

# Dhekelia Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	132417
<b>Local authority</b>	Service Children's Education
<b>Inspection number</b>	365536
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11-12 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Elisabeth Linley HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	179
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Service Children's Education
<b>Chair</b>	Colonel Pat Burns
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Thomas
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Dhekelia Cyprus BFPO 58
<b>Telephone number</b>	00357 24 744288
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<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	<b>11-12 January 2012</b>
<b>Inspection number</b>	365536



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Elisabeth Linley

Her Majesty's Inspector

Bradley Simmons

Her Majesty's Inspector

Inspectors observed teaching over approximately ten hours; thirteen teachers were seen and meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, senior leaders, governors and staff employed by Service Children's Education (SCE). Inspectors observed the school's work, heard pupils read and looked in particular at the school's raising achievement plans, monitoring records, safeguarding documentation, school data about pupils' attainment and progress and pupils' work. Inspectors considered 80 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those returned by pupils in Key Stage 2 and members of staff.

## Information about the school

Dhekelia Primary School is situated on the British Army's Dhekelia Garrison in Cyprus and is smaller than most primary schools in England. It serves the children of service and Ministry of Defence personnel. The number of pupils who start or leave school at different times of the school year is particularly high. As a result, most pupils remain at the school for no longer than two years. The number of pupils attending the school has declined by approximately one fifth since the school's previous inspection. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and those with disabilities, and of pupils who speak English as an additional language, is below average. The school has met government floor standards for pupils in Year 6 during the last three years.

Following the retirement of the school's headteacher in July 2011, an acting headteacher took over the leadership of the school. An assistant headteacher was seconded to join the school's leadership team in May 2011. The new substantive headteacher took up her post at the end of November 2011. Three members of teaching staff are also new to the school. One joined in September 2011 while two others joined the school in January 2012. The mobility of support staff is high with a 20% change having been seen during the last academic year.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Results of the Year 6 national tests have improved during the past three years. Pupils' attainment in mathematics and English, including reading, is above average and pupils achieve well at the higher level 5.
- Year 2 assessments show that pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is average overall. However, outcomes at the higher level 3 are below average and pupils' writing is not as good as it should be; this remains an issue for pupils in Years 3 and 4.
- Writing is also an issue for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is because, even though they make a satisfactory start to their education, not all children have enough opportunities to write and so their progress is not as fast as it could be. Furthermore, the assessment of children's phonic skills is variable and this slows the progress made by some children in their reading and writing.
- Parents and carers are positive overall about the school's work. However, a small number expressed concerns about the variable quality of teaching and as a result, the progress that their child is making. Inspectors agree. Although good and outstanding teaching was observed, some teaching is not good enough. In addition, some teachers do not consistently challenge more-able pupils to do their best.
- Effective multi-agency links enhance the school's provision. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and those with disabilities achieve as well as their peers. Individual support for pupils who have specific needs, or who might be vulnerable, is well-planned. However, the use of teaching assistants to aid all pupils' learning is inconsistent; greater rigour in planning is needed to ensure that pupils' individual needs are met effectively.
- Although the role of middle leaders is not fully developed, the headteacher and senior staff are clear about the schools strengths and weaknesses. Much has been done to improve pupils' behaviour and behaviour management. Pupils say that behaviour is better and they feel safe at school. Work to improve the quality of teaching is underway.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement in writing by:
  - providing pupils with daily opportunities to write
  - ensuring that pupils write at length in literacy and across the curriculum
  - ensuring that the assessment of pupils' phonic knowledge is sufficiently analytical, accurate and timely.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better throughout school, by:
  - ensuring teachers develop a wider range of questioning skills to interest, motivate and target pupils of varying abilities
  - making sure that teachers' planning meets the needs of all pupils, so they are consistently challenged to achieve their best, particularly the most able
  - ensuring teachers' planning is effective in making the best use of the time that teaching assistants and support staff are with pupils so that pupils are helped to become independent learners and achieve well
  - sharing good and outstanding practice within school.
- Develop the middle leaders so they have high expectations for the achievement of all children and pupils, and are effective in their roles.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are broadly in line with expectations for their age. The school's current data, children's work and observations show that children make satisfactory progress and by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage they attain outcomes in line with expectations for their age. However, the progress of some children in reading is not consistently strong. This is because the assessment of their phonic skills is variable and so children and pupils, including those who are more able, are not consistently challenged to do their best. This lack of challenge for more-able pupils is an issue throughout school, the exception being where teaching is consistently good or better. Where good and outstanding teaching was observed, all groups of pupils achieved well, regardless of gender, need, mobility or ability. In these classes, the gaps in pupils' attainment, for example, between girls and boys in their writing, are beginning to narrow. However, the school's data show that pupils' attainment in writing needs to improve at a faster pace. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities in literacy lessons to develop their writing skills and in some classes not enough is done across the curriculum to ensure that every chance is taken for pupils to write. Children in Foundation Stage 2, for example, do not have daily opportunities write.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities achieve similarly to their peers benefitting, as all pupils do, when teaching is good or better. They also benefit from focused support and intervention. However, teaching assistants are not used as well as they might be in every class to ensure that their time with pupils is effective, and encourages independent learning and a faster rate of progress. As a result, the picture of pupils' overall progress is inconsistent throughout school.

