

INSPECTION REPORT

NINE ACRES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newport

LEA area: Isle of Wight

Unique reference number: 118164

Head teacher: Mrs Margaret Walding

Lead inspector: Mrs Joanna Pike

Dates of inspection: 13th - 16th June 2005

Inspection number: 267397

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	353
School address:	South View Newport Isle of Wight
Postcode:	PO30 1QP
Telephone number:	01983 522984
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss V Gwynn
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Nine Acres is an above average sized first school for boys and girls who are 4-9 years old. It has 353 pupils organised into 14 classes, with slightly more boys than girls. The school is situated in the middle of Newport, Isle of Wight, and draws most of its pupils from the local community, with 25% coming from further afield. It serves families from a range of social circumstances, but taken together these are below the national average, though the proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is about average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. Overall, pupils' attainment when they start school is lower than expected for their age. Six pupils, a below average number, have statements outlining more significant educational needs. The majority of special educational needs are for moderate learning or behavioural difficulties. Nearly all pupils are of white UK heritage. A small number are of other white, Asian, African, Chinese and mixed backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language (EAL). The school has received the following awards: Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools Award, Investors in People, Eco-schools Bronze Award, School's Achievement Award, Flying High Kite Mark for Early Years and was a Beacon School for four years. The school is a designated Extended School and provides before and after school care, as well as holiday activities for children. The school has partnerships with teacher training institutions.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
32367	Joanna Pike	Lead inspector	Science, art and design technology.
19798	Jane O'Keefe	Lay inspector	
3674	Grace Marriott	Team inspector	Mathematics, religious education, music and English as an additional language.
32529	Ann Duke	Team inspector	Provision for children in the Foundation Stage, Information and communication technology and physical education.
16084	Margaret Coussins	Team Inspector	English, geography, history, personal, social and health education and citizenship, special educational needs.

The inspection contractor was:

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	11
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, AND SUBJECTS	18
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Nine Acres is a successful school with some outstanding features. Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching. Leadership and management at all levels are good. The school strives to make learning an enjoyable and successful experience, through interesting lessons, exceptional relationships and excellent care. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science, and very well in music
- Pupils' spelling skills are below average because these are not taught consistently
- The quality of teaching is good overall, but weaknesses in some of the lessons seen resulted in the pupils not achieving well enough
- The positive atmosphere throughout the school supports pupils' personal development very well, and leads to excellent attitudes and very good behaviour
- Pupils benefit from the wide variety of enrichment activities
- The care and welfare of the pupils is excellent
- Outstanding links with the community, and a very good partnership with parents support pupils' learning very effectively

Since the school was last inspected in November 1998, improvement has been good. Above average standards have been sustained in English and mathematics, and in science standards have improved and are now above average. The school has improved provision in the reception classes, and as a result, gained the 'Flying High' kite mark award. Teaching assistants have undertaken extensive training and now make a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. More able pupils, including gifted and talented children, are well extended in lessons, and benefit from the very good enrichment opportunities. Progress with improving pupils' presentation skills has not been sufficient because pupils' spelling is below average and handwriting is not always neat enough.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	A	B	C	C
writing	A	B	B	B
mathematics	A	A	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Pupils' achievement is good. The children start reception with generally below average knowledge, skills and understanding. They all achieve well in mathematical, creative, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world, and very well in personal development. Achievement in reading and writing is satisfactory. As a result, almost all the children are on track to reach the standards expected by the time they join Year 1, and most will exceed expectations in their personal development. By the end of Year 4, pupils' achievement is good. By the end of Years 2 and 4, standards observed are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, science and history and all pupils achieve well. More able pupils are challenged effectively and reach higher levels. In Year 4 standards in music are well above average, and are above average in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils have very good speaking and listening skills, and the content of their written work is usually good, but spoiled by poor spelling and presentation. They have very good numeracy skills. Pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs, and from all backgrounds achieve equally well.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are fostered very well. As a result pupils have excellent attitudes to school and behave very well. They respond well to the opportunities to enjoy and succeed in their learning. Pupils are enthusiastic

and persevere when work is hard. Relationships are exceptional and this enhances pupils' personal development. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good.

Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons are interesting because teachers use a good range of activities and resources. Pupils have many opportunities to explain their ideas, which helps them develop well above average oral skills. This also helps pupils who have English as an additional language to progress well. Teaching assistants support pupils very well, especially those pupils with special educational needs. In some satisfactory lessons seen, however, teachers did not make the best use of time or challenge pupils as much as they could have done. Teachers assess work effectively in most lessons, and explain how well pupils are doing and what they can do to improve. The marking of written work, though regular and encouraging, does not always tell pupils how to improve.

The curriculum is good in the reception classes and Years 1 to 4. It is enriched by a wide range of activities both in and out of school. The accommodation is very good. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and the partnership with parents is very good. Links with the local community are outstanding. All these strengths contribute strongly to the all-round quality of the education provided.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The head teacher provides very good leadership and her partnership with the deputy headteacher is very strong. The aims that all pupils should enjoy and succeed in their learning are strongly supported by governors, staff and parents. Governance is good and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. Governors are very supportive of the school, but are also prepared to ask challenging questions about its performance. Management of the school is good. Key staff work well together as a team. They check on the quality of teaching and learning regularly but as yet, not all make effective use of this information to raise standards in their subjects. The school improvement plan does not fully reflect current school priorities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have very positive views of the school and the great majority feel that their children are doing well. Pupils are very proud of their school, and speak enthusiastically about things they have achieved.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The school already has considerable strengths on which to build. The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Improve the quality of the satisfactory teaching so that it is challenging and well organised to make best use of lesson time
- Teach spelling systematically to improve pupils' accuracy

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good. In the reception classes, the children achieve well because the curriculum is well planned and stimulating, and the teaching is effective. Almost all the children are on track to reach the standards expected by the time they join Year 1, and most will exceed expectations in their personal development.

Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 to 4, because good teaching makes the lessons interesting, and so the pupils are well motivated to learn. Standards in Years 2 and 4 are above average in English, mathematics, ICT and history. By Year 4, pupils reach well above standards in music.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get a good start to school in the reception classes
- Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum lead to above average standards in English, mathematics, ICT and history
- Pupils achieve very well in music because the teaching is very good, sometimes excellent
- Pupils' spelling skills are below average, which detracts from the quality of their writing
- Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language achieve well because of the good support they receive
- More able pupils achieve well because of the good opportunities they have to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills

Commentary

1. Children start school with skills that are below average overall, but they make good progress. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved the curriculum for reception children, gaining the 'Flying High' kite mark award for the very good daily opportunities it provides for independent play. These create a rich environment for learning and result in children exceeding the expected goals in personal and social development, preparing them very well for their future education. The children all achieve well in most other areas of learning. At the time of the inspection, most children were likely to reach the expected goals in mathematical, creative, physical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. However, only about half were likely to achieve the expected goal in writing, and about two thirds were likely to achieve the expected goal in reading. Achievement in these areas is satisfactory, but teaching is not as sharply focused on promoting the children's reading and writing skills as on other aspects of their development.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.0 (16.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	15.7 (15.5)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	17.3 (17.6)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. When compared to all schools nationally and to schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, results of the 2004 Year 2 national tests were average in reading, and above average in writing. They were well above average in mathematics, because pupils have well above average numeracy skills. Results in reading and writing had declined in 2003 and results in reading dropped slightly again in 2004, though writing improved a little. The school has taken appropriate action to address this decline, and indications are that results this year are likely to be above average in both reading and writing, reflecting the standards seen during the inspection. Although results have shown differences between boys' and girls' performance, no differences were seen during the inspection.

