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BRIGHT NEW IMAGE FOR SCHOOL

By a County Press reporter

Wednesday, October 23, 2002

By Jon Moreno LOVE LANE Primary School in Cowes believes it has shed a shabby image in favour of a zesty 21st century look - with the added aim of forging greater maritime links with the town.

Boasting six new classrooms, a library, computer suite and extensive refurbishment at a cost of around £500,000, the school re-launched itself last week.

IW Council vice-chairman Cllr John Bowker officially re-opened the school at a special assembly, when he spoke to the school's 150-pupil complement about the importance of Love Lane's community links and its future.

Each classroom - bearing nautical names such as starfish, dolphin, seahorse, shark and turtle - is linked to the IT suite.

The classrooms will each have a pair of PCs to help improve the students' learning capabilities during lessons.

The Island Cable Wight Byte Suite, named in recognition of reduced-cost work by IW Cable and Wight Bytes Computers, is kitted out with 14 computers, each connected to the internet.

The school now aims to link with other schools from around the globe.

The library, which has had around £9,000 pumped into improving it, will be available to children and adults as part of the school's commitment to improving its relationship with the Cowes community.

Before, the school had used the hallways to store books.

Love Lane is seeking sponsorship from local firms to help fund a £2,000 library scanning system which allows books to be checked in and out using the cardholder's thumb.

The rest of the classrooms and school areas have been extensively refurbished with striking marine colours.

Headteacher Alex Thorp, who took over the post a year ago, said the school was a far cry from how it used to be.

She said: "It looks brilliant now. The children had performed so well in shabby conditions before.

"They are being given deserved credit to reflect their efforts - the new facilities are a world apart."

Cowes mayor Cllr Geoff Banks also visited the school to meet staff and pupils later that day.

Love Lane is now hoping to persuade round-the-world yachtswoman Ellen MacArthur to visit the school as part of its commitment to developing stronger links with the town's maritime traditions.



Cllr John Bowker with Daniel Hazell, five, and Emily Seaman, seven, in the new Love Lane Primary School computer suite. Back, from left, are partners of Wight Byte Ian Luff and Graham Tutton, and director of Wight 365 Ltd, Carl Crawley.