitors to the school feel very welcome by greeting them with a smile and holding doors open for them. In assemblies and at playtimes, they behave very well and are courteous and sensible towards others. In the playground, pupils respect the 'quiet' playground and use it to have their snacks, talk to others or play in small groups. Pupils on the large playground enjoy playing with a soft football or in small groups. Their play is lively and sometimes boisterous, but no incidents of bullying or unpleasant behaviour were observed during the inspection and pupils were seen to be friendly and sociable with each other.
17. All pupils make very good progress in their personal development and relationships. In both key stages, most pupils use equipment independently to support their learning and treat resources with respect. In lessons where they are required to work on their own, for example during the literacy hour, they try hard to get on with their work and not to disturb others. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility. The youngest children and pupils act as helpers in the classroom and take registers to the office. Older pupils carry out many duties around the school, are confident and act responsibly and sensibly. They help younger pupils and children around the school, at lunchtime and in the playground and show a very caring attitude when doing so. They represent the school in football teams, take part in residential visits, charity fundraising and carol singing and give gifts to the elderly at harvest time, demonstrating their increasing awareness of the needs of others in the community.
18. The consistent promotion of positive attitudes towards others results in excellent relationships throughout the school. Pupils are caring towards others and show understanding for those with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language. Pupils and staff all work together in a harmonious and caring atmosphere and this has a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the life of the school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The previous inspection report judged the quality of teaching to be good in 47 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in 53 per cent. In Key Stage 1, 50 per cent was good, with 40 per cent good in Key Stage 2. Strengths were identified in: *high expectations, challenging activities well matched to ability, joint-planning between parallel classes and good use of resources, including support staff and volunteers.* Weaker features of satisfactory lessons were identified in: *slower pace, less high expectations, lack of confidence/expertise and assessment not used to set targets for groups or individuals.*

20. Inspection findings are that teaching is a strength of the school and that it makes a significant contribution to pupils' attitudes and behaviour, to their quality of learning and to the standards achieved. Inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents, with 98 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that teaching in the school is good. The strengths identified in the previous report have been maintained and the weaker features have been addressed well, although in a minority of lessons teachers' use of day-to-day assessment is still underdeveloped and expectations of higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently high.
21. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good overall. In one per cent of lessons it was excellent, with 18 per cent very good. Good teaching was seen in 49 per cent of lessons, with 31 per cent satisfactory. One lesson (1 per cent) was unsatisfactory. Excellent teaching was observed in Years 3 and 4 in a literacy hour. Examples of very good teaching were seen in the under fives, in Key Stage 1 in literacy and music and in Key Stage 2 in mathematics, science and physical education. Examples of good teaching were seen across the school and in most subjects. The one unsatisfactory lesson was in science in Key Stage 1 and related to the organisation of pupil groupings in the lesson which resulted in pupils making insufficient progress in their learning.
22. The teaching of the under-fives is consistently good and a strength of the school. It makes a significant contribution to the development of positive attitudes to learning and to very good behaviour and relationships. Very effective joint planning means that children in both classes receive the same high-quality teaching and learning experiences. The teaching of key literacy and numeracy skills, particularly the use of phonics, is good.
23. The teaching of literacy in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good and makes a strong impact on the improving standards of pupils' literacy skills. Teachers understand and manage the Literacy Hour well. A particular strength is the very good relationships with pupils, which increases pupils' enjoyment and confidence in the subject. Lessons are well planned, with good organisation of group work, and pupils are kept on task which ensures they cover a good range of work. Pupils are encouraged to do well through the effective use of marking and praise.
24. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, teaching is well organised and lessons follow the expectations of the National Numeracy Strategy well. However, the final or plenary session is not always used effectively to assess the knowledge, skills and understanding pupils acquire during the lesson. In addition, higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged to develop their mathematical understanding. In Key Stage 2, higher-attaining pupils benefit from the additional support of being taught as a group by the headteacher, although in class lessons they are not always sufficiently challenged. However, the management and organisation of the Numeracy Hour is good.
25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and linked carefully to their individual education plans. In addition to effective support from their class teachers, they benefit from working with specialist teachers and classroom assistants who make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Through this support, pupils show good attitudes to their work, both in lessons, and when being supported in small groups or as individuals.
26. Pupils with English as an additional language benefit from the good teaching of the visiting specialist teacher who visits the school for one morning per week. However, she liaises effectively with class teachers to set targets for pupils' learning. As a result, they receive good support in lessons, including that from classroom assistants. A particular strength is the support offered to these pupils by their classmates, which helps them to adapt well to the day-to-day life of the school.
27. The significant strength of the best teaching is the quality of relationships between pupils and teachers. Teachers know their pupils well, which enables pupils to feel secure and confident. Pupils respond well to the consistent and positive reinforcement of high expectations in relation to behaviour and to the work that is expected of them. For example, if pupils talk out

of turn they are expected to apologise to the teacher. These relationships are the basis on which the school develops very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. As a result, pupils make good progress in their learning.

28. Where teaching is good, teachers show good subject knowledge, which they pass on to their pupils with interest and enthusiasm. In reception, the teacher's own love of stories was clearly evident, with children being spellbound as the story was told. Teachers share the targets for the lesson with their pupils; for example in a Year 3 and 4 numeracy lesson, the target was 'Use knowledge of doubles to multiply using paper and pencil methods'. The teacher checked that the pupils understood the target through careful questioning. The teacher shared with the class that the lesson needed to reinforce this work because the results of marking work from the previous day showed that many had not fully understood the idea. This is a good example of teachers using day-to-day assessment.
29. Where teaching is good or better, pupils show very good attitudes to learning. In lesson introductions they are enthusiastic and are often 'bursting' to give the answer to a question. They are confident in making suggestions and in posing their own questions. Pupils are confident in explaining their thinking. For example in a numeracy hour a pupil said, "To double '88' I double '80' which is '160' then double '8' which is '16' so double '88' is '176' ". Pupils settle quickly to group work, showing good personal organisation skills, particularly in having the equipment they need ready to hand. They show perseverance and interest in their work and are confident to explain what they are doing. When given the opportunity, they work successfully in pairs and small groups. At the end of lessons, they clear up quickly and sensibly before sitting quietly for the final or plenary session. In this session, they are keen to share their work with their teacher and their classmates.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

30. The curriculum is good in breadth and balance and meets statutory requirements, including those for children under five and religious education. It uses resources from within and outside the school very effectively to enrich the curriculum. Priority is given to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, although the opportunities presented for this in other subjects is not fully realised. This, together with provision for the physical development of children under five, is the only weakness in curricular provision. Sex education is fully integrated into the curriculum. When questions arise, these are explained within the context of loving families and relationships. Health and drugs awareness is actively promoted. The school takes part in the 'High Sheriff's Drugs Awareness' scheme. The school has good links with the pre-school and with the middle school to which the pupils transfer at the end of Year 4. Overall, pupils are well prepared academically and socially for the next stage of their education.
31. Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Good provision is made for their cultural development. The calm, peaceful atmosphere that exists in the school, assemblies, well-planned acts of collective worship and many opportunities for reflection and wonder throughout the school day, very effectively support pupils' spiritual development. They are actively taught the difference between right and wrong and have many opportunities to show a high degree of respect for the differences between people and for their values and beliefs. There are visits by multicultural musicians and opportunities for pupils to speak to the school about their own cultural and religious traditions. The very strong relationships and the very good example set by all who work in the school enhance pupils' moral development. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is a strong feature of the school. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to take responsibility and to show initiative within the life of the school. Parents report that the older pupils are very caring in their response to the needs of younger pupils. Inspection evidence supports parents' views. Pupils are given many opportunities to appreciate and to contribute to the local community through, for example, local visits, singing in public, distributing Harvest parcels, visits to homes for people with learning difficulties and participation in community art displays. They also contribute to the wider community through collecting for charities such as Great Ormond Street Hospital, the Children's Society and for children in war-torn

countries.

