

The British Forces School, Naples

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132370
Local authority	Service Children's Education
Inspection number	363562
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2011
Reporting inspector	John Rutherford HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Ministry of Defence
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	Service Children's Education
Chair of School Governance Committee	Lt Col Tom Blythe
Headteacher	Hazel Jones
Date of previous school inspection	28 March 2006
School address	HQ AF South Naples BFPO 8
Telephone number	0039-081-839-55111
Email address	sce.naples@scschools.com

Age group	3–11
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St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in seven lessons taught by five teachers. They held meetings with school leaders, groups of pupils and the chair of the school governance committee. The lead inspector carried out a telephone discussion with the school's link inspector/adviser. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress and a range of management documents, including policies and records for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils. They analysed completed questionnaires from 38 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of all groups of pupils, especially in writing.
- The use of assessment to accelerate the progress of pupils in lessons.
- The extent to which the broader curriculum contributes to the development of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- The contribution of the recently formed senior leadership team to improving the quality of provision and pupils' outcomes.

Information about the school

BFS Naples is the only school administered by Service Children's Education in Italy. It is smaller than most primary schools and the number on roll changes frequently as many pupils join or leave throughout the year. Almost all of the pupils have a parent in military service. Over half of the parents and carers serve in the Royal Navy while most of the remainder serve in the Royal Air Force or the Army. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. A very small number of pupils are from a minority ethnic background.

The school has recently undergone a period of considerable change. The headteacher has only been in post since September 2010 and she replaced a temporary headteacher who led the school for two terms. Around half of the teaching staff changed shortly before the headteacher started. Within the last month, the school has moved into new accommodation from a building that was in poor condition.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

BFS Naples provides a good quality of education. The majority of pupils make good progress, whether they start in Early Years Foundation Stage or during Key Stages 1 or 2. Those pupils who stay until the end of Year 6 leave with above average standards of attainment in English and mathematics. The strong guidance from senior leaders and the staff's commitment have ensured that pupils' achievement has not suffered during the recent period of considerable change.

The quality of teaching is consistently good or better across the school. Teachers use assessment information well to set individual targets and plan work that helps pupils to accelerate their progress. They are using increasingly effective approaches to teaching writing, including role play and discussion, to stimulate pupils' ideas. This is helping to raise standards of attainment in English. During lessons the pace of learning occasionally slows when teachers do not check thoroughly whether pupils need more support or challenge.

School leaders have recently introduced significant improvements to the curriculum and it now provides many more opportunities for teachers to use interesting topics to link learning in different subjects. Pupils enjoy these topics considerably and learn much from them. Teachers skilfully use work in many subjects to extend pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills. During the latter half of the summer term the teaching day is shortened due to the hot weather and a large amount of time is given to swimming lessons. Consequently pupils do not have access to the same range of learning experiences as they do during the rest of the year. This means that although there are good features in the curriculum, it is satisfactory overall. The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good overall and this helps the children to make good progress. The design of the outdoor area limits its contribution to children's independent learning, particularly in the development of physical skills.

The headteacher has effectively established a team approach to leadership. New school leaders are quickly developing their skills in improving teaching and learning across the school. Their success in continuing to improve pupils' achievement during the very difficult circumstances of this year demonstrates their good capacity to sustain and further improve the school's above average standards of attainment. School leaders acknowledge that, while keeping the school focused on maintaining good-quality education, there has been some slippage in communicating effectively

with all parents and carers. They, and the school governance committee, are now planning measures to improve this.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

To raise pupils' achievement from good to outstanding, the leadership team and school governance committee should take the following actions.

- Improve the use of assessment during lessons to check pupils' understanding and adapt lesson plans accordingly.
- Improve the curriculum by:
 - enabling pupils to have access to a suitable range of learning experiences throughout the year
 - ensuring that the outdoor area for the Early Years Foundation Stage is equipped to support all aspects of children's learning and development.
- Improve communication between the school and all groups of parents and carers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All groups of pupils make good progress. More-able pupils achieve well because teachers provide suitably challenging activities during and outside of lessons to extend their skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress at the same rate as other pupils because they receive programmes of support that are well suited to their individual needs. Pupils who arrive in the middle of the school year experience minimum disruption to their educational progress because teachers quickly and accurately assess the levels at which they need to work.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above average and they have very positive attitudes to work. They achieve particularly well when working together to carry out investigations on, for example, the relationships between perimeter and area in different shapes. Their good behaviour contributes to the effectiveness of their independent work, with only a small minority unable to stay on task when not supervised. Pupils' approach to work and their progress in learning basic skills gives them a good foundation for their future education and economic well-being.