3. Standards in the current Year 2 are well above average for speaking and listening, and above average for reading, writing, ICT, history and music. In mathematics, standards are above average overall, with well above average numeracy skills, and average standards in other aspects. Standards in science, religious education, art and design, and design and technology are average.
4. In Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to make good progress and achieve well. In English, the good focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills results in very good achievement and standards that are well above expected levels. This is particularly beneficial to those pupils who speak English as an additional language and consequently, there is no difference in achievement between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. By Year 4, pupils reach above average standards in writing, but their spelling skills are below average because the school does not teach spelling systematically. Although the content of much of their written work is good, weaknesses in spelling detract from its overall quality. It also spoils pupils' presentation of their work, as does their handwriting, which is often untidy. In mathematics, standards are above average overall, and well above average in number work. In science, pupils benefit from the strong focus on practical work and reach above average standards. In music, the very good teaching and very good enrichment opportunities lead to very good achievement, with pupils reaching well above average standards. Standards in Year 4 are also above average in ICT and history. Standards in religious education, design and technology and art and design are average.
5. The school's own information shows that the progress of the current Year 4, particularly those in the middle range of attainment, dipped when they were in Year 3. This was mainly as a result of staffing difficulties beyond the control of the school. However, as in Years 1 and 2, the school has taken appropriate action and standards are improving. Achievement in Years 1 to 4 is good, as a result of the good teaching the pupils receive. Achievement of more able pupils is good, because they are challenged in most lessons, and benefit from the very good enrichment opportunities. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Adults working with them know their needs very well, and so they get the focused support they need to succeed in lessons and in small groups.
6. At the previous inspection, pupils' achievement was good overall, though in several subjects achievement was satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is now good in all subjects, except religious education, and very good in music, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection.
7. Despite its successes, the school is always looking for ways to improve pupils' achievement still further, and this is one of the reasons why it is such a good school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have excellent attitudes to school and behave very well. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths

- Pupils very much enjoy coming to school and show outstandingly positive attitudes to their work
- The pupils respond admirably to the school's high expectations by behaving very well in lessons and around the school
- The school provides lots of experiences that develop pupils' personal qualities very effectively

Commentary

8. The pupils are very proud of their school and show excellent attitudes to their work. Attendance is good. Staff work very hard to encourage good levels of attendance by monitoring any absences closely and promoting actively the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Parents are supportive of their children's education, and so most ensure that children arrive on time. The very positive environment for learning ensures that pupils enjoy coming to school and, as one stated in a recent questionnaire, "I like coming to school because I've got a lovely teacher and lots of friends". In lessons, pupils work extremely hard and are highly motivated and conscientious. In an excellent ICT lesson, Year 4 pupils enjoyed explaining their difficulties, and how persevering had helped them learn. Many hands go up when a question is asked. Pupils listen very well to teachers and each other, and will happily discuss their work with visitors. Behaviour is very good in lessons, around the school and at playtimes. Pupils play together well and those who may be feeling lonely are supported well by their peers through the use of the 'friendship benches'.

9. The school provides a very good range of activities at breaks and lunchtimes, which further supports pupils' personal and physical development. Bullying is not an issue in the school and pupils are confident that, should an incident occur, it will be dealt with quickly and appropriately. No pupils were excluded from the school during the past year. Pupils are articulate, friendly and courteous. They take a pride in the responsibilities given to them, such as being a member of the school council or organising charity fund-raising events. Relationships between pupils are excellent. Pupils were observed spontaneously applauding each others' successes in classrooms and actively supporting their classmates who have special educational needs. Pupils who have significant emotional and behavioural problems benefit from the high expectations and skilled support of the adults who work with them. The school has very effective strategies to help pupils learn how to modify their behaviour and work harmoniously within the classroom.
10. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual development is promoted very effectively through a range of subjects and in assemblies. Staff strive constantly to foster the self esteem of all pupils. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is outstanding. Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are constantly given very useful opportunities to discuss and consider moral issues in lessons, assemblies and *circle times. In lessons pupils show that they respect and care for the feelings and views of others, in the way that they listen and sensitively respond to each other. Pupils' cultural development is fostered very well through lessons that examine other beliefs and cultures. The contribution of different cultures is valued and celebrated well through displays of work and artefacts, information in different languages, and special events such as the celebration of Divali and the Chinese New Year or the recent music link with a school in Africa. As a consequence, pupils from ethnic minorities are very well-integrated into school life.

* Circle time is when pupils gather in a circle to discuss their thoughts and feelings

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

Attendance improved in 2004/5, but national figures are not available for comparison.

11. Improvement since the last inspection is good, with pupils' attitudes being outstanding. This is an important factor in supporting pupils' good achievement.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education for its pupils, with some outstanding features. Teaching is good overall, as is assessment. The curriculum is good and the care provided for pupils is exceptional. The school has a very good partnership with parents and other schools, and outstanding links with the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It was very good in about one third of the lessons seen. Good systems are in place for assessing pupils' developing knowledge and skills.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In all classes, teachers foster a real excitement about learning, which pupils share
- Relationships are very good and teaching assistants give very effective support for pupils' learning
- Adults use questions skilfully and encourage pupils to explain their ideas
- Pupils enjoy their lessons because teachers plan a good range of interesting activities
- Whilst teaching was never less than satisfactory, there were weaknesses in some of the lessons seen that slowed pupils' learning
- In the reception classes, the teaching of reading and writing is not always structured well enough

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 41 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (12%)	9 (22%)	14 (34%)	13 (32%)	0	0	0

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

12. Taken as a whole, the quality of teaching and learning is good, with a third of the lessons observed during the inspection being very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, which is an improvement since the previous inspection.
13. Reception children get off to a good start because of the good range of stimulating activities which teachers plan. The children really enjoy their learning and try hard. This means that in most areas of learning they achieve well. These positive attitudes are further fostered by the excellent relationships between teachers and children. Occasionally, although teachers plan appropriate activities, they do not always prompt or question children enough to move their learning on. In reading and writing teachers do not always sufficiently focus the activities on developing skills.
14. In Years 1 to 4, teachers continue to build on these strengths by creating a very positive atmosphere for learning in their classrooms. They also plan lively and varied activities. This leads to pupils being confident and keen to be actively involved. They behave and work well individually or in groups, concentrating hard on their tasks. In an excellent music lesson, Year 4 pupils achieved outstandingly well, managing to compose and perform from scratch, tunes with an Egyptian theme, because the teacher used a variety of activities to carefully build pupils' skills. Teachers use questions effectively to prompt thinking, and pupils' learning is well supported by these frequent opportunities to explain their answers. This also helps pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, and is especially effective in enabling pupils with English as an additional language to extend their understanding. Teachers are skilful at matching questions to pupils' abilities. In a Year 4 science lesson, a pupil with special educational needs answered the teacher's question by explaining that the spine was like a woodlouse with overlapping bones. Teachers make very effective use of the good resources, such as the interactive whiteboards (large computer screens), to give clear explanations or demonstrations. They often encourage pupils to do the same, which further enhances pupils' learning and self esteem. Teachers plan carefully so that pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils have appropriately challenging work.
15. Where teaching is very good or excellent, teachers use their good subject knowledge to build pupils' learning in small steps, at a fast pace, using a very good range of activities and resources. In an excellent Year 4 ICT lesson, pupils used a data handling program to enter their results from a

questionnaire on healthy living and decided which graph was the most suitable to present the results. The teacher kept the pupils working at speed, by moving them onto the next stage promptly. Pupils often explained or demonstrated their skills to the rest of the class and so, by the end of the lesson, all pupils gained a very good understanding in using the program.