32. Curriculum planning is good, and weaknesses noted in the last inspection have been fully and successfully addressed. Policies and schemes of work in all subjects now guide planning and provide continuity in pupils' learning. Provision in English and mathematics has been strengthened by national strategies, both of which the school has implemented successfully. All classes have a lesson each day in literacy and numeracy. An area for development is to further develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Provision for information technology has been developed in line with recent national guidance and meets the revised national expectations. Pupils apply their information technology skills well in most other subjects. Provision for art, music and information technology is a strength of the school and contributes strongly to the school's ethos. Religious education is soundly based on the locally agreed syllabus.
33. A good homework policy has recently been agreed, clearly setting out a programme to support the curriculum. A wide range of visitors, such as drama groups, helps to broaden pupils' awareness of the world. Very good use is made of the local environment to develop pupils' understanding and skills through many well-planned visits, such as those to Brading Roman Villa and Carisbrooke Castle. The physical education programme includes swimming and is extended by adventurous activities on residential visits.
34. There is a very good equal opportunities policy in place. The school provides effectively for pupils of all ages, gender, ethnic diversity and differing religious beliefs. The curriculum provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, although in some lessons pupils of higher attainment do not make the progress of which they are capable because not enough is expected of them. The school reflects equality of opportunity in its aims and objectives, curriculum and organisation, including the grouping of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and good provision is made for improving their learning skills so that they can keep up with their peers and grow in self-esteem and confidence. Where appropriate, these pupils are supported effectively in small groups outside the classroom. The requirements of the Code of Practice⁴ for pupils with special educational needs are fully met. Good provision is made for pupils who speak English as an additional language enabling them to make progress comparable to that made by other pupils of similar ability.
35. Good provision for out-of-school activities involves many pupils. Sports activities include football and 'kwik' cricket. Arts activities include a choir, ballet and drama. There is a French club, rocks and fossils group, knitting, Bible and technology clubs. Other clubs are run at different times of the year, depending on staff interests and availability.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school makes very good provision for the health, safety and welfare of its pupils within a caring and supportive learning environment. All staff in the school have excellent relationships with pupils and care for their needs very well. The quality of educational and personal support and guidance that they provide is good and there is good monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development to ensure that they are receiving the correct levels of support. The care and support provided for pupils has been well maintained since the last inspection and has a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and their experiences at school. Parents appreciate the safe, caring atmosphere provided for their children. They report that teachers are very open and approachable and are sensitive to concerns about their child's progress or the need for additional support in the classroom.
37. The school has very good arrangements for ensuring that it provides a safe place for pupils

⁴ Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

and adults to work. There are clear procedures and policies which address safety and security in all areas of school life. The school is well supported by members of the governing body who have relevant expertise in health and safety and who ensure that pupils and staff work in a safe environment by carrying out regular checks of the premises and equipment and assessing potential risks. The procedures for dealing with first aid, accident reporting and pupils who are unwell are also very good. Staff who look after pupils' individual needs are appropriately trained and offer caring and sympathetic support. The quality of supervision at playtimes is good.

38. There are very good procedures in place for dealing with any concerns relating to child protection and pupil welfare. The school maintains positive links with outside support agencies on which it can call to address concerns about individual pupils. It promotes the health and welfare of pupils through programmes of personal safety and welfare such as the police supported scheme of 'Getting It Right' and regular visits to classes from the fire service, police and the school nurse. Through its policy of positive praise and the work it does to promote pupils' self-awareness and esteem, the school helps pupils to mature, act responsibly and make choices about their lives. It has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development from the time children start school in the reception classes to when they move on to their next schools. All staff in the school know the children very well and ensure that they develop and mature in a caring and supportive environment.
39. The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and addressing any incidences of oppressive behaviour. The school's behaviour policy emphasises the importance of positive attitudes and relationships and is based on an ethos of care and respect for others. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and are consistent in their approach to any lapses. In lessons, assemblies and around the school, pupils are praised for their work, their attitudes towards others and their efforts in personal improvement. The consistency with which staff treat pupils has a very positive impact on behaviour. Pupils have a clear understanding of the expected standards of behaviour and rarely stray from them. Where pupils have individual difficulties, teachers offer firm and caring support to emphasise their expectations and to bring pupils to a clear understanding of the school's standards. In lessons, pupils are taught to value the opinions and contributions of others. Teachers set very good role models in their attitudes towards pupils and to each other and pupils clearly follow their example.
40. The school makes appropriate use of the educational welfare service to follow up concerns about pupils' patterns of attendance. Although the school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' absence and completes records and registers appropriately, attendance levels remain slightly below the national average and there are incidences of unpunctuality which the school tries to address through regular letters to all parents and to individual families. This is an on-going problem of which the school is aware but has not wholly successfully resolved.
41. The school has good arrangements for the routine assessment of the academic progress and personal development of its pupils. The deputy headteacher, as assessment co-ordinator, manages the collection of a good range of data on each pupil, including that from national and other standardised tests. These indicators, when taken in conjunction with the good knowledge class teachers have of each of their pupils, produce an accurate profile of attainment which is reflected in reports home to parents and carers.
42. Arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, eliminating oppressive behaviour, giving personal support and guidance and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. These areas are significant strengths in the school. Detailed assessment of the knowledge, skills and understanding which the youngest children bring with them as they enter the school provides a good baseline judgement which is expertly used by their teachers to build confidence and learning in line with the expectations of the agreed curriculum for that age group. Pupils who have special educational needs are accurately and sensitively assessed in full consultation with parents and appropriate learning programmes and targets for development devised. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional

language are provided with good individual support and sensible learning targets. The school also makes good provision for the part-time education of pupils based elsewhere, giving them a valuable experience in a mainstream school. The staff and pupils show considerable care and compassion in these circumstances.

43. There is, however, a shortcoming in the school's assessment strategy. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning, although satisfactory overall, consists of two elements, one of which is good, but the other is inconsistent. Teachers make good use of regular assessments of attainment in planning half-termly programmes of work in line with nationally agreed targets. However, day-to-day assessment of what pupils have or have not learnt and understood in individual lessons is inconsistent. In such lessons, the concluding session is too short or, sometimes, non-existent. Teachers' skill in questioning to test understanding is used insufficiently and, as a school strategy, is under-developed. This means that, on occasions, teachers stick to the planned sequence of work and timetable without evidence that what has just been taught has been grasped and remembered.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school works very effectively with parents and relationships between the school and the parents it serves are very good. This is a significant strength of the school and has a very positive impact on pupils' learning and, particularly, their personal and social development. Since the last inspection, the school has strengthened the good relationships that it has with parents by improving the quality of its communications and by making it easier for parents to speak to teachers on a more regular basis through the introduction of 'surgeries'. Through its 'parental satisfaction surveys', it regularly seeks the views of parents and identifies where improvements in provision can be made that will have a positive effect on pupils' learning. These comments are responded to positively by the school, which has a good impact on consolidating and developing the partnership between home and school.
45. In the questionnaires and at the meeting held before the inspection, parents showed very good support for the school and all areas of its work. They feel that their children make good progress and that their standards of behaviour are very good. They appreciate the quality of teaching and report that they are well informed about the progress that their children are making. Parents report that the school deals well with any questions or problems that they may have and they are very positive about the values the school promotes which enable their children to be mature and responsible. They feel that the school is well managed and led. There were very few criticisms of the school made, although a small number of parents would like to see a greater range of activities outside lessons and a few criticised the school's provision for homework. The inspection team found that the provision for extra-curricular activities is good and that the school is aware of some parents' comments about the provision of activities for the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1. The school currently provides a satisfactory level of homework and is developing a more structured programme, particularly for older pupils.
46. Overall, the school provides parents with good quality information. Pupils' reports are detailed, with a clear definition between pupils' strengths and weaknesses in each subject. Reports make 'recommendations for the future' linked mainly to English and mathematics and also to pupils' attitudes to learning or behaviour in the classroom. Although these recommendations are good and are helpful to parents in supporting their child's learning, the school has identified the sharing of pupils' targets and assessments as an area for development. The recent introduction of 'surgeries' for this purpose is a very good initiative and is already valued by teachers and parents as a way of more regularly reviewing and modifying targets and encouraging parental support at home. Teachers are always available to speak to parents at the beginning and end of the school day. Parents report that they have close contact with their child's teacher and that any suggestions they make are treated in a positive manner. Parents are kept very well informed about the school's work through regular curriculum evenings and newsletters, which contain curriculum information as well as news and diaries of events. The school's prospectus and annual report from the governing body meet requirements and provide parents with satisfactory information about the work and achievements of the school.