Pupils say they feel safe in school and free from any harassment. Should they ever feel anxious they know that they can turn to an adult who will help them sort things out. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. In talking about their lunch boxes and snacks, they demonstrate a clear understanding of a healthy diet. They also know the precautions to take when out in the sun.

Many pupils are keen to take advantage of the plentiful opportunities to make positive contributions to their school and the wider community, for example when

acting as a 'buddy' to a newly arrived pupil or when putting on performances in the local community.

In drama lessons and assemblies, pupils show that they can think about what life is like for other people. Through involvement in global charities, they develop an understanding of the effects of conflict and disaster on families and how they can help. Enterprise projects and residential trips help them make good progress in learning how to get on with other people and work together. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of faiths and cultures other than their own and they speak knowledgably of the main similarities and differences in major world religions. They understand the culture of their host nation and many delight in being able to speak in Italian to visitors.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers ensure a good pace of learning by providing a well-planned sequence of interesting and challenging activities during lessons. Pupils are kept involved and attentive with small group discussions and problem-solving tasks. Tasks are adapted well to meet the needs of different age and ability groups in each class. Occasionally, the pace of lessons is too quick for effective learning because plans are too focused on tasks to be completed rather than on the skills to be acquired and teachers do not sufficiently modify their plans in response to pupils' needs.

Wherever possible, teachers provide first-hand experiences to enthuse pupils and support their learning. Periodically, a week is dedicated to a particular aspect of their work, such as enterprise or science, and this helps pupils to deepen their understanding considerably by carrying out extended practical investigations or research tasks. The curriculum is enriched by staff taking full advantage of the opportunities to explore the historical and cultural richness of Naples. Pupils' information communication and technology skills are extended when they take part

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

in video conference debates with pupils in other Service Children's Education schools. Many pupils benefit from the wealth of extra-curricular activities that draw on the strengths and enthusiasm of the staff. Pupils' access to the many strong features of the curriculum is uneven over the year because of summer time adaptations to the timetable.

Sensitive and effective support is given to those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, ensuring that they are able to settle well in school and make the same rates of progress as others. Staff effectively obtain assistance and guidance from support services, mostly located in Germany, that helps them to make good provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils who are new to the school are helped to make friends quickly and participate fully in the life of the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team has steered the school through a very difficult period with the minimum negative impact on pupils' enjoyment and achievement. They have the full support of the large majority of staff and there is a good ethos of teamwork in the school. This was seen especially in the way that staff sustained pupils' good achievement in the old school building despite the many disruptions to teaching and learning and in the way they very quickly established effective educational provision in the new building.

Recently appointed leaders have already made important improvements in such areas as the quality of the curriculum, provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the provision for pupils who need additional support or challenge. They are developing their skills in evaluating teaching and learning across the school in order to provide guidance to help colleagues improve their practice. They make effective use of the school's good system for tracking pupils' progress to check that all have a suitably challenging target and to ensure that additional support is quickly provided for any who are beginning to fall behind.

School leaders demonstrate good capacity to build further on their early improvements. They have a clear and accurate view of strengths and areas for improvement in pupils' outcomes. Their judgements of the school's work closely match those of the inspection team. The school improvement plan provides a sharp focus on the most important priorities for raising standards of attainment further.

The school governance committee works in strong partnership with school leaders in monitoring the implementation of the school improvement plan and offering support

or guidance as appropriate. Members have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they are using this to gradually increase their role in supporting the leadership team's strategic planning. The school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. Pupils and their parents and carers have received appropriate training on the safe use of the internet.

Most parents and carers are pleased with the quality of provision in the school, and there is some good practice in helping them to support their children's learning, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the new leadership team has not fully developed an effective partnership with all groups of parents and carers. Leaders are also at an early stage of developing partnerships with community groups and organisations. They have good plans in place to strengthen local links by taking advantage of the additional accommodation in the new school building.

