

Island Learning Centre

Albany Road, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 5HZ

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She has ensured that the school is a positive, purposeful and calm learning environment.
- Leaders and staff successfully develop pupils' self-esteem. As a result, pupils take pride in their work and in their well-kept school.
- In most subjects and year groups, teachers ensure that learning is planned well.
- Teachers use a range of strategies that help pupils succeed and make the right choices regarding their learning and behaviour.
- Pupils make consistently good progress in most subjects. Effective support ensures that pupils who have complex needs or low starting points also make strong progress.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is good. Staff are skilled in ensuring that pupils' individual behavioural needs are met well.
- The management committee have a strong grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are ambitious for the school and its pupils.
- Parents and carers value the work of the school. They particularly appreciate the significant success it has in improving pupils' attitudes to learning and supporting their well-being.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. The school's good-quality support helps them to settle quickly when they first join the school.
- While pupils' attendance is beginning to improve, it is too low. Leaders acknowledge that more needs to be achieved to raise pupils' attendance further.
- The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics, particularly for older pupils, is not as consistently strong as that of other subjects.
- The most able pupils are not consistently challenged. As a result, these pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to improve outcomes further by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan learning tasks that are suitably challenging for the most able pupils
 - the teaching of mathematics, particularly for older pupils, is consistently strong across the school and teachers have higher expectations of pupils.
- Ensure that pupils' attendance continues to improve.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has been very successful in developing a positive learning culture at the Island Learning Centre. A strong spirit of togetherness unifies staff, pupils and their families. Her appointment as the permanent headteacher has been well received by the school community.
- Leaders and the management committee have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. They use this to celebrate successes and identify areas for further improvement. They carry out regular checks to evaluate the impact of their action plans. These are thorough and detailed.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the management committee, is developing further the effectiveness of middle leaders. For example, middle leaders are encouraged to gain additional professional qualifications. This is helping them to develop the skills they need to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, and improve further pupils' behaviour.
- Leaders use their accurate understanding of pupils' needs to design and implement an effective school curriculum. For instance, they adapt the school timetable to support pupils who struggle to remain focused in lessons. Breaktimes are well-balanced, allowing pupils time to collect their rewards and socialise, but not too long to avoid any loss of momentum in pupils' learning.
- The school supports effectively pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about challenging topics, such as social and personal issues relating to the use of social media and the internet, in carefully planned lessons. As a result, pupils are able to make informed choices to keep themselves safe.
- The sports premium is used effectively. For example, leaders have purchased bicycles that have enabled pupils to gain important cycling qualifications.
- Pupils are supported well to develop a clear understanding of British values. This is demonstrated by the way in which they treat each other with tolerance and respect. Consequently, pupils are prepared effectively for life in modern Britain.
- The local authority team supports the school well. They use their in-depth knowledge of the school to provide leaders with accurate feedback and give advice about future developments.

Governance of the school

- The management committee use their broad expertise to provide leaders with the support they need to improve the school further. They hold the headteacher to account stringently and provide strong, effective challenge. Consequently, governors fulfil their statutory duties well.
- The management committee have high expectations for pupils and the school. They demonstrate this by setting leaders appropriately challenging targets. Members are committed to ensuring that the school is the very best it can be.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have strong safeguarding knowledge. They know their responsibilities well and work collaboratively to keep pupils safe.
- Staff are trained well in safeguarding. There are clear systems in place to record and track any concerns about pupils' well-being or safety. Effective induction processes ensure that all new staff know what actions to take to keep pupils safe.
- The school works effectively with other child-protection professionals. For example, the school has formed a positive relationship with the local adolescent and child mental health services. As a result, leaders are able to effectively support pupils' mental health needs.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They are confident that there is always a trusted adult they can talk to if they have a worry or concern. Additionally, parents say the school looks after their children well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Learning is typically planned well. Teachers use their strong knowledge of pupils' needs and abilities to pitch work appropriately. Teachers are adept at identifying any gaps in pupils' learning and put in place additional teaching to help them catch up.
- Staff forge positive relationships with pupils. They provide the support pupils need to make good progress across the curriculum. Pupils appreciate this greatly, and as a result, the trust between staff and pupils is strong.
- Pupils develop important skills, such as literacy and scientific understanding, effectively across the curriculum. Throughout the school, teachers plan learning that sparks pupils' interests and engages their creativity. Pupils respond enthusiastically to this approach and learn well as a result.
- Teachers choose good-quality reading books that help pupils to develop their literacy skills. Throughout the school, pupils read keenly with confidence and good expression.
- In art, pupils produce a range of good-quality work. Their impressive work is celebrated in displays both at school and at local galleries. Pupils are proud of their achievements and ensure that their portfolios are kept in the best order.
- Teachers do not consistently plan tasks that enable the most able pupils to make consistently good progress. Extension tasks typically require pupils to repeat some things that they can already do and offer insufficient challenge to enable pupils to deepen their learning.
- The teaching of mathematics is inconsistent across the school. Work in pupils' books is sometimes unfinished or underdeveloped because teachers' expectations in this subject are not as high as they should be. As a result, pupils do not currently make as much progress in mathematics as in other subjects.