47. The school makes a good commitment to an open and positive relationship with parents through its home-school agreement. It fully involves parents in its work from the time that parents prepare for their children to start school in the reception classes through to their move to middle school. There are positive relationships with the nearby pre-school playgroup and the reception class teachers visit regularly in order to acquaint themselves with both children and parents. This enables the teachers to get to know children well, to put in place appropriate support where it is needed and to reassure parents as their children move into full-time education. Parents are fully encouraged to help in the school either in classrooms, on visits, with swimming or as part of the thriving 'Friends' Association'. Although not many parents are able to help on a regular basis, there is always very good support for school events, concerts and assemblies, fund-raising activities and special projects, such as the recently produced 'Millennium Banner'. The school receives good quality support from its parent governors who work hard on behalf of the school and its pupils to raise standards and the quality of pupils' learning. The school welcomes any support that parents can give and recognises the important impact that this has on pupils' learning and on their personal and social development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The headteacher has built a team around him that has a clear understanding of where the school is at present and where it needs to be. It is a team that is capable of taking the school forward. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and leads by example, but is equally effective in delegating and enabling the deputy headteacher and co-ordinators to make an important contribution. He monitors standards carefully himself through data analysis and lesson observations. His attention to standards within subjects is effective and he aims to spread good teaching practice. Teachers are able to observe other lessons and particular attention is given to newly-qualified teachers. In staff meetings, discussion takes place on what constitutes good practice and teachers share things that have worked well for them. However, the headteacher concentrates on general issues and his monitoring is not sufficiently specific or demanding. There is a lack of attention to individual teaching quality and effectiveness.
49. The deputy headteacher plays a key role in monitoring, evaluation and review. This is achieved through data analysis, lesson observations, and enabling co-ordinators to function effectively. The senior management team meets to evaluate standards. The strength of the work of the co-ordinators lies in their monitoring of their subject, both in terms of standards, and in monitoring of teaching. They analyse data carefully and set realistic but challenging targets. The headteacher and deputy headteacher enable this to happen by providing supply-teaching time, which is effectively used. A weakness in the system is that some lesson observations are descriptive of what has taken place rather than making evaluative comments. However, many are aware of this and intend to correct it in future. Whilst regular discussions take place where outcomes are included, co-ordinators' job descriptions are too general, and do not indicate specific requirements to raise standards in the subject. However, co-ordinators write their own action plans, which appropriately address the important issues, and these are proving to be effective. In particular, through school based in-service training, teachers are being given confidence to teach the subject, and this is having a direct effect on standards, especially in literacy.
50. The school's motto 'Together We Grow' is clearly demonstrated in many ways. For example, teachers work together in their planning, which ensures equality of opportunity for all pupils. The relationship between teachers and pupils is such that pupils are happy and confident learners. Displays around the school constantly remind all involved of the many ways that pupils, teachers, helpers, parents and governors grow together. There is a determination by the staff, working well together as a team, to raise standards and this is shown in the successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies.
51. The governing body is very effective in fulfilling its statutory duties. All requirements are met with the exception of the headteacher's appraisal and targets, where further advice and support from the local education authority is awaited. Although some governors are unable

to spend much time in school, the majority visit to talk to teachers and pupils and to observe lessons. This is giving them a good understanding of how the school is working, and what needs to be done to raise standards. Governors have class and subject responsibilities, which is relatively new for them, but is enabling them to have a deeper understanding of the National Curriculum subjects and how they are taught. An induction programme in the school, together with local education authority training, is helping the governors to develop their role in monitoring. They are increasingly aware of their statutory duties. They work closely with the headteacher and staff in helping to shape the direction of the school. Most have a good understanding of the strengths and weakness of the school and understand the challenges it faces. For example, one governor described in detail the standards on entry, the standards at the end of Key Stage 1, and how these compare with schools nationally and locally.

52. The school is well aware of its standards through a system of close monitoring and analysis. Weaknesses are addressed by forming part of the school improvement plan, and actions are taken to eradicate them. The school's priorities and targets are appropriate, and linked with clear programmes of action. For example, the school was well aware of the weakness in boys' reading levels. Extra resources were focused in that direction, including appointing a male literacy expert as a role model. The gap between boys and girls of 4.2 in 1996 has been reduced to 1.4 in 1999. This is a good example of how the pupils benefit from wisely targeted spending. Most staff are aware of the importance of achieving good value for money, and the local education authority's assistance with value for money exercises has been beneficial. However, the allocation of money to co-ordinators is less well planned with an annual allocation of 'spending money'. There is no requirement for co-ordinators to list and cost their requirements for the year, nor to evaluate how effective their spending has been.
53. The school takes parents' views seriously. It conducts surveys to find out what parents like and dislike about the school. Where appropriate, items will then be included in the school improvement plan. The school is held in high regard by parents, local inhabitants and neighbours. The school is committed to being a valuable part of the community, and is successful – with the exception of parking problems outside the school!
54. There are good examples of where governors consider the effectiveness of their spending decisions. For instance, the last report indicated that improvement was needed concerning the time allocation for the special educational needs co-ordinator. Changes were made, and after evaluation, further changes made to arrive at the present considerably improved situation. At the moment, governors are considering their spending on music tuition, which again shows that they are thinking carefully about spending decisions. The school's carry forward was high last year, but this was a deliberate strategy to enable refurbishment as furniture and fittings in the new school needed replacing. However, events have overtaken that strategy, and the money has been used very effectively to enable an extra teacher to reduce class sizes, and the carry forward is now with normal limits.
55. The school is well staffed. There is a full complement of appropriately qualified and experienced teachers, supported by a sufficient number of general classroom and special educational needs assistants. However, there is insufficient allocation of support staff for the under fives. There is sufficient expertise to teach all the areas of the curriculum, with strengths in art, information technology and history. However, the lack of more demanding work in normal classroom situations for higher-attaining pupils indicates some weakness in teacher confidence and expertise in, for instance, mathematics. The headteacher takes small groups of pupils out of normal classes for extension work. In all subjects, joint planning ensures that teacher expertise is shared across classes with similar age groups of pupils. This is particularly effective in, for instance, music where a good scheme of work ensures proper coverage of the subject and teachers who are not subject experts nevertheless demonstrate confidence and high expectations.
56. Although support staff are keen and conscientious, there are two weaknesses in their deployment. The first leaves the under-fives groups too often unsupported and with a number of children that is too large for the teacher alone. The second relates to the tasks

given to assistants when the teacher is addressing the whole class. Too often the assistants are left watching and waiting for group work to begin.