Staff frequently monitor the progress of each pupil, using data analysis and interviews, to make sure there are no barriers to their equal opportunity to achieve well. The small numbers of pupils from countries of origin other than the United Kingdom are helped to participate fully in the life of the school and make good progress. To strengthen community cohesion, staff include the teaching of Italian in the curriculum so that pupils can begin to take part in aspects of local life. Teachers ensure that pupils develop a clear understanding of the different cultures and faiths in United Kingdom society and how to contribute to harmonious relationships between them.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account:	
The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	

Early Years Foundation Stage

On entry to the Nursery class, children's skills are broadly typical for their age. With good teaching and care, most children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make better than expected progress. By the time they move into Year 1, the majority exceed the goals for their age. The staff's thorough approach to assessment contributes significantly to children's good progress. They systematically observe and record children's achievements and use this information to plan activities well matched to their learning needs and interests.

Teachers plan a wide range of stimulating activities that help children to make good progress in all areas of learning and development, particularly in their early literacy and numeracy skills. For example, in the Nursery class, children enjoy making hand and finger patterns in foam and then extending these skills confidently to mark-making on paper. In the Reception class, children excitedly rise to the challenge of estimating lengths and heights of objects around the room. During this task, one child could define estimation as ‘...a very good guess.’

Alongside adult-directed work, there is an appropriate balance of child-initiated activities, which helps the children to make good progress in developing their independent learning skills. Whether involved in role play at the railway station or writing simple sentences, the children are keen learners. They extend their speaking skills by talking confidently about their activities with teachers or teaching assistants. Staff endeavour to extend all areas of learning and development in the outdoor area, however they are hampered by the design and layout of the equipment. These are not always conducive to promoting children’s independent learning, especially in relation to their physical development and exploring the outside world in a safe environment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. In the new building, the leader has quickly established a safe and attractive environment where all the children’s welfare requirements are met. He has arranged a good introduction into the Nursery class for children and their parents or carers, which involves close liaison with the nearby pre-school centre. Parents and carers appreciate the informative guidance from staff, especially the ‘workshops’, which helps them to support their children’s learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire are happy with the quality of education and care in the school and with their children’s progress. Inspection findings confirm that these are strong aspects of the school’s work. Around a third of respondents feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found that pupils’ behaviour is good and there was no evidence of staff not managing it well. A similar proportion of respondents disagree that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. School leaders acknowledge this and are already planning to seek the views of parents and carers more systematically once staff and pupils have settled into the new building. The area of greatest concern for respondents is the leadership of the school, with 45% disagreeing that the school is led and managed effectively.

The inspection evidence is that leadership and management are good overall. However, the large majority of this group of parents and carers wrote that their specific concern is the quality of school leaders' communication with them. School leaders and the school governance committee acknowledge that communication with parents and carers has not been as effective as it might be during the recent very difficult period. They have begun planning measures for better communication and, in addition, inspectors have included this as an area for improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at BFS Naples to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 38 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 89 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	45	20	53	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	50	18	47	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	24	21	55	8	21	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	37	18	47	3	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	39	17	45	3	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	24	20	53	7	18	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	34	20	53	3	8	1	3
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	7	18	19	50	6	16	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	29	18	47	8	21	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	18	13	34	12	32	2	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	18	12	32	13	34	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	7	18	7	18	11	29	6	16
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	32	17	45	6	16	2	5

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



17 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of BFS Naples Primary School, BFPO 8

Thank you very much for your help when I came with my colleague, James Kilner HMI, to inspect your school. You gave us very useful information which helped us to make the judgement that your school is good. School leaders and staff have worked very hard indeed to ensure that your education did not suffer while you were moving out of your old school building. I am sure moving was hard, but we could see how delighted you are with your lovely new school because it is so spacious and well-equipped.

Your teachers provide you with interesting and enjoyable lessons which help you to make good progress. They also give you very useful targets to improve your work. One of you summed up very nicely why your targets are so helpful when you said, 'you don't give up on the things you find hard, you keep trying'. Your teachers organise many activities for you that you will remember for a long time, such as the camping trips and the science weeks. Most of you work very hard in lessons and make the most of the chances you get to work with your friends.

School leaders, staff and the school governance committee wish to improve your education even further. We have agreed with them that the most important things they need to do are:

- to check your progress during lessons more often and give you extra support or harder work if you need it
- to ensure that you have the same amount of interesting learning activities throughout the school year
- to help your parents and carers to be more involved in the life of the school.

We are confident that you will help your teachers by always working hard to meet your targets, even when they are quite challenging.

Yours sincerely

John Rutherford
Her Majesty's Inspector