16. Teachers make very effective use of teaching assistants both in supporting individuals or groups, and in assessing pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching assistants know the pupils very well and have good knowledge and understanding about how pupils learn. They use this adeptly in knowing when to help a child and when to encourage them to have a go on their own. Teaching and learning opportunities for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Individual education plans, which are written by class teachers, are clear and specific and appropriate for the targets set. Teachers and teaching assistants record and share evidence to show how well pupils are making progress towards reaching their targets. Teaching assistants provide very good support in lessons and while working with groups of pupils outside of the classroom. Teachers work well with teaching assistants to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language have support appropriate to their individual needs. The local authority adviser provides good guidance for staff on appropriate activities and teaching methods for these pupils, and specific support for individual children, as necessary.
17. Where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, teaching is not always organised well enough. Occasionally tasks are not challenging enough or the time available is not used well enough. In Years 1 to 4, teachers sometimes do not plan and organise their lessons thoroughly enough. In some of the lessons seen, teachers tried to cover too much, the pace was too fast, and pupils' learning was not focused sufficiently. In other lessons, teachers did not move pupils on quickly enough. In science and religious education, teachers sometimes did not have sufficient subject knowledge to build pupils' understanding.
18. Assessment is good. Teachers share with pupils what they will learn in lessons and, in the best practice, pupils often choose their particular target for the lesson. Teachers usually end lessons with pupils reflecting on what they have learnt, and how much progress they have made towards the lesson's targets. This helps pupils to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils have targets set half termly for literacy and numeracy, and these are shared with parents. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and give pupils good encouragement and praise. However, they do not always tell pupils how to improve. In science, teachers use good questions in their marking to prompt pupils' thinking, and pupils often respond well to these. Pupils' progress is closely tracked in English, mathematics and science, and the information is well used to identify pupils who need extra help. Tracking in other subjects is not as detailed.
19. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good. A wide range of activities outside lessons enriches the curriculum very well. Accommodation is very good and resources are good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and pupils' personal, social and health education is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and well resourced, which contributes to pupils' good achievement
- Too few links between subjects mean that pupils do not get enough opportunities to use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills
- Pupils' personal development is very effectively supported by the excellent personal, social and health education programme
- Many pupils, especially in Years 3 and 4, benefit from taking part in the varied activities on offer outside the school day
- The well designed accommodation and attractive grounds support learning very effectively

Commentary

20. The curriculum for children in the reception classes is well planned and provides a good range of activities that develop the children's skills effectively in all areas of their learning. Children benefit from the frequent opportunities for independent activities, which contribute well to their very good

personal development. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In reading and writing, however, the curriculum is not as well structured as in other areas, which means that the children do not always make as much progress as they could. In Years 1 to 4, the curriculum for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is good and pupils achieve well. English and science are planned effectively to ensure that pupils cover all aspects of the subjects and build their knowledge, skills and understanding well. In science, pupils' practical skills are built up progressively so that they reach well above average standards by Year 4. In mathematics, however, planning puts emphasis on learning number skills and so there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge about other aspects of mathematics. Also, pupils do not practise their mathematics skills in other subjects as often as they might. The development of pupils' skills in design and technology is well planned, with exciting enrichment opportunities. During the science/technology challenge day, pupils in Years 2 and 3 really enjoyed the very good opportunities to design and make constructions that moved. Music is very well resourced and planned. There are very good opportunities in many subjects to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, which are the basis of much of their learning. Teachers are beginning to link work in a number of subjects to provide relevant and interesting activities. This also gives pupils the opportunity to develop their skills in one subject through work in another, which helps them achieve well. At present, however, pupils have too few chances to develop their skills through work in other subjects, particularly mathematics and ICT.

21. Provision for personal, social and health education is promoted strongly throughout the school and is very effective in raising pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Part of the provision is through specific lessons, such as circle times, when pupils can discuss their feelings and views. A large part of the provision, however, is through assemblies and the day-to-day work of the school, in the way that adults relate to pupils, and the high expectations of pupils behaving well, taking on responsibilities and respecting each other.
22. The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs, and this gives them the confidence to achieve well. Individual education plans, which give details of the targets pupils are working towards, are well thought out and reviewed regularly. The school is committed to providing early, additional support for pupils, particularly in reading and writing, which helps to reduce the number of pupils with special educational needs. Teaching assistants are used very effectively and are very knowledgeable about the needs of individual pupils.
23. The school has put considerable effort into ensuring that the curriculum helps build pupils' understanding of cultural diversity. For example, this is seen in the work on different beliefs in religious education and in the use of multi-cultural instruments in music. Resources are good, with a range of artefacts, musical instruments from different cultures and dual language books in the library.
24. There are very good opportunities for pupils to take part in activities outside lessons, such as a variety of arts' and sports' clubs. The clubs are well attended, as are the before and after school learning sessions. These activities play a significant part in pupils' personal development and enrich their learning. An example is the mini-enterprise club where pupils, with an initial start-up fund from the local Rotary Club, used a range of numeracy, literacy, art, ICT and research skills to publish a calendar which celebrates festivals from different cultures. A wide range of visits and visitors to school, and community activities, enrich the curriculum for all ages. Participation in local projects, such as the Carisbrooke Collaborative Writing Project, extends learning effectively for more able pupils. Many pupils, particularly in Years 3 and 4, greatly benefit from taking part in musical activities, either learning instruments or performing at concerts.
25. The accommodation is very good. Recently completed building work, including new classrooms, an extended ICT suite, a new library and staff facilities has improved the accommodation, which is well kept, spacious and attractive. The places outside the classrooms are effectively used to enable small groups to work in pleasant surroundings. The outdoor space has been carefully planned to provide active and quiet areas, including an adventure playground which is used effectively to develop pupils' physical skills, and areas which pupils use for science activities. The school is well staffed, and teachers and teaching assistants work closely together in effective teams which supports pupils' learning effectively. Resources are good and contribute to making lessons interesting.

26. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes excellent care of its pupils. Arrangements for health and safety are very good. The use of good assessment procedures ensures that pupils are supported very well in their learning. Very good systems are in place for the induction of new pupils. The school council seeks and values pupils' views very effectively.

Main strengths

- Pupils thrive in the exceptionally caring environment and parents know their children are happy and safe in school
- The school has very efficient procedures for health and safety and good child protection procedures
- Staff know the pupils very well and monitor them closely to provide effective support when necessary
- Very good induction procedures mean pupils are well prepared when they start at the school

Commentary

27. The school has a very caring ethos within which pupils' welfare is of paramount importance. This ensures pupils' general well-being is fostered constantly, and is much appreciated by parents. Outstanding relationships exist between staff and pupils. Pupils know who to see if hurt or feeling unwell, and greatly value the care they receive from staff. Very efficient procedures are followed for dealing with and monitoring accidents and illness. The school is a very happy place, where each child is valued equally and pupils feel safe and secure. The careful use of circle times each week to monitor and log any personal concerns a pupil may have is particularly effective. The way in which the school provides support for families is excellent, and plays a particularly effective role in dealing with any attendance or child protection issue. In addition, all staff are fully trained in the necessary procedures to follow should there be a concern about an individual pupil's welfare. Comprehensive arrangements are in place for ensuring the health and safety of all in the school through a very thorough system of checks and risk assessments.
28. The school has good systems for monitoring pupils' academic progress. Teachers make very good use of the information they have about pupils' attainment to ensure pupils know the next step they need to make in their learning. The progress of children who have English as an additional language is monitored well, which ensures that children feel supported in their progress. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and cared for and their diverse needs are taken into account. Support is given to pupils with a range of needs beyond their academic progress.
29. Staff also get to know pupils well as individuals and monitor their personal development very effectively as they progress through the school, providing sensitive support to those experiencing difficulties. In the reception classes very good organisation ensures that the children experience a confident and happy start to school. Children are made very welcome by staff, who visit them at their pre-schools. They receive good opportunities to get to know the staff and the school before they arrive and, as a result, the children settle quickly into school life.
30. The school council is well established and helps develop the confidence of those pupils involved. Members of the council meet regularly to discuss suggestions and concerns and enjoy having their say, for example about which charity fund raising events will be taking place each term. Older pupils, however, have too few opportunities to enhance their personal development by taking more responsibility within the council. The school seeks pupils' views regularly through the use of questionnaires.
31. Improvement since the previous inspection is good, especially in the support now provided for families.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Parents are very happy with the care and education their children receive. Partnerships with parents are very good. The school has built up outstanding links with the local community and very good links with other schools.