57. Staff training is reasonably well matched to the school's professional development needs. The mathematics co-ordinator, for instance, has attended courses relating to her new responsibilities and the introduction of the National Numeracy Hour.
58. The accommodation is ample for the number of pupils on roll. Nevertheless, there is a weaknesses. The classes with pupils under five years old do not have a dedicated outside area adjacent to the classrooms. The component of their curriculum relating to experience with large toys and building blocks is, in consequence, under-emphasised. The accommodation, including outside areas, is clean and very well maintained, providing a pleasant and welcoming environment.
59. The range of materials and equipment is good and sufficient to meet the needs of the National Curriculum in all subjects. The library is well stocked and used well by pupils; the librarian and a teacher with particular expertise maintain it as a high quality facility. In mathematics, the co-ordinator has recently conducted an audit of resources and now has a very good schedule for the renewal and replacement of equipment necessary for the National Numeracy Strategy. The English co-ordinator received extra funds last year for the purchase of large texts and other resources for the National Literacy Hour. However, subject co-ordinators are not involved in discussions with colleagues about their respective priorities. The only mechanism for ensuring best value in this area of spending is the experience and expertise of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
60. Very good use is made of resources in the community, including visits to places of historical and geographical interest. During the inspection, there was a very fine display of artefacts from Carisbrooke Castle. The pupils were exceptionally caring and appreciative of the high value dolls and other museum pieces made available for drawing and as a stimulus to discussion and learning. This makes a strong contribution to their learning.
61. The leadership and management of the school are undoubtedly a strength and are having a considerable impact on standards. There is a consistency about the work of all involved, with all pulling in the same direction and showing common practice and common expectations of high standards.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education for its pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
 - a. provide more opportunities for the under fives to have regular outdoor play by providing a designated area and improving the provision of resources, including large wheeled toys (paragraphs 1, 30, 58, 63, 69);
 - b. improve the classroom support staff for the under fives (paragraphs 55, 56, 70);
 - c. further develop opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills across the full curriculum (paragraphs 5, 30, 32);
 - d. further develop opportunities through which higher-attaining pupils can be sufficiently challenged in lessons in order to improve the standards achieved (paragraphs 9, 24, 76, 82, 85); and

- e. improve the consistency of teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' work in order to improve pupils' learning (paragraphs 43, 82).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	99

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	18	49	31	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	234
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	59

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	37	26	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	29	32
	Girls	23	25	23
	Total	52	54	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (78)	86 (77)	87 (71)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	32	31
	Girls	22	23	24
	Total	51	55	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (71)	87 (74)	87 (82)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (85)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	
White	222
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	147.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	397,318
Total expenditure	394,864
Expenditure per pupil	1,731
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,689
Balance carried forward to next year	30,143

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	234
Number of questionnaires returned	123

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	29	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	32	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	44	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	48	7	1	3
The teaching is good.	65	33	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	36	2	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	19	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	53	41	3	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	52	43	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	39	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	40	11	0	3

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE

CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they reach the age of five. The school uses the local education authority's scheme to assess children on entry to the school and the results are well below average. In the reception classes, children make good progress and, by the age of five, meet the expectations of the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning, with the exception of language and literacy. In addition, children have insufficient opportunities for regular outdoor play as part of their physical development.
64. Children make very good progress in their personal and social development. They settle quickly into the day-to-day life of the school and to classroom routines. Each morning, they know that when they come into school they should find an activity, such as reading, jigsaws or construction toys. When it is time for registration, they tidy up sensibly and sit quietly on the carpet. They answer their names politely and respond well, for example when they have to 'sing' their name in response to the teacher. Children are eager to tell the teacher which day it is and to give a weather report. In lessons, they listen attentively and answer questions enthusiastically. When working, they settle quickly to the task and know where to find the equipment they need. They show good concentration and persevere well to complete their tasks. When they have opportunities to choose activities for themselves, they do so quickly and sensibly. Children play well together, for example in their role-play of going on a train journey.
65. Children make good progress in language and literacy. They develop good skills in speaking and listening. Children know the importance of listening to the teacher and they follow instructions well. They enjoy the opportunity to answer questions and to offer their thoughts. For example, when the class were looking at the pattern '2,4,6,8,10', one child observed, "Nine is missing". Others chipped in with, "And seven", "And five". In reading, most children recite the alphabet accurately and they know letter names and letters sounds. They find words beginning, for example with the letter 'e', and know how it sounds in the words 'egg' and 'elephant'. They show an interest in books and know that print conveys meaning. Children know the terms 'author' and 'illustrator'. More able children distinguish between fiction and non-fiction. However, many are at a very early stage of reading independently. In writing, most children write their names unaided. They develop satisfactory skills in copying the writing of adults, but the majority are not writing simple sentences by themselves.
66. Children make very good progress in their mathematical understanding. They read, write and order numbers to 10 accurately and many count to 50 along with the teacher. Through registration, they have regular access to larger numbers. Mental arithmetic skills are developed well through questions such as, "How many more children are having a school dinner than sandwiches?" A few children find the answer immediately, for example 'eight' if there are sixteen dinners and eight having sandwiches. The rest are confident in using a number line to 'count on' in order to find the answer. Children have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and identify accurately triangles, circles, squares and rectangles. They show a good understanding of patterns by using repeating patterns of colours and shapes.
67. Progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. In science, children know that we need energy to move and that food gives us energy. They know that toys can be pushed or pulled and they use construction kits well to make their own models of moving toys. Children sort and classify materials by 'shiny', 'soft', 'hard' and 'smooth'. They show a good understanding of weather and know key winter words, including 'frosty', 'ice', 'slippery' and 'cold'. In history, children develop a good awareness of past and present through the study of 'Toys' and, in particular, through a visit to the museum at Carisbrooke Castle. The visit is also used well to develop children's geographical skills. After the visit, children draw maps of the route from school and mark on key features which they identify on the journey. Children use computers successfully and most are confident in the use of the mouse and keyboard. They use a graphics program well to 'paint' pictures.

68. In creative development, progress is very good. Children have a good range of opportunities to work with a variety of media. They make imaginative use of charcoal to create pictures of trees in winter. Their crayon drawings of 'Pudsey Bear' are particularly good. In work linked to literacy and the poem 'The North Wind Doth Blow', they use pastels and chalks to create interesting winter scenes which include the 'poor robin'. Children enjoy music and they sing with enthusiasm and gusto. They are confident to sing to the rest of the school in assembly. Children enjoy role-play and in their 'train journey' play the parts of 'driver', 'passenger', 'guard' and 'booking clerk' most realistically.
69. With the exception of having regular opportunities for outdoor play, children make good progress in their physical development. Children have regular music and movement, physical education and games lessons in the hall or playground. In music and movement, they show a good awareness of space and the ability to change direction and to work at different levels. Children know the importance of a warm-up and cool-down at the start and end of lessons. In music and movement, they interpret music well when, for example, visiting 'Granny's House'. They 'explore' the house, showing how they look in 'high cupboards' and on 'low shelves'. Children become totally absorbed and lose themselves in the story by taking on the characters they play. However, children have no regular opportunities for regular outdoor play where they can climb or tunnel or play with large toys, including bicycles, tricycles and scooters. This denies them their entitlement to this aspect of physical development.
70. The quality of teaching of the under fives is consistently good and is a strength of the school. High-quality teaching makes a significant contribution to the progress children make and to their positive attitudes to learning. Teachers give children a very secure start to their life in school, which enables them to build successfully on their learning experiences as they move up through the school. A particular strength of teaching is the joint planning which ensures that children in both classes are taught the same curriculum. There is a very good balance of teacher-led activities and those which the children choose for themselves. The teaching of key literacy skills, including phonics, is good. Teachers have high expectations of children's work and behaviour. Good use is made of classroom assistants to support children's learning. Classroom assistants work well with the children and form very good relationships with them, particularly through small group work. However, the under fives have insufficient support from classroom assistants in relation to the allocation of time.