Personal development and welfare

- Leaders successfully develop pupils' self-esteem. From the time they join the school to when they leave, pupils' well-being and confidence grow significantly. They take pride in their work, as shown in the quality of work in their books and in the well-kept displays around the school.
- Pupils are respectful and tolerant of each other's different views and backgrounds. As a result, incidents of derogatory language and racial discrimination are very rare. On the very few occasions that this does happen, staff challenge this behaviour quickly and effectively.
- During breaktimes, staff support pupils well to help them to develop their social skills. For example, they diligently encourage pupils to use good manners at mealtimes, including sitting down to eat. As a result, breaktimes and lunchtimes are mostly calm and orderly.
- Pupils settle in well when they join the school. The family liaison officer conducts initial meetings with pupils and their parents or carers at the family home. As a consequence, pupils' transition from mainstream settings to this school is generally smooth.
- The school aims for pupils to return to a mainstream school whenever possible. Bespoke plans are put in place to support individual pupils to help them with transition. For example, support staff accompany pupils when they return to school, to ensure that they have a settled start and therefore the best chance of success in their new schools.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. This is because staff are successful in promoting a calm atmosphere and courteous behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to make 'the right choices' and where they fail to do this, appropriate consequences are clearly and consistently applied. Staff use carefully thought-through strategies that encourage pupils' good conduct.
- Pupils across all key stages value the school's system to promote positive behaviour. They enjoy collecting 'reward stars' which help promote a 'can do' approach to all aspects of school. Pupils enjoy the additional responsibilities they are given and having the freedom to choose how to use their rewards by either 'spending' or 'saving' them.
- Leaders acknowledge that pupils' attendance is not yet high enough. Some pupils that join the school have a previous history of poor attendance. Leaders have taken a stringent approach to improving attendance and have recently introduced a number of new strategies. While these are beginning to have a positive impact, it is too soon to see the full impact of leaders' work to improve attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils are good. Across the school and in most subjects, pupils' progress is typically good due to effective teaching and support.
- Pupils make strong progress in a range of life skills and their communication skills improve rapidly. They learn to question in a purposeful, respectful and calm manner. Their progress is carefully tracked through well-planned reviews.
- In all year groups, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in reading and writing. Additional funding is used effectively to help pupils make good progress, and to catch up where necessary.
- Pupils in key stage 2 make consistently good progress. Positive relationships re-engage pupils into education and make learning enjoyable for them. Time is taken so that pupils can learn without the fear of failure.
- Secondary pupils make consistently good progress in English and science. However, the progress of older pupils in mathematics is not as strong.
- Pupils make rapid progress in art and food technology. They scope out their own projects and develop their design ideas, creating impressive products that are of a high standard.
- Year 11 pupils leave school with qualifications that are, in the main, suited to the level at which they are able to work. Most teachers recognise that high expectations are important and encourage pupils to access GCSE and vocational courses. As a result, most pupils move on to appropriate college courses to pursue further studies or post-16 training.
- However, some of the most able pupils do not make consistently good progress because some tasks offer insufficient stretch or challenge. This limits the progress that these pupils make.
- While progress in most subjects is good, there is more variability in older pupils' progress in maths. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in mathematics mean that pupils do not progress as well in this subject.

School details

Unique reference number	133744
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	10040896

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Maintained pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Grainne Andrews
Headteacher	Jackie Boxx
Telephone number	01983 300333
Website	www.Islandlearning.co.uk
Email address	ilcadminoffice@iow.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils who are unable to maintain a place at a mainstream school. Some pupils are dual-registered with a mainstream school. Most pupils in Years 10 and 11 remain at the school until the end of key stage 4.
- All pupils have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The school has some pupils that have education, health and care plans.
- The majority of pupils are supported by the pupil premium additional government funding.
- There is a second unit on the site that provides support for pupils who have medical needs, including pupils with high anxiety requirements.
- Some pupils access alternative providers in the local area. These are the Military Preparation and Training College, Workshop Initiative Supporting Education, Woodlearn, and the Isle of Wight Outdoor Adventure Activities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all areas of school. All observations were undertaken jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- The lead inspector looked at a sample of pupils' books with the headteacher. Both inspectors reviewed and discussed work with pupils during lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle leaders, teachers and support staff. A meeting was also held with key members of the school's management committee.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including leaders' evaluations of school performance, minutes from management committee meetings, school policies, safeguarding records, records of attendance and behaviour, pupil progress information and information on the school's website.
- The lead inspector held a phone call with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during break and lunchtimes as well as between lessons and in classes.
- Inspectors took account of the four responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents during the parents' event held during the inspection.

Inspection team

Gary Tostevin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Christine Bulmer

Ofsted Inspector

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