Main strengths

- Parents are closely involved with the school and very interested in supporting their child's education
- Very good information is provided for parents
- The school is involved in many community events, such as the carnival, which contribute very well to pupils' personal development
- The very good links with local schools contribute strongly to improving pupils' achievement

Commentary

32. The staff have worked very hard to build up what are now very good partnerships with parents, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Parents receive very full information on general matters through regular, informative newsletters and daily, personal contact with staff.
33. The great majority of parents feel the school is approachable, although a few parents expressed a different view. The school's prospectus and governors' annual report are clearly written and meet all the legal requirements for their content. All parents attend the regular consultation meetings with teachers. Targets for improvement are set for pupils each half term, in full consultation with parents. The school ensures that parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept very well informed of the progress of their children. They have opportunities to speak with teachers or the school's special needs co-ordinators at parents' meetings. Staff are always available, however, and parents take advantage of the many other informal opportunities to discuss their children's progress. Regular homework is set and enables parents to support their children's learning at home. Annual reports are issued in the summer term. The quality of these was unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection, but now they are very effective in providing detailed information on work pupils have covered, progress made and suggestions of ways they could improve. The school listens carefully to parents and actively seeks their views through questionnaires.
34. Parents are very supportive of the school and its work, which is very much appreciated by staff. A hard-working group of parents regularly helps in classrooms, with swimming and on outings. The school's friends association (FONASA) plays an important role in the school by regularly organising fund-raising and social events. The hard-working committee is supported well by parents and members of the local community, helping to provide very useful funds for extra resources for the school. Practical help has also been provided by parents, such as enhancing the school grounds and through the *Dads' Band*, which plays at school events. The school's effective provision of the *Snowflakes* breakfast and after-school clubs has provided very good additional support for working parents, both from the school and local area. The school is now working closely with the charity *Families First* to re-establish, in the near future, its provision for family learning activities such as courses for adults on numeracy and literacy.
35. The school has excellent links with the local community. There is involvement in every curriculum area and this supports pupils' learning very strongly. Pupils take full part in local events such as the annual carnival where staff, governors and pupils' families are heavily involved with making costumes. Pupils frequently perform locally, taking part very successfully in music festivals as well as entertaining members of the local community such as the elderly. Very good relationships with the local parish include frequent visits from the pastor for assemblies. A very good arts' link, using two artists in residence, recently involved both parents and pupils in designing and making a screen for the local library. Many local organisations make use of the school's facilities outside school hours. Local businesses are very supportive of the school's fund-raising efforts and very good use of the local area is made for visits.
36. Very good links have been established with other schools in the area, in particular the middle school to which most pupils transfer. Curriculum links are strong and developing, with staff from local schools working together on numeracy and writing projects. The writing project has helped improve pupils' vocabulary and the content of what they write. Staff liaise very closely to ensure that

transition to each phase is handled successfully. A good range of sporting links have been established with other schools, for instance through the friendly football league set up between local primary schools. During the inspection, pupils took part in a country dancing afternoon with other schools. Students from local colleges and trainee teachers are welcomed into the school and are very well supported. Overall, this outward-looking approach has a positive effect on pupils' attainment as they progress through the school.

37. Overall improvement since the previous inspection is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are good. The leadership of the head teacher is very good. The leadership and management of subject co-ordinators are good. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head teacher has established a very clear direction for the school and this is strongly supported by governors, staff and parents
- The head teacher and deputy are very hardworking and constantly seek ways to improve the school further
- Governors have a strong role in planning for the future of the school
- Good systems are in place for monitoring the finances of the school
- The school improvement plan does not fully reflect current school priorities

Commentary

38. The head teacher provides very good leadership for staff and governors to fulfil the school's aim of providing a very good all-round education for each pupil. She is well supported by senior staff. The changes in the last two years to the senior management structure mean that the head teacher works with an effective larger team of senior staff who share her vision and direction and, with the governors have ensured that the school has not become complacent, but has continued to work to improve. The enlarging of the senior team has had the effect of strengthening the management of the school and is providing these staff with very good professional development. The head teacher's partnership with the deputy head is particularly strong, and their complementary skills in both teaching and management make them very good role models.
39. The school's self-evaluation is good and is used to identify key areas for improvement. For example, the senior staff recognised that standards were falling and have taken effective action to remedy this. Good systems for checking the quality of teaching and learning ensure that teaching continues to improve and that pupils make good progress. Most priorities for improvement are reflected in the school improvement plan, except for ICT which is a major priority, but not yet included in the plan. This makes it difficult for governors to monitor the effectiveness of action taken. Subject co-ordinators provide good advice, support and ideas for their colleagues. They monitor planning, observe teaching and scrutinise pupils' work to gain a good picture of standards. In the core subjects, particularly science, they are using this information effectively to raise pupils' achievement. In other subjects, this is a little more variable, but the leadership and management of music are very good.
40. Governors work hard to promote the interests of the school, and give very good support to the school in all that it does. It is well organised with committees that meet regularly and assiduous in fulfilling its responsibilities and ensuring that the school meets all statutory requirements. Governors are also particularly concerned to see that the provision for the extended school day, for which they are responsible, continues to be successful and to develop further. Governors are very supportive and proud of the school's success, but are also prepared to challenge at appropriate times. As a result of their regular visits and the briefings, governors are very aware of the strengths of the school in terms of providing for pupils' personal development, and of parental support and satisfaction. They show rather less understanding of the information they receive on the academic strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors have participated enthusiastically in training to improve their own skills. They have played a major role in the development of the school's new buildings and facilities, voluntarily undertaking a great deal of essential work which has ensured

high quality and a good match to the needs of the school. The governing body has a clear vision and a desire for full involvement in the future development of the school.

41. The staff are strongly committed to making sure that all pupils, whatever their needs or ability, can take part in all that the school has to offer. The leadership and management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. The special needs co-ordinators support their colleagues effectively, and work in classes on a regular basis to check on the progress of pupils, and on the quality of the teaching, and to give guidance to colleagues. Teachers have the responsibility for setting targets and assessing progress, and pupils' needs are identified as early as possible. Individual education plans are mainly for literacy and numeracy. Similarly, the provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is carefully managed and monitored to make sure that they make similar progress to other pupils. Good liaison over special educational needs and English as an additional language with other agencies caring for pupils, as well as the local education authority consultants, helps to promote good progress.
42. The provision for continuing staff training and development is good. The performance management programme is closely linked to school priorities, and staff have agreed common targets relating to assessment and the use of ICT across the curriculum. Staff have access to both school-based training and work undertaken with the local authority and universities. Support staff are included in professional training.
43. Financial planning and management are closely linked to whole-school priorities. Finances are well managed by the head teacher and governors. The day-to-day management of the budget is efficient and good systems ensure that expenditure is monitored regularly and appropriate action taken. Staffing and other resources are used efficiently for the benefit of pupils. Longer term financial management is made difficult because of the year-to-year variation in the size of the intake. The difference can be as much as a whole class. To cushion the effect of temporary changes and protect the overall quality of education, the school deliberately carries a higher than average surplus. The current surplus is also high as it includes money earmarked for equipment for the new buildings. Staff and governors are very clear about the need to achieve best value for money, and understand the link between the quality of goods and services and the impact upon standards. The school gives good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	939,107
Total expenditure	956,020
Expenditure per pupil	2,845

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	98,996
Balance carried forward to the next	82,083

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. Provision for children in the reception classes is good and has improved since the previous inspection. When children start school, their skills and knowledge are below average overall. They make good progress, in a nurturing and well organised environment. Teaching and learning are good. A wide range of interesting activities gives children many opportunities to explore and try out their own ideas. Good questioning by teachers and teaching assistants encourages children to think hard and consolidate their learning. However, children are sometimes not given enough structure to support their learning, particularly in literacy. Comprehensive assessment procedures ensure that staff have a detailed knowledge of every child's learning and, as a result, progress can be checked carefully. These are very thorough assessments, regularly shared with parents, and lead to targets made for the next steps of learning. This sets the tone for the school's very good links with parents. There are excellent relationships between staff and children. Within this encouraging and supportive environment, children settle happily into school life and grow in confidence as their learning increases. Children with special educational needs achieve as well as others. There were no children learning English as an additional language at the time of the inspection. Leadership and management are good. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good with spacious rooms and access to a well equipped outside area. The new facilities from September 2005 will further enhance children's learning as the outdoor play area will be adjacent to their classrooms.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is very good.