ENGLISH

71. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests in reading at the end of Key Stage 1, the number of pupils reaching Level 2 was close to the national average. The number of pupils reaching the higher levels was below the national average and below average when compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The number reaching the expected level in writing was also close to the national average, but the number reaching the higher levels was below the national average and below average when compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards of the majority of pupils now in Year 2 are average in reading, writing, speaking and listening. There is evidence that the standards of the majority of pupils now in Year 4 are in line with those expected for their age in all aspects of English.
72. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory for pupils in Year 2 and Year 4, and have been sustained at this level since the last inspection. Pupils pay careful attention to class teachers during the Literacy Hour. Most pupils join in class discussions confidently and wait politely for their turn. In assemblies and when answering in class, they speak clearly in standard English and read aloud together with expression. In reporting their work to the class at the end of lessons, most pupils express their views clearly, relating well to their audience.
73. Standards in reading are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and have improved since the last inspection, when pupils needed to be encouraged to read more widely at a suitable level. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory understanding of phonics, so they are able to sound out unfamiliar words. They read with understanding from books which are well chosen to match their level of achievement. Some read aloud with dramatic expression. Levels of understanding are mainly good and pupils with average attainment or above give quite detailed

accounts of what they have read. By the end of Year 4, most pupils read longer texts with good concentration. Most read aloud fluently and accurately. They retell the main events of the plot and most explain characters' actions and show good comprehension skills. In literacy lessons, pupils gain a good understanding of how settings influence events and incidents in stories and they develop good prediction skills. By the end of Year 4, pupils' library skills are well developed, although they do not always have enough opportunities to apply these skills to research tasks in other subjects.

74. Standards in writing are average at age seven and the opportunities to produce extended narrative and descriptive writing have improved since the last inspection. The school has yet to fully realise the opportunities provided by other subjects to developing pupils' writing skills, so as to provide meaningful and purposeful reasons for pupils to write. An overdependence on worksheets also limits opportunities for extended writing and for pupils to be able to assess the progress they are making in their writing. However, pupils are motivated to write as, for example, when the Year 2 pupils are asked to write their predictions after the class had read the text: 'Journey into Space.' Pupils are beginning to write with sound control, forming letters clearly and most achieved a joined style.
75. Standards of spelling, punctuation and handwriting are average when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. Their knowledge of grammar is sound. Pupils in Year 4 have an appropriate vocabulary and have a good understanding of the use of nouns, adverbs and adjectives. Their factual accounts are clear but are mainly brief. Pupils use their computer skills to type out their work. Those with higher attainment write good stories when challenged, but not enough is expected of these pupils. Pupils are not yet confident in planning and drafting longer pieces in a range of styles.
76. Pupils enter the school with well below average attainment in English. The good quality teaching in both key stages supports pupils' learning and they make good progress in all aspects of English. Progress in reading is sustained because it is directed by graded reading materials and carefully monitored. Progress in writing, speaking and listening are good, although pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop these skills in other subjects. Pupils are given many well-planned opportunities to speak in assemblies and to take part in dramatic performances. This provision has a positive impact on developing their speaking skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their individual education plans have specific targets for reading and writing. These are planned as a series of specific steps and their progress is carefully monitored. Class teachers use the targets in planning appropriate tasks for these pupils in lessons. These pupils play a full part in class activities and are given effective additional support whenever possible. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported in the school and make equal progress to that of other pupils of similar attainment. Higher attaining pupils are not always fully challenged. In some cases they produce too little work in the time available, although it is mainly accurate and well presented.
77. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils in all classes increase pupils' confidence in discussions and their enjoyment of the subject. Lessons are well planned, activities are very well organised and the quality of explanations by teachers demonstrates their good knowledge of the subject. Teachers set good models of language in reading aloud expressively and in writing clearly on the board. Lessons are harmonious but, in some otherwise satisfactory lessons, expectations of pace of pupils' work and of all pupils contributing during whole class sessions are not high enough. This was not so in an excellent lesson in Years 3 and 4, where the brisk pace kept all on task, so that a very good amount of work was covered. Tasks are well matched to the needs of each group in lessons. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and give good encouragement. Most teachers clearly identify major weaknesses and set new targets. Insufficient demand is made of pupils to proof read their own work before it is marked or to correct errors afterwards.
78. Other factors that influence pupils' learning and achievement in English are their good behaviour and attitudes to the subject. Pupils enjoy reading and most develop their skills at home, supported by their parents. Behaviour in lessons is always good. Pupils in both key stages settle to work quickly and stay on task. They work carefully, but too often the pace is slow and too little is produced in the time available. Pupils take a pride in their finished work

and are proud to see it attractively displayed around the school.

79. The management of the subject has a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. The co-ordinator, the supportive literacy governor and staff have worked very hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy, and planning is now effectively guided by the targets of the framework. All classes have a literacy hour in their timetable each day and teachers follow the recommended structure closely. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching and given advice to ensure that standards are consistent. Teachers meet to analyse samples of pupils' work, and so review the standards expected of each year group. As a result, teachers' judgements of standards are consistent. Assessment procedures are good and teachers use assessment information well when planning work for different groups of pupils. Assessment is guided by National Curriculum level descriptions. Examples of pupils' work are very attractively displayed throughout the school, making a good contribution to the ethos of the school. The subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Pupils were observed listening to stories in awe and wonder during the week of inspection.

MATHEMATICS

80. The 1999 year group of end-of-Key Stage 2 pupils, still in the school in Year 3, reached a level of attainment in national tests in May 1999 that was close to the national average, both for the percentage (87 per cent) reaching Level 2 or above, and also the percentage (22 per cent) reaching Level 3. However, within the Level 2 successes, many pupils were in the lowest (Level 2c) grade and overall standards were below average. In comparison with similar schools, results are below average, but the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs has to be taken into account. Inspectors judge that standards are currently close to the national average, both for pupils in Year 2 who will take national tests in May, and also for pupils in their last year in the school. This reflects the positive trend in results recorded over the past few years. The school has set realistic targets for further steady improvement.
81. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a marked and beneficial effect on the teaching of number. The discipline of a short sharp session of mental arithmetic each day is making pupils work hard, and inspectors saw good strategies thought out or learnt by pupils. For instance, Year 1 and 2 pupils, working on "doubles", calculate the sum of "near doubles" such as 7 and 8, by recalling that twice 7 is fourteen and then adding 1. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are confident in handling numbers involving multiplication by 2, 3, 5 and 10. In group work, about half the pupils in a Years 1 and 2 class demonstrated understanding of "place value" and the power of the digit in the first place of a two-digit number. However, although they enjoy games and problems involving the use of "digit cards", only a few pupils show easy familiarity and enjoyment with numbers. At both key stages, there is suitable emphasis on learning technical terms. For instance, Year 3 pupils made good progress during one lesson seen in using the terms "product" and "sum". They threw two dice and worked out the product and sum of the two numbers. One Year 4 pupil worked out that when one of the numbers is 1, the product and sum, whatever the other number, differ by one. By the time pupils leave the school, they have tackled number manipulation to a level appropriate for their age. During the inspection, mathematics teaching was concentrated on number work. Evidence was seen of work on shape and space, but only to a limited extent on mathematical investigations. Pupils use worksheets too much and too little is kept in mathematics exercise books. This results in standards of neatness and presentation that are not as good as would normally be seen from pupils of these age groups.
82. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good, overall, at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, although the teaching is well organised in line with the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy, there are two weaknesses. Firstly, teachers do not check understanding systematically or well. The plenary session at the end of the hour is too often used just to 'show and tell' what has been done, with only rare interventions from the teacher with a probing question to test understanding. This is a weakness in assessment, because the teacher does not have the evidence of progress or otherwise to inform planning of the next lesson. Secondly, in classes with two year groups and a wide range of prior attainment, higher-attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently in their learning and understanding. Teaching at Key

Stage 2 is a little more relaxed and inventive. Discussion with pupils shows that there is enthusiasm for learning and a willingness to test hypotheses to try to invent rules to be able to make predictions, as with the dice-throwing theory devised by a pupil in Year 4. In class activities, there is insufficient stimulation and challenge for the higher-attaining pupils. This is partly because teachers are concentrating on raising the standards of pupils of below average and average attainment, but also indicates a slight lack of teacher confidence and expertise in challenging higher-attaining pupils to ask demanding questions. Acknowledging this concern, the headteacher takes small groups of higher-attaining pupils for one session a week. The work done in these sessions is to a high standard and is for pupils whose target is Level 3 by the end of Key Stage 1 or its equivalent in Key Stage 2. There is no significant or obvious difference in the standards being achieved by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully and successfully included in class work. They receive help where appropriate and are sometimes withdrawn for intensive personal tuition.

83. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and very well organised. She has sought help and personal development from good outside sources and is recognised in school as a good leader. The use of computers is a little under-developed, except by the headteacher when he takes small groups of higher-attaining pupils. The co-ordinator has recently conducted a thorough audit and is reallocating resources sensibly between classes. The subject area is well led and managed and is having a positive impact on the raising of standards.

SCIENCE

84. The 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments show that, compared with all schools nationally, there is a below average number of pupils reaching the expected level, Level 2. The percentage reaching the higher level, Level 3, is in line with teacher assessments nationally. These comparisons remain the same when comparing Cowes Primary with similar schools. The science assessments are not significantly different from the results in English and mathematics, although the percentage reaching Level 3 is higher in science than the other two subjects.
85. Inspection evidence shows attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 to be almost in line with the national average and at the end of Year 4, when pupils leave the school, attainment is in line with national expectations. There are some variations within the subject and within different groups of pupils. For example, with experimental and investigative science in both key stages, pupils do not achieve as well as in the other areas of science. This has been recognised by the school and recent developments with a new scheme of work have had a positive impact on achievement. There are occasions when higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged to extend what they know and understand. The inspection evidence shows a more positive picture than the National Curriculum teacher assessments. This is largely because the majority of pupils can talk about the work they are doing at the time and show sound understanding. However, they are less confident or accurate when talking about earlier work, often being unable to remember what they have done.
86. In studying life processes and living things, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know parts of the human body and that humans need food and water to live. They know that babies grow into adults, the difference between healthy and unhealthy food and can talk about the five senses. They have experimented with broad beans to find out what plants need to keep healthy. In Key Stage 2, pupils group animals according to such factors as the number of legs and their body covering or whether they are vertebrates or invertebrates. They understand how animals are suited to their environment, such as a rabbit's long teeth to eat grass and a frog's webbed feet for swimming.
87. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use their senses to explore and recognise similarities and differences in materials and they sort them according to their properties. For example, they feel the roughness and smoothness of various rocks and they sort according to whether an object floats or sinks, or is magnetic or not. They describe what happens to an ice cube when placed in the classroom. Pupils in Key Stage 2 understand that materials are suitable for

- specific purposes. For example, they know that rubber would be suitable for a hosepipe, but sponge would not be. They test the qualities of materials, such as for absorbency or flexibility.
88. In physical processes, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils identify things that they push or pull, such as their toys or light switches. They investigate the pull of gravity by testing toy cars running down a ramp to see how far they will go. They talk about which appliances use electricity. In Key Stage 2, pupils understand that sounds are made in many ways, and experiment with different sounds from bottles containing different amounts of water. They know that light is unable to pass through some material and correctly use the terms transparent, translucent and opaque.
89. In much of their science work, pupils are given opportunities to experiment and investigate. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils investigate the rate at which ice cubes will melt when placed in different parts of the room. Key Stage 2 pupils begin to plan and record their investigations carefully. For example, when investigating balloons, they worked under the headings: 'task', 'method', 'sketch', 'prediction', 'fair test' and 'results'. This is having a positive impact on learning in investigative science, which has been very weak.
90. In Key Stage 1, pupils are mainly well behaved and attentive. They listen well and are keen and willing to answer questions. They settle well to their practical work, although sometimes rather noisily. This is particularly so when the teaching has not interested or stimulated them sufficiently and, on these occasions, pupils take too long to respond to the teacher's instructions. In Key Stage 2, pupils' response is mainly good and, sometimes, very good. Teachers are successful in creating a purposeful working atmosphere, where pupils interact well with each other and the adults in the room, and work with interest and enthusiasm.
91. In Key Stage 1, pupils' progress is mainly satisfactory, although it does vary according to the quality of teaching. Where lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils' interest is roused, they are attentive and make good gains in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. When pupils are not stimulated, they are less attentive and their progress is unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, pupils' progress is good. They show an increased maturity, especially when working in groups on practical work. They settle well to their work, maintain their interest and concentration and sustain their intellectual effort. This enables them to make good progress. There are occasions, in both key stages, when the higher ability pupils are not sufficiently challenged to enable them to make appropriate progress. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are well supported and make good progress for their abilities.
92. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, but it ranges from good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching is good, lessons are well planned and prepared, with resources readily available. Questioning involves many pupils and challenges their thinking. Different work is set for pupils of different ability, enabling them all to make progress. Where teaching is not satisfactory, pupils are not well managed or organised, allowing many to take little part in the lesson. They then become fidgety, wasting their time and gaining little. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good overall; in some lessons it is very good. Lesson objectives are clear and made known to the pupils at the start. Explanations are clear and pupils' attention is held well. There is good organisation and control and maximum use is made of the time available. Pupils concentrate well and make good progress, for example when taking measurements of temperature around the class. This enables pupils to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is mainly sound, although there are some difficulties. For example, there is some confusion when dealing with natural and man-made materials, there are occasions when teachers are not identifying what pupils need to do to reach the higher levels and teachers are not always confident with the requirements of experimental and investigative science.
93. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. There is a broad curriculum, covering all the required areas of the National Curriculum, using a new published scheme of work. Planning is a strength of the subject and teachers plan jointly. However, there are sometimes difficulties with changing teachers or teacher absences, when plans are not followed and pupils in different classes do not cover the same material or do the same work

twice. A new assessment system is ready to use, which is sound and fits well with the whole school assessment plan. There has been insufficient use of previous assessments to help teachers with their planning. The use of information technology to help pupils with their science, particularly with recording their experiments and investigations, is limited. In other areas of the curriculum, there are good links. For example:

- there are links with music when investigating sounds made from bottles;
- there are links with design and technology when pupils test the suitability of materials for making a purse;
- there are links with mathematics when pupils learn to read the scale on a thermometer;
- there are many links with literacy when recording what they have done; and
- there are links with art and information technology when Key Stage 1 pupils draw pictures to show them pushing and pulling, followed by writing a sentence using the computer.

94. There are sufficient resources of good quality to enable science to be taught effectively, although the new scheme being adopted necessitates another audit of resources.
95. Strengths reported in the last inspection have been maintained. Weaknesses in pupils' attainment have been addressed. Results are carefully analysed to identify weaknesses and standards are rising. The provision of work for the most able pupils has not improved sufficiently.

ART

96. Art is a strong feature of the school and standards are good. Pupils are taught a wide range of skills and are given the opportunities to put them into practice through effective cross-curricular links. The good quality of artwork around the school enhances the environment and celebrates pupils' attainment in the subject. Art makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development, as they convey mood and feeling in their work and study the works of famous artists. The school has still to fully realise the contribution that art from other cultures can make to pupils' attainment in the subject and to their understanding of the diversity and richness of other cultures.
97. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' literacy skills as they develop the correct vocabulary relevant to the subject.
98. Throughout the school, pupils have many opportunities for independent decision-making in their work. They choose materials, when printing, for example, for their visual and tactile qualities to stimulate and develop ideas for their work. They study the work of well-known artists, such as Lowry and Van Gogh, and make effective use of the learning in their own work. This, combined with pupils' growing expertise with materials provided for them, results in work of good quality. In both key stages, pupils evaluate their work thoughtfully, and make modifications when necessary. By the end of Key Stage 1, they present their work practically and imaginatively with materials, tools and techniques, and present their work in two and three dimensions. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 4, pupils represent chosen features of the surrounding world with increasing accuracy and attention to detail.
99. Teaching is good throughout the school and some very good teaching was observed in Key Stage 2. This enables pupils' good rate of learning in the subject in both key stages. Work currently displayed around the school indicates that teachers consistently reinforce the skills and techniques learnt during art lessons. Teachers' knowledge is secure and planning is clear, with good emphasis on teaching identified skills, and resources for lessons are carefully chosen and well prepared. They provide pupils with good opportunities to develop a range of skills so that they can learn effectively to convey their own feelings and ideas through their work. Lessons are well organised and teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported in lessons. This enables them to make good progress. Teachers use a good balance of whole-class teaching and individual work so that the pace of pupils' learning is good. A very good example of this was seen in a lesson in Years 3 and 4, where pupils were making observational drawings of artefacts from Carisbrooke Castle. The teacher introduced the tasks

and lesson objectives very precisely and continued to promote pupils' skills as they worked.