### **Quality of teaching**

Where there is good and outstanding teaching, teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of learning, productivity and behaviour. Lessons are characterised by very good pace, tasks are expertly matched to pupils' needs and capabilities, and the varied use of tone and volume in teachers' exposition keep pupils interested.

Conversely, where weaker teaching occurs, expectations of pupils are not high enough, planning lacks consistency and rigour, and questioning is not sufficiently focused. The impact of the planned curriculum is similarly varied. Where pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is specifically considered, it makes a positive difference to pupils' engagement. This was seen when Year 6 pupils considered the feelings of evacuees during World War II and when pupils in Year 1 excitedly recounted the birth of a baby lamb observed during their morning visit to a local farm. Pupils in Year 4 derived immense pleasure from learning and speaking French in a lesson taken by a specialist teacher while 'Super Skills' sessions provide a positive start to the school day and the development of pupils' basic skills. However, while direct intervention aids the teaching and learning of phonics, this is not consistent for all pupils in all classes. Assessment of pupils' phonic skills is inconsistent and does not enable teachers to build effectively on pupils' previous learning and fill the gaps in pupils' knowledge. Nonetheless, pupils say they enjoy their lessons although they feel they could be challenged more.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Work to improve pupils' behaviour and safety has seen positive outcomes, for example, exclusions have been reduced. Pupils have engaged positively with the 'Good to be Green' initiative which makes clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and is consistently applied by staff. Pupils believe that bullying is rare and that limited incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with well. However, around one in ten parents and carers expressed concerns, through questionnaires, about pupils' behaviour. These parents and carers may be reassured that any incidents are dealt with well by the school. Even so, pupils' learning in lessons is often passive. Where weaker teaching occurs, pupils become disengaged and bored, and do not make the progress of which they are capable. Conversely, pupils' attitudes to learning significantly improve when lessons are stimulating and challenging. In most lessons, pupils work well with others, in pairs or in groups. They enjoy having responsibilities such as being school councillors and librarians. They develop appropriate skills to empathise with others, taking time to reflect on moral issues during lessons for PSHE (personal, social and health education) and during assembly when opportunities are provided for prayer or quiet reflection. Pupils' enjoy school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance.

## Leadership and management

The smooth handover between the acting and substantive headteachers has enabled the school to continue an upward trend of improvement. The introduction of assertive mentoring, for which all staff have received training, has underpinned the rigour by which data on pupils' progress is collected and used. Through this process, in which parents, pupils and staff are involved, pupils' targets are set and carefully monitored. Although more is to be done to analyse the data gathered by groups of pupils, teachers are held accountable for pupils' progress. As a result, pupils' accelerated progress is evident in some classes, for example in Years 1 and 6.

The new headteacher, supported by the deputy and assistant headteachers, has brought renewed focus to honing the quality of teaching. Although more is to be done to eradicate weaknesses, there are beacons of outstanding practice in Key Stages 1 and 2 that can be shared. In addition, there is evidence that identified gaps in pupils' achievement, for example in boys and girls' writing, are beginning to close. However, middle leaders' expectations of what pupils can achieve are insufficiently high. Members of the school governance committee take their responsibilities seriously and are aware of how they might better hold the school to account for pupils' improved achievement. Similarly, the senior leadership team has correctly identified areas for improvement, for example, to review the curriculum to ensure that it develops pupils' skills systematically in all subjects as pupils move through school.

Strong links have been established with partner agencies to meet the needs of potentially vulnerable pupils, and parents and carers are appropriately involved to support their child's development. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern; all appropriate checks are completed for adults who work with children.

## 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



16 January 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Dhekelia Primary School, Dhekelia, Cyprus BFPO 58**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed having the opportunity to talk to you, to visit your lessons and to look at your work. We also talked to your teachers and looked at the questionnaires that pupils in Key Stage 2 completed as well as the ones completed by your parents and carers and members of staff. From all the information we looked at, we were able to judge that Dhekelia is a satisfactory school. It is clear, however, that things are improving. For example, pupils in Year 6 attain above average standards in English and mathematics and some of the teaching in school is outstanding. Where teaching is really good, you make good progress. But this is not always the case. Sometimes teaching is not as good as it could be and so your achievement is satisfactory overall in reading, writing and mathematics. Also, in some lessons, you are not challenged to do your best; some of you told us this as well. When this happens, you often get bored and are not fully involved in the lesson. However, you told us that behaviour in school has improved a lot and that you feel safe.

We could see that most of you get on with each other and that you work well together. This was particularly noticeable in Year 6, when you were learning about evacuees in World War II. A visitor to school, who had been an evacuee, wrote to the inspectors to say how impressed they were with you. Well done! Your headteacher and senior leaders know what has to be done to ensure that further improvements are made. To help them we have asked them to:

- improve the progress that you make in your writing, including the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- improve the quality of teaching so that it is all at least good and you are all challenged to do your best, including those of you who find your work easy
- ensure that all school leaders have high expectations of what you can achieve.

We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Elisabeth Linley

Her Majesty's Inspector

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