Main strengths

- Children achieve very well because of the good range of well planned activities
- Many opportunities are given for children to develop independence
- There are very good relationships between adults and children

Commentary

45. Children achieve very well in their personal and social development because classroom routines all promote very good learning of the skills of independence. By the end of the reception year, most children exceed the expected early learning goals. All children work productively and sensibly within the classroom environment. They experience a wide range of interesting activities and are confident to try these, with many children being eager to share their ideas with adults in the classroom. There are trusting relationships within the classroom and all adults respond encouragingly to children, praise their efforts and build a good ethos of respect and high self esteem. Children's behaviour is very good overall. They are usually attentive and concentrate well, responding to staff's high expectations. Children are becoming aware of the needs, views and feelings of others and can work well as part of a group or class. The school has very effectively addressed the weakness from the previous inspection in providing independent activities. The commitment to independent play has deservedly gained them the "Flying High" kite mark award. Children are now given a very good start in developing their personal and social skills and this forms a strong foundation for the very good achievement in this area throughout the school.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory overall.

Main strength and weakness

- Children's speaking and listening skills are developed well
- The teaching of reading and writing is not structured well enough to ensure that children achieve as well as they do in speaking and listening

Commentary

46. Children make good progress overall in their development of skills in communication, language and literacy. By the end of the reception year, standards of speaking and listening match expectations for children of this age. This is good achievement and reflects good teaching. Careful and probing

questioning by adults encourages children to articulate their ideas and listen to those of others. Standards in reading and writing are below those expected, although they show satisfactory progress from children's starting points when they enter school. The staff work very hard to develop the basic skills of reading and writing, but there are not enough structured teaching sessions to enable all children to make maximum progress in their learning. The whole-class, shared reading session seen was successful because it gave children opportunities to join in with the story and use their knowledge of letter sounds to identify the rhyming words. Small group reading was not always successful because children were not so interested in the books, their attention wandered and, therefore, their learning was limited. At the time of the inspection, standards in reading were higher than writing with about two thirds of children likely to reach the expected goals. About half were likely to reach the expected goals in writing. When writing, almost all children form recognisable letters. About a third of children write simple sentences with occasional use of full stops. Other children are still at quite an early stage of development. Although they are using writing to record and communicate and can correctly write some initial sounds, they need support to build up simple words phonetically and identify other common words.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is good.

Main strengths

- Good teaching promotes mathematical development through a wide range of activities
- Children learn to count confidently in a range of activities

Commentary

47. The children achieve well, with most reaching the expected early learning goals because of the good teaching they receive. They are given many opportunities to consolidate and extend their mathematical knowledge and understanding. They spontaneously demonstrate their good counting skills in a range of activities. The great majority of children count to 10 and many to 20. Some high ability children confidently use the language involved in adding and subtracting, and relate this to sub-dividing a group of 10 objects into its "pairs", for example 7 and 3 or 6 and 4. Over three-quarters of children are on track to attain the early learning goals in mathematical development at the end of the year. This is good achievement from a starting point where the great majority of children were below the expected standard on entry to the reception class. A lesson seen showed very good teaching and learning related to the properties of flat and 3D shapes. Children correctly remembered the names of the shapes and used vocabulary such as "faces" and "corners" when describing their properties.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is good overall.

Main strength and weakness

- Many interesting activities encourage children to explore and discover and this helps them learn well
- Teachers do not always question children enough and this lessens their learning

Commentary

48. Assessments at the beginning of the reception year show that most children have weaknesses in their knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the year, most children are on track to reach the expected learning goals. This represents good achievement. Teachers' good planning results in a wide range of interesting activities around a theme, for example 'the sea'. Children are excited and enthusiastic about what is provided, but occasionally they tend to be involved in the activities without necessarily learning from them. For example, some imaginative activities were provided involving finding treasure in sand using magnets or metal detectors. When children were playing with these independently, the play lacked focus. On the other hand, when a questioning adult supported play, making it clear what the children could be looking for and positively encouraging their investigations, much greater learning ensued. The best progress was seen when children worked in groups supported by an adult who could guide and extend their learning. Children are growing in confidence in their use of computers. Most follow instructions to access a

simple program and use the mouse quite confidently. No activities were seen in which children could develop a sense of time and place, but teachers' past planning shows that this is part of the curriculum.

Physical development

Provision in physical development is good.

Main strengths

- Children achieve well because of the good range of activities they experience daily
- Children learn to use a variety of tools safely

Commentary

49. Through a well planned variety of activities, children learn to use small and large equipment safely and sensibly. Most are near to achieving the expected standards for their age. Teachers provide frequent well planned opportunities for children to develop skills in handling small equipment, such as pencils and beads. As a result of this good teaching, children's skills of co-ordination are developing well. The outside area provides good opportunities for children to use larger equipment, and this makes a significant contribution to their physical development. Teachers use an effective balance of independent and teacher supported tasks. The new outside facilities planned for next year will provide more ways in which children can extend their physical development. The school hall is also used to develop children's movement and confidence in a large space, but children are not always given opportunities to explore and create for themselves.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is satisfactory.

Main strength and weakness

- Activities are well planned to cover all aspects of creative development
- Children are sometimes not challenged sufficiently

Commentary

50. During the inspection, children participated in a range of creative activities which linked well to the week's theme of 'the sea'. Some children enjoyed printing with a variety of objects in sea colours. Others were using material and tools to design and make things. Regular use was made of the 'pirates' corner' for creative play. Children particularly enjoyed this activity. A good range of percussion instruments was available for children to make sounds of the sea. An effective initial input from the teacher resulted in pupils investigating confidently and identifying what sort of water sound the instruments made. Overall most children are likely to reach the early learning goals, and this is good achievement since they started in reception. Occasionally their imaginative creativity and response in the art, design and music work was not extended by the teacher and this lessened their learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 2 and 4, standards are above average and pupils achieve well
- Good teaching develops pupils' speaking and listening skills very well
- The pupils have good opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects, but the purpose and audience for writing are not always clear
- Spelling skills are below average and the presentation of work is not good enough
- Teachers use marking effectively to let pupils know how they can improve their work
- Teaching assistants provide very good support and their work helps pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, to achieve well