100. Pupils' positive attitudes to art contribute strongly to the quality of learning. They work consistently well with good levels of interest and application to complete the tasks. They enjoy the practical experience and sustain concentration and good behaviour to achieve their best results. Pupils in both key stages share resources, work very well together and show responsibility in handling the materials. They listen carefully to instructions and show pride in their finished work.
101. Pupils' learning in the subject has improved since the time of the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator has very good knowledge of the subject and has a clear vision for its future development. A good policy and scheme of work are in place. These, together with a good range of resources, effectively support teaching and learning. Pupils' learning is further enhanced through the school's participation in local art exhibitions, well-planned art weeks and by the very high quality of art displays around the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. Design and technology is taught as a discreet subject and enhances many areas of the curriculum, such as history, science and geography. Throughout the school, pupils make effective use of their numeracy skills when measuring and weighing materials.
103. At Key Stage 1, pupils leave the reception year with sound skills in design and construction. The quality of learning is good through this key stage. They use construction kits to explore model making and are developing a sense of how things function through their work with moving toys using axles and wheels. Recent work in Key Stage 1 has featured designing and making models of the Mary Rose and of Carisbrooke Castle linked to their topics in history. By the end of the key stage, pupils develop a good sense of how things function and recognise the basic function of familiar products and relate these basic features to their own ideas, when, for example, they consider how wheels and axles are used in toys that move. They use pictures to develop and communicate designs and make judgements about the outcomes of their work. Examples of work on display in the school hall show that pupils reflect on their designs and suggest improvements where necessary.
104. Pupils at Key Stage 2 use an increasing range of materials and techniques. By the end of Year 4, they exhibit a sound level of competency and choose from a range of tools, materials and resources. They assemble their products by cutting and shaping components and materials with some precision. Year 4 pupils evaluate ideas, showing understanding of the situations in which designs will have to function and they have an awareness of resources as a constraint. Evidence of this was seen when pupils designed and made purses, evaluating their products as they developed. Completed work in design and technology is imaginative and takes account of aesthetic considerations. Good examples of this are seen in the finished work displayed around the school. Food technology is well represented. This makes a good contribution to pupils' health education when they design and make sandwiches with a healthy diet in mind.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence indicates that, because of recent staff changes, there are implications for in-service training for teachers in Key Stage 2 to strengthen their knowledge of the subject and to increase their confidence in progressively developing pupils' skills in designing and making. Teaching is good where lessons are well structured and where there is an appropriate focus on the skills to be developed. A good example of this was seen in a lesson in Years 3 and 4 where pupils were being challenged at appropriate levels to study the designs of a variety of torches, with different users in mind. Teaching has shortcomings where teachers fail to challenge pupils, particularly those of higher attainment and where the lesson is more focused on science than on design and technology. In these lessons, the appropriate skills of designing and making are not developed.
106. Pupils enjoy the subject and their attitudes are good. These good attitudes contribute effectively to their learning. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are well motivated and

that most work with sustained concentration. They are keen to discuss their work and work well together. Boys and girls work equally well on tasks, and pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, participate fully in lessons.

107. The subject is well co-ordinated. The subject co-ordinator is aware of the shortcomings in teaching and learning and has a clear vision for the future development of the subject. This is evident from the action plan she has produced. There is a clear scheme of work in place which guides teachers' planning and indicates the links to be made with other subjects. There is a wide range of resources available to pupils. Good assessment procedures have recently been introduced and when fully implemented will help to ensure the progression of pupils' skills year on year.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Standards in geography are satisfactory in both key stages and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Evidence from lessons and displays indicate that pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good understanding of the local environment. By the end of Year 2, they express views and opinions on features of the environment of a locality they find attractive or unattractive. They do traffic surveys and consider ways of making the environment safer. Pupils describe physical and human features of different places when comparing their local environment with other areas. They have a sound understanding, for example, of the effects of weather on the environment. Simple mapping skills are developed. Pupils draw maps of routes around the school and identify well-known features on local maps.
109. By the end of Year 4, when they leave the school, pupils use skills and sources of evidence to respond to a range of geographical questions. They use news reports to increase their knowledge of the world. They describe how people can both improve and damage the environment. Pupils have a good understanding of the effects of pollution on the environment and search for clues to discover change in the environment over time. They show a sound awareness that different places may have both similar and different characteristics, as for example, when they compare Cowes to a village in Surrey. They continue to develop skills and sources of evidence to respond to a range of geographical questions, as for example, when they describe suitable holiday locations.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features, which contribute strongly to pupils' learning. A strength of the teaching is the way in which teachers use the local environment to stimulate pupils' interest in the subject and to heighten their awareness of environmental issues. In this way, teachers ensure that the subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' social development and sense of citizenship. The main weakness in teaching is that teachers do not make sufficient use of the subject's potential to contribute to pupils' literacy skills by providing opportunities for discussion and extended writing. However, lessons are well planned, clear objectives are shared with the pupils and teachers establish a good learning environment. Pupil management is good and this enables all pupils to learn and to make progress. Pupils' own good attitudes to the subject and their good behaviour in lessons also contribute well to their quality of learning. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with good support and make good progress. Those who speak English as an additional language are also well supported in the school and this enables them to make progress comparable to that of pupils of similar ability.
111. A temporary teacher is effectively managing the subject in the absence of the subject co-ordinator. There is a good policy and scheme of work in place to guide teachers' planning and to ensure continuity in pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has had development time for geography and has been able to monitor and support work in the classroom.

HISTORY

112. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4 when pupils leave the school is in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 1, when studying the Great Fire of London, pupils have developed a sound sense of chronology and identify events in the order

they happened. Many give reasons for events. For instance, they know that the fire spread quickly because of the wind, the houses being made of wood and no modern fire engines! They use a date line to represent their own lives, including their date of birth, going to pre-school, starting at Cowes Primary and which class they have been in. There is a weakness in pupils' confidence and ability to describe events in detail and to use the appropriate vocabulary. In Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Romans as invaders and settlers in Britain. They describe clothing, artefacts, food, public baths, houses and roads. Some talk about why the Romans built roads in Britain and describe trade and ease and safety of travelling.

113. Pupils show a good deal of interest in history. They are stimulated by handling historical artifacts and treat them with care. They listen attentively, and are keen to answer questions. They settle quickly and concentrate well on the work in hand. Their positive attitudes enable them to make sound progress. In Key Stage 2, where pupils' vocabulary has improved, they describe events in detail and make good progress.
114. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Resources are very well prepared and effectively used. Organisation and control of pupils is mainly sound, although sometimes in Key Stage 1 expectations of pupils' attention and behaviour are not high enough and too much emphasis is placed on facts, rather than finding out the facts for themselves and looking at reasons. Strengths in Key Stage 2 are the promotion of the use of correct vocabulary, such as 'conquer', 'invade', 'settle' and the effective range of strategies used to include all pupils in discussions. Assessment is developing in line with the whole-school assessment plan, but is not used well to inform future planning.
115. The subject is well co-ordinated. Monitoring and support for teaching is good, although there is a tendency to be descriptive rather than evaluative when observing lessons. There is a sound policy and scheme of work which are regularly updated. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum, especially art and design and technology. Displays are a particular strength, with some examples of very good art and craftwork. The curriculum is considerably enhanced with artefacts on loan, which the pupils are encouraged to handle with care and sensitivity. Effective use is made of visits to local places of historical interest and of visitors, such as the staff of Carisbrooke Castle.
116. The level of pupils' attainment and quality of teaching have both been maintained since the last inspection. The length of Key Stage 2 units of work is not now a problem, but the use of assessment for future planning has not improved.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