Commentary

51. When children start school, their abilities in language are lower than expected for their age. Inspection evidence shows that, by the end of Year 2 and Year 4, standards are well above average for speaking and listening and above average for reading and writing, indicating good achievement during pupils' time in the school. Achievement is very good in some lessons, particularly in Year 4, where teaching is very good or better. Boys and girls achieve equally well in lessons, as do pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language. Current standards show improvement since the 2004 national test results because effective action has been taken to deal with weaknesses. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good in many of the areas identified as needing attention, but the presentation of pupils' writing still needs further improvement. Pupils' very good attitudes and excellent relationships with each other and their teachers help them achieve well in English.
52. Results of the 2004 Year 2 national tests were average in reading and above average in writing, even though a significantly lower proportion of pupils reached the higher Level 3 in writing than was the case nationally. The unconfirmed results for 2005 indicate an improvement in standards, particularly in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in writing. However, the majority of pupils achieving this level are girls. The staff are aware of the need to investigate the reasons for this further as, during the inspection, no difference was seen between the achievement of boys and girls.
53. Speaking and listening skills are developed very well and are the basis of pupils' success in English. Good speaking and listening skills are evident in lessons in other subjects, and in pupils' ability and obvious pleasure to converse with adults and each other outside of lessons. Class discussions provide many stimulating opportunities for sharing and developing ideas and understanding.
54. Good achievement in reading is due to the very good support given to pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. The early identification and support given to pupils who are making slower progress than usual in the initial stages of learning to read are very effective. Pupils have many opportunities to read to adults, which gives them confidence and helps develop their enjoyment of the good range of fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils have good opportunities to browse and choose from classroom collections and from the well-stocked school library. Research skills using reference material, thesauri and other sources are developed well. Sometimes, opportunities are missed to use good reading resources as models for writing, and so pupils are not always able to use their good knowledge of authors' differing styles and techniques to enrich their own writing.
55. Aspects of pupils' writing have improved over the last two years because of the priority given by the school to raising standards. Targets are set and pupils are involved in evaluating their work. By Year 4, they express their ideas clearly, use a good range of vocabulary and punctuate and organise their writing well because teachers focus well on developing these skills. Pupils use dictionaries and thesauri effectively to improve their written vocabulary. They have a good grasp of metaphors, similes and synonyms and understand that, when appropriate, their use can improve their writing. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils enjoyed learning about similes, and one pupil explained, 'they make your writing more interesting'. Year 4 pupils start sentences using interesting words such as

'furthermore', and 'without a doubt'. A weaker aspect is the presentation of pupils' work, as too much work is accepted which is untidy and poorly presented. Standards in spelling are below average. Although pupils learn individual words to use in their writing, their knowledge and understanding of letter patterns is not secure enough to make informed attempts at spelling unfamiliar words, and so much of their spelling is inaccurate. Pupils also make frequent careless spelling errors, including words copied from books or the white board.

56. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning, which help them achieve well. Planning is thorough and lesson objectives are clear. The organisation of pupils into ability groups for English helps teachers provide well-matched work for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able. The quality of the teaching of reading skills in reading sessions is inconsistent. There are examples of excellent teaching, but some of these sessions lack a clear focus and, as a result, some pupils do not make as much progress as they might in learning how to read unfamiliar words or developing their understanding of texts. Lessons that were very effective were characterised by fast pace, good use of time, including tight deadlines, and teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm which motivated the pupils very effectively. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils achieved very well in writing because the teacher used her very good subject knowledge to build learning in small steps, using lively activities. In a few lessons, time was not used efficiently, pupils had limited time to work on tasks and, as a result, did not achieve as much as expected. All teachers use the agreed school marking policy, which helps pupils know how they can improve their work, and pupils make considered and sensible comments on their own achievements. All pupils have half-termly targets, which help them focus on their next learning step.
57. Leadership and management are good. The recent drive to improve reading and writing has been managed effectively and successfully. Staff training, target setting and increased opportunities for writing across curriculum have improved standards and achievement. The work of teaching assistants is well managed and their impact, particularly on pupils' skills in reading, is substantial.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. Reading, writing, speaking and listening develop well across the curriculum. Pupils' very good attitudes mean that they are attentive and well motivated; they listen carefully and contribute readily to discussions. Speaking and listening opportunities are evident in most subjects, particularly through sessions at the end of lessons where pupils recall and share what they have learnt and when teachers give time for talking to partners and group discussions. Opportunities have improved recently for pupils to use and develop their writing skills in other subjects, writing accounts of visits for history and reports of experiments in science. However, pupils' work often has spelling errors and in some cases untidy handwriting. The written work in these subjects is not helping pupils to improve their spelling and presentational skills as much as it should.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 4, standards are well above average in number work and pupils achieve very well
- Mathematics teaching is good overall and some is excellent
- Pupils enjoy mathematics because the activities are presented in an interesting way
- Standards in shape, space and data handling are average and pupils are not achieving as well as they do in number work
- Marking is regular and encouraging, but some of it is not giving pupils enough guidance on how to improve
- Pupils' presentation of their work is not good enough

Commentary

59. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are achieving well. Results in the 2004 Year 2 national tests were well above average in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or better. Current standards are above average overall and well above average in numeracy. Pupils show a very good understanding of number and use a range of strategies to calculate mentally and on paper. They add and subtract two digit numbers and know the two, five and ten times tables. More able pupils are also confident in multiplying using the four and six times tables, and subtracting three digit

numbers to 1000 and multiplying and dividing two digit numbers. In Year 2, pupils grasp new ideas quickly. For example they know it is easier to add 9 to a number by adding 10 and subtracting one. They have little difficulty in applying a similar method to subtracting nine from a number. Pupils generally apply their knowledge well to questions, though occasionally they make careless mistakes in calculation, so that their final answer is not always accurate, even though they fully understand the method and the principle. Pupils have fewer opportunities to develop their knowledge of other aspects of mathematics and their work on shape and space is broadly average.

60. By Year 4, pupils are still achieving well overall, and very well in numeracy, though the standard of a few pupils has been affected by the staffing difficulties. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 build well on the knowledge and understanding gained in the earlier classes. They have increased the strategies they use to calculate mentally and using paper and pencil methods, and are clear about the need to check work carefully through using inverse operations. Many pupils do this routinely and do not need to be reminded. Their understanding of place value is secure. However, as in Years 1 and 2, they have relatively few opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in shape and space or in handling data.
61. Teaching is good overall and some lessons were excellent. In the best lessons, teachers made very good use of questions both to challenge pupils and ensure that they understood what they were doing. Pupils were encouraged to ask questions and these questions were taken seriously. They responded well to this and were not afraid to take risks or make mistakes. In most lessons, teachers motivate pupils successfully by presenting the work in a lively and interesting way, with the result that pupils enjoy mathematics. Year 2 pupils were challenged to extend the application of the mathematical principle they had learnt to larger numbers and, in Year 1, pupils were keen to try to make more complex two dimensional shapes. Year 4 pupils responded well to some difficult work on multiplying two and three digit numbers. In all classes pupils were being taught to use the correct mathematical language, which they did well orally, though their written work revealed a shaky grasp of spelling and in general was not neat or careful enough. Teachers and pupils are also making increasing use of computers, though they are aware that this needs to be developed further.
62. The relative weaknesses in teaching relate to making sure that the work is well-matched to the needs of the pupils, and to marking. Occasionally the planning somewhat under or over estimated, what pupils would achieve and in one or two lessons a long time was spent on oral work. This left relatively little time for pupils to practise individually what they had learnt. Sometimes the whole-class sessions at the end of lessons were a little rushed because the teacher tried to pack too much into the lesson. The quality of teachers' marking is good overall, but some is not as helpful to pupils as it could be. Comments tended to be along the lines of "We'll do more practice on this" without indicating exactly what the pupils needed to do, whereas the best marking was very specific about the action needed, for example "Don't forget to add the ten you carried". All teachers encourage pupils to assess their own work honestly, and pupils find this helpful.
63. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The head teacher has taken over responsibility temporarily until a permanent subject co-ordinator joins the staff. The systems and procedures which have been put in place have enabled the school to manage a difficult staffing situation with relatively little effect on most classes. The head teacher is very aware of the classes which have been affected and has taken appropriate action. Pupils' work and teachers' planning are monitored and the information gained from this has helped in the drafting of a subject action plan. Standards have been maintained at a high level since the previous inspection and the improvement since then is satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. The opportunities for pupils to use mathematics across the curriculum are sound and, when required to do so, pupils use their good knowledge and skills effectively. For example, they analyse and collect a range of data and produce graphs in ICT and geography. However many opportunities are missed for pupils to practise their skills in other subjects, such as using graphs to present and analyse data in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 4, pupils' practical skills are well above average because teachers plan effective investigations
- Teachers lack confidence about some aspects of science, and this lessens their ability to extend pupils' learning
- Pupils enjoy science and work hard because lessons use a variety of interesting activities
- Pupils have plenty of good opportunities to explain their ideas and this helps them to build up their understanding

Commentary

65. Standards seen in lessons and in the work in pupils' books are above average by Year 2 and Year 4. This matches the teachers' assessments for Year 2 at the end of 2004. Pupils' practical skills are well above average by Year 4 because teachers develop these systematically through frequent well-structured experiments. All pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. More able pupils are effectively extended, especially through their report writing, and special events such as 'the challenge day'. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
66. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers plan lively and interesting activities, which pupils really enjoy, and as a result, they work hard. Teachers develop pupils' self esteem, so they respond confidently, and concentrate for long periods of time. Overall, pupils' thinking is constantly challenged by teachers' skilful questioning, and the frequent opportunities to explain their ideas both orally and in writing. Pupils benefit from these frequent opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills, and most pupils are very articulate. Where teachers do not have good knowledge themselves, they do not always pick up pupils' misunderstandings or give good explanations and this slows pupils' learning. Teachers make clear to pupils what they will learn. Often pupils set themselves a lesson target. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils set themselves targets about the human skeleton, and this helped them to recognise what they had learnt by the end of the lesson. Sometimes teachers try to pack too much into lessons or activities go on too long and this lessens learning. Pupils' work is often spoilt by careless spelling errors, and occasionally by untidy presentation. Pupils' books are regularly marked and teachers' comments are effective in suggesting points to improve. Pupils frequently respond to teachers' comments. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
67. Leadership and management are good. The schemes of work are well focused on developing pupils' practical skills, alongside their scientific knowledge and understanding. Very good use is made of the school's grounds for practical work. Regular checks are made of the quality of teaching and learning which helps further improvements to be made, though this is not always rigorous enough. Pupils extend their literacy skills well because their written work often uses new learning from their literacy lessons. However, pupils' spelling skills are not well supported because careless errors are frequently made, even with key words. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use numeracy or computers to present their results or to analyse data. Improvement since the previous inspection is good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for ICT is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 4 because pupils have benefited from the significant improvement in resources and staff training
- Pupils are enthusiastic about learning new skills and they apply these to other areas of the curriculum
- Teachers' comprehensive planning results in pupils achieving well
- The subject is led and managed well and improvement since the previous inspection has been good
- Assessment and target setting are not yet used consistently to support pupils' learning

Commentary

68. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and above expectations by the end of Year 4. Year 2 pupils log on, retrieve their work, make amendments and save them. In Year 4, pupils use the PowerPoint program confidently, use word processing for a variety of tasks, enter data into a database and select the appropriate graph to display their survey results. Achievement of all pupils is good. Those with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and more able pupils are extended well.
69. Good teaching and learning has resulted in pupils' good achievement. Teachers make good use of the ICT suite and pupils are comfortable and confident using the computers for a range of purposes. During the inspection, older pupils were seen making excellent progress using a data handling programme to create a range of different charts. The high standard of teaching resulted in a stimulating lesson in which all pupils were engrossed in their work, enthusiastic about the skills they were able to demonstrate and keen to take on further challenges. Very good learning resulted in all pupils being able to question, collect and present data in a variety of forms, and articulate their opinions clearly about the quality of information presented in the charts. Teachers have created a positive atmosphere for learning and provide good support and challenge. As a result, relationships were very good in all classes.
70. More able pupils in the older classes were keen to show their good skills in using text, graphics and animation to produce a Power Point presentation on Newport churches, as part of their geography and history work. Other pupils effectively demonstrated their confident use of Digiblu equipment to take photographs and short video clips. They could download images very swiftly onto their laptop and manipulate these for a variety of purposes. In a very good lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher's well planned links to previous science work resulted in an involved and enthusiastic response from pupils in their work using a Paint programme to create pictures of a variety of habitats. They worked sensibly in pairs, co-operating well and extending each others' learning. At a brisk pace, they showed their competence in logging on, accessing their files and using the magnifying glass tool to add details to their pictures. Pupils were confident in trying out their ideas and were well challenged to modify and correct their work. Teaching assistants were used well in all year groups to support and encourage pupils, including those with special educational needs.
71. Leadership is good, with a clear vision of future developments to enhance the school's ICT provision. The school has had a clear focus on increasing its use as a learning tool for pupils by raising whole staff confidence in ICT and updating and improving the resources throughout the school. This development work is a significant factor in the good improvement of ICT provision since the previous inspection. The curriculum is well planned to progressively develop pupils' skills and to give them an increasing number of opportunities to use these skills effectively in other subjects.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. There are some effective and exciting links with other areas of learning, Pupils in all year groups use word processing programmes for their creative writing. Some older pupils have competently produced a school newspaper called the Nine Acres Express. Years 3 and 4 use ICT in science, history, design technology and art. Younger children also use graphics programs, art programs and data handling packages as part of their design technology, science and mathematics work. The school recognises the need to extend further the use of ICT across other subjects.

HUMANITIES

73. Provision is judged in history and religious education, but not judged in geography, as it was not possible to see enough lessons. Samples of pupils' work were evaluated and inspectors spoke to staff and pupils.
74. It is not possible to make overall judgements in **geography** as only one lesson was observed. However, work in pupils' books indicates that standards are as expected for their ages. Pupils' geographical skills are being progressively developed. Year 2 pupils locate places on a map of Great Britain and understand that it takes longer to travel to more distant locations. They do this by enthusiastically following the travels of Barnaby Bear. In Year 3, pupils understand there are different climates in countries around the world. In the lesson seen, Year 3 pupils used their own experience of travel to indicate temperatures on maps, and good use was made of ICT to gather and record information. They had a good knowledge of different climatic regions and good understanding that countries nearer the equator had higher temperatures. Year 4 pupils developed mapping skills further following a trip to Yarmouth. Geography work is linked well to topic work, and contributes well to learning in other subjects, including ICT, numeracy and literacy. The Year 3 geography work was effectively linked to an English lesson where more able pupils achieved very well because of the demands of a challenging text. Year 4 pupils identified and categorised buildings in Yarmouth and presented their evidence on graphs and used grids in an investigation into noise pollution, which also helped them apply their numeracy skills. The local area is used well to support pupils' learning and develop their enquiry skills. Leadership and management are good. There has not yet been the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning through observation of lessons, but there is a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses and areas for development.

History

Provision in history is good.

Main strengths

- By Year 2 and Year 4, Standards are above average
- Teaching is good, which enables all groups of pupils to achieve well
- The curriculum is enriched by worthwhile visits and a good range of resources
- There are good links between history and other subjects

Commentary

75. Standards in history are above those expected for pupils' ages and they achieve well. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were average by the end of Year 2.
76. By Year 2, the pupils have a good understanding of the order in which events take place and how things change over time. In a very good lesson, pupils in Year 1 placed their family members on a time line in correct order of age. Work in Year 2 showed how pupils understood the passage of time by looking at the clothes people wore to the seaside in the past compared to clothes worn today. Pupils have a good knowledge of some famous people from the past, including Samuel Pepys and Florence Nightingale. They are familiar with some famous events in British history, such as the Great Fire of London, and produced good quality booklets on this topic.
77. By Year 4, pupils are skilled in using a variety of historical sources to find out about the past. For example, pupils used artefacts on the British Museum website to help them find answers to questions relating to the Anglo-Saxons. Pupils have a good knowledge of key dates, periods and events in British history as seen in a Year 4 lesson where they explored the impact of the Anglo-Saxon arrival in Britain and understood that different groups interpret events in different ways.
78. Teaching is good and this is a significant factor in stimulating the pupils' enthusiasm for history and in their good achievement. Teachers ensure that all groups of pupils are fully included in learning. Teachers have a good command of the subject and motivate and challenge through good questioning and interesting activities, which sustain pupils' interest levels. A good example of this was in a Year 4 lesson when the teacher introduced role-play, props and costumes and the lesson provided good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills as they questioned each other.