117. By the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, standards exceed national expectations. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve good standards. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills when word-processing their stories and poems. They show good application of punctuation and spelling skills.
118. By Year 2, pupils are confident in the key skills of using the mouse and keyboard. They know how to load, save and print their work. Pupils write imaginative illustrated stories in which they successfully combine text and 'clip-art'. They know how to edit their text and rearrange page layouts. Pupils make good use of CD-ROMs when carrying out research, for example into butterflies and moths. They use a data-handling program well to produce graphs which show, for example their favourite minibeasts. Imaginative and symmetrical pictures of Christmas trees are created using a graphics program. Pupils use the Internet successfully to carry out research to support their study of 'Space'. They are confident in entering commands into a programmable toy in order for it to follow a planned route.
119. By Year 4, pupils develop their word-processing skills further and are confident in the use of fonts, justifying layouts, spell-checker and changing the colour of text. Word-processing skills are used well in writing stories, newsletters, poetry and e-mails. In poetry, pupils show a good

understanding of how each line should begin with a capital letter. Pupils use the Internet successfully to carry out research into, for example, dinosaurs and they understand the technical terms 'search engine' and 'home page'. They are successful in sending e-mails to other classes in the school and to friends in a school in Gloucestershire. Pupils use the digital camera and scanner well as a means through which they can present information. In data-handling, they create a database on minibeasts and interpret the results of investigations through graphs and pie-charts.

120. No whole-class teaching of information technology was observed during the inspection. However, inspection evidence is consistent with the quality of teaching being good. In their planning, teachers include opportunities for information technology in most lessons, including literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of a classroom assistant who supports pupils' learning effectively through teaching pupils in pairs. There is a strong emphasis on teaching key skills, for example how to access the Internet and how to send e-mails. Good teaching and the regular opportunities for pupils to use information technology, contribute well to their positive attitudes to learning. Pupils of all abilities make good progress because they are interested and motivated by the subject. In lessons, pupils work well together, including boys and girls, and there are good examples of them teaching each other new skills.
121. The subject is managed most effectively and this contributes well to the standards achieved. The headteacher, supported by the governing body, is committed to the teaching of technical skills and to the on-going training of teachers. The subject has a detailed action plan, which is aimed at improving skills and raising standards. There is a very good portfolio of pupils' work, which shows the progress made and the good standards achieved.
122. The previous inspection report judged standards to be 'consistent with national expectations'. The school has completed the writing of a policy and scheme of work, both of which are good. The strong commitment to the subject, particularly in the teaching of skills, has had a significant impact on the raising of standards since the last inspection.

MUSIC

123. Standards in music are above average, with particular emphasis on singing. Pupils clearly enjoy music lessons; they concentrate well and ask sensible questions. They sing enthusiastically and tunefully in assemblies; the school has a good reputation for musical events and occasions such as carol services. The significant strength of the subject is the very good planning. All aspects, including composition and appreciation, are well and fully covered. Nearly all the teaching is carried out by class teachers, but the scheme of work and support given by the two co-ordinators gives these teachers confidence. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good and disciplined sense of pitch and rhythm. Year 1 and 2 pupils hold up cards with symbols representing colours, animals or other suitable signs and clap the rhythm of the words. They work in groups with several of these cards and sort them into an order which makes a composition which can be recorded and repeated. Year 3 and 4 pupils sing rounds and part songs well, with good dynamics and accurate pitch.
124. Teaching is good. Pupils learn well and make good progress. They show good attitudes to this subject. The two co-ordinators work well and successfully together and have produced a good scheme of work, drawing on local and national expertise and examples. Teachers are enthusiastic about this subject and the sense of fun and enjoyment is transmitted to pupils. There is a sufficient range of resources in good condition and a music room which is also used by peripatetic teachers. There is a recorder club and about one-third of the pupils play an instrument. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well involved; they and their support assistants join in the music making fully.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4 when pupils leave the school is in line with national expectations. Little physical education was seen in Key Stage 1. However, from what was seen, it is apparent that games skills are well developed, especially in throwing and catching. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their skills further and are gaining confidence

when handling a rugby ball. In gymnastics, pupils control their movements appropriately, and find different ways of jumping and landing. In dance, they are confident with their movements, especially when performing a Spanish dance. They put taught movements together to form their own sequence.

126. In most lessons, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, have plenty of opportunity to practise their skills, which enables them to make good progress.
127. Pupils' attitudes in physical education are good and often very good. They respond immediately to the teacher's commands, and participate enthusiastically in all activities. They co-operate well with others and thoroughly enjoy their lessons.
128. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and, overall, is good. Lessons are well planned in units of work, and clearly show a progression of learning objectives. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and demonstrate clearly to pupils. Expectations of work and attainment are high and more able pupils are challenged with more difficult activities. There are occasions, especially in gymnastics, when insufficient attention is paid to the quality of movements. Pupils are well managed and given plenty of opportunity to practise their skills. Warm-ups are not always effective and there is insufficient attention given to teachers' dress for physical activities.
129. The curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities. It includes gymnastics, athletics, dance, games, swimming and outdoor activities. There is a well-planned scheme of work to help teachers plan their lessons and there is an appropriate policy which includes health and safety items. However, this aspect is not always followed. Too often, pupils are allowed to take part in unsuitable clothing and wearing jewellery. The school has used outside agencies well for the provision of resources, especially for games, and has taken advantage of the training courses for teachers. This has had a positive impact on teachers' confidence and pupils' attainment. Overall, the quality and quantity of resources is good. Assessment is developing well, but the new system has not been implemented.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. At the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
131. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound understanding of many Bible stories. They re-tell stories, such as that of the Good Samaritan, showing interest and enthusiasm. They recognise many symbols of faith, such as the candle representing God as the light of the world. They know about special festivals, such as Christingle and Christenings, but are not able to explain the symbolism. They look at symbols of other religions, for example the Sukka for Jews. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their experiences and feel good about the world around them.
132. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of Bible stories such as The Last Supper. They develop an understanding of Judaism and Islam and see similarities in religious festivals. They know how and where Christians, Jews and Muslims pray. Pupils are encouraged to see how religious stories relate to their own lives and this is having a positive impact on their understanding. For example, following a story about a Jewish boy, pupils were able to explain and discuss what makes them feel proud. One response was the wearing of school uniform. On another occasion, pupils discussed the idea of 'belonging', whether it is belonging to a church or a football club, and the qualities required of a good member.
133. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. They show interest and concentration when listening to stories or when discussing issues. There is evidence of deepening knowledge and understanding of religious festivals and symbols as pupils move through the school.

134. Pupils' attitudes in religious education lessons are good. They listen attentively and willingly join in with discussions. They are particularly good at offering their experiences that relate to the story they have heard.
135. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory and sometimes good. Planning is sound and clearly indicates the learning intentions. Teachers use a variety of approaches, including pupils retelling stories in words and pictures. Role-play is used effectively, such as where pupils acted the story of the Passover. Teachers engage pupils well in the moral or spiritual issues raised. Good relationships and effective questioning create a positive atmosphere that enables all pupils to be involved in the lesson.
136. The subject is effectively co-ordinated and teachers are monitored and well supported. The curriculum is soundly based on the locally agreed syllabus. There are good links with other subjects. Literacy is well used, with plenty of discussion and pupils writing their own version of stories. Art is used by younger pupils when they represent their story in pictures, and design and technology skills are used in making a Sukka. Drama was well used with the enactment of a wedding. The school uses the local community in a variety of ways to enhance the curriculum. There are visits to the church and a variety of visitors come into the school to talk to children. Religious leaders from the Christian and Muslim churches are used effectively, but links with the Jewish faith have yet to be developed. Good use is made of a loan service for artefacts, which help bring religion to life for the pupils. Assessment is developing along with the whole-school assessment policy. The last inspection reported favourably on religious education. All the strengths have been maintained and there has been further progress with teachers' confidence and the quality of resources.