79. Pupils make very effective use of their literacy and ICT skills to record their learning in a variety of ways, for example in letters written as evacuees or wounded soldiers nursed by Florence Nightingale. Pupils design storyboards to plot and sequence the story of Boudicca, write reports on Roman Gods, reports of visits and informative captions for artefacts. Pupils in Year 4 made *PowerPoint* presentations of their findings from a mock archaeological dig in the school field and used a digital camera to record photographic evidence of their work. A local carnival with an Egyptian theme provides good opportunities to link work in history, with art and music.
80. Good use is made of the local area, for example visits to Carisbrooke Castle, a Roman Villa and Osborne House. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their work and what they have learnt and the well-planned programme of visits and visitors to school enhances their learning and involves the community. Leadership and management of the subject are good and plans are clearly focused on improvement showing a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By Year 4, Pupils have generally good knowledge of the main beliefs of different religions
- Work in books does not always reflect the quality of discussion in lessons
- Resources are used very well to help pupils learn

Commentary

81. Standards are average overall and meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils in all year groups have good knowledge of the main Christian beliefs and festivals, at a level appropriate to their maturity. They are also knowledgeable about Judaism and Islam which helps to develop their knowledge of other cultures. The displays in classrooms show good work including some good research and, in lessons, pupils discuss the features of different religions sensibly. However, the work in pupils' books is not of the same quality. The presentation is not as good as it could be and it does not reflect the level of knowledge that they show in discussion. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
82. The teaching is satisfactory overall with some that is very good. Teachers plan carefully and ensure that all the key information is presented in an interesting way. They make very good use of a range of resources. For example, in a lesson on Islam, the prayer mat and the recording of the call to prayer helped pupils to learn what Muslims believe. Teachers and pupils also have access to a good range of books in the school library. Sometimes teachers under-estimate what pupils can achieve in the time available. In contrast, in a lesson on Judaism, the pace was very brisk and pupils completed a great deal of research on synagogues. In general, the lessons and pupils' work showed that teaching tends to concentrate on developing pupils' knowledge of different religions, with a lesser emphasis on their understanding of why many people and societies consider that religious beliefs are important and their own response to spiritual and moral issues.
83. The leadership of religious education is good and the management is satisfactory. Staff receive sound guidance on subject content, teaching approaches and available resources all based on the locally agreed syllabus. Teaching, learning and standards are checked and this has included some observation of lessons as well as regular scrutiny of work, but the lesson observation is not as rigorous as it could be. The improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

84. Provision is only judged in music, as it was not possible to see any lessons in art and design and design and technology during the inspection, and only a few lessons in physical education. For art and design and design and technology, inspectors looked at pupils' work on display and talked to staff.
85. From looking at displays of pupils' work, standards in **art and design** are in line with national expectations. Achievement is good. Pupils experience a wide range of media, with good links to the work of artists and other cultures. Art contributes well to pupils' cultural development. Art is also linked well with other subjects. Year 2 pupils had observed and drawn a habitat accurately as part of their science work. Year 3 had created clay sculptures in the style of Henry Moore, successfully

capturing the flowing forms of Moore's figures. Year 4 pupils have developed accurate observational drawing skills which they use in a variety of activities in other subjects, such as history. Pupils in Years 3 to 4 benefit from the good enrichment opportunities of the art club, and are enjoying preparing to exhibit in a local gallery. The subject is well managed, with good planning in place. Leadership is satisfactory. Future developments are not fully focused on raising standards.

86. From looking at samples of pupils' work, standards in **design and technology** are in line with national expectations, and pupils achieve well. Pupils benefit from the many, varied opportunities to develop their designing and making skills, and to evaluate the things they make. These activities are well linked to other subjects, and this lends a real purpose which aids learning. They enjoy design and technology. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 could hardly contain their excitement during their science-technology days. More able pupils are well provided for by special events such as 'the challenge day'. The subject is well led with very good schemes of work which ensures a consistent approach across the school.
87. Only two lessons were observed in **physical education**, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement of provision, as the full range of the curriculum was not seen. In both lessons, pupils were achieving standards that are expected for their age. Pupils in Year 1 recognised how their body responds to exercise and demonstrated that they could move confidently and safely in their own and general space, using changes of speed, level and direction. In a well planned lesson in Year 3, good links were made to pupils' previous learning about light and shadows. They responded to a poem about shadows by selecting and applying appropriate actions to compose a dance to music. Leadership and management of the subject are good with a clear action plan which meets the improvement needs of the school in physical education. Currently the school is benefiting from taking a very active part in a training scheme with local partnership schools. There is a good scheme of work to ensure pupils' progression of skills and half-termly assessments are made. Teaching and learning are checked through lesson observations, and there is a clear understanding of staff training needs. Links with the community are very good and pupils have the opportunity to receive coaching in a wide variety of sports. Pupils' efforts and success in sporting achievements are regularly applauded in assemblies, and this ethos is a strong contribution to pupils' motivation for learning.

Music

Provision in music is very good.

Main strengths

- Standards are well above average in Year 4 and pupils achieve very well
- The standard of singing is very good
- Teaching is very good and some is excellent
- Music makes a very strong contribution to pupils' personal development and to the school ethos

Commentary

88. Standards in music are above average in Years 1 and 2, and well above average by Year 4. Pupils sing tunefully and with good attention to tone, pitch and dynamics. This was very evident in the singing in assemblies and in the rehearsal for the school concert with Years 3 and 4. Pupils were confidently able to sustain a three part round and the prize-winning choral group were particularly impressive. In the class music lessons, pupils were enthusiastic and keen to participate, but showed considerable self-discipline in handling instruments and taking turns. In Year 1, they listened carefully to instructions and kept a good two-part rhythm going using percussion instruments and clapping. Year 4 pupils were similarly very keen to use their percussion skills and general musical knowledge and demonstrated how effectively they could apply these to new work. Pupils are achieving well in Years 1 and 2, and very well in Years 3 and 4.
89. Music teaching is very good overall and some is excellent. The lessons are very well planned and move at a brisk pace so that the pupils achieve a great deal. In an excellent Year 4 lesson, the teacher and pupils worked exceptionally well together to create, from scratch, a composition on an Egyptian theme using percussion and recorders, all in the space of a 60 minute lesson. Together they developed six different rhythmical phrases based on Egyptian words and chose appropriate

notes on the pentatonic scale using C major. These were then combined to create a composition which the pupils performed following the conductor's direction.

90. Music makes a very significant contribution to the spiritual, moral social and cultural development of pupils. Pupils have many opportunities to take part in a range of musical activities and many take advantage of this. Recorder, strings, brass and guitar tuition are all available and a group of children were also enthusiastically learning the tambourine and could perform a number of routines. The choral group is open to anyone to attend. The high spot of the year is clearly the summer term concert performed at a professional theatre. This involves every pupil in Years 3 and 4 and is much appreciated by pupils, parents, governors and staff.
91. The leadership and management of music are very good. The guidance on lesson planning is very helpful and staff are given support appropriate to their needs. Lessons are observed and staff are also encouraged to work with more experienced teachers to develop their own skills. The school is well resourced with a range of instruments which include good provision for developing multi-cultural understanding. The improvement since the previous inspection has been good, standards are higher and the opportunities for pupils to perform have been increased.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

92. Only one lesson was observed, but inspectors spoke to pupils and staff as well as looking at pupils' work. It was clear that, overall, the provision is excellent and has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes, achievement and preparation for their future lives. Many features relating to this aspect of the school's work are included throughout the report. The school's very good commitment to personal development enhances pupils' self-confidence. Pupils have opportunities to receive sex and drugs education and develop their understanding about relationships. When pupils sit in a circle and discuss things (*Circle Time*) and through the whole curriculum, pupils listen to the views of others and express their own ideas and views with growing clarity and sensitivity. The school has an award for being a healthy school which means that it works hard to educate pupils about a healthy lifestyle, through special events, specific curriculum provision, including science and PE, and a daily emphasis on healthy eating. Pupils' views are also successfully represented through a school council. This area has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	1
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the head teacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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