

# Mount Pleasant Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	132691
<b>Local authority</b>	Service Children's Education
<b>Inspection number</b>	384987
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Daniel Towl 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>	37
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Service Children's Education
<b>Chair</b>	Wing Commander Julie Shayler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Kim Adams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3–4 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Mount Pleasant Complex BFPO 655
<b>Telephone number</b>	0050073328
<b>Email address</b>	sce.mountpleasant@scschools.com

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	28–29 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	384987



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Daniel Towl

Her Majesty's Inspector

The inspector observed eight lessons and a number of other activities involving six teachers and teaching assistants. Discussions were held with the headteacher, teachers, groups of pupils, parents and members of the school governance committee. The inspector took account of the responses from parents', pupils' and staff questionnaires, observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of school documents, policies and plans. Sixteen questionnaires were returned by parents representing two thirds of pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a small school which serves the children of British Forces personnel based at the Mount Pleasant Complex on the Falkland Islands. Most pupils stay for no more than 18 months. Pupils come and go frequently. Pupil mobility is very high; up to 132% within one year and since September there has been a 50% change. Teaching staff are posted to Mount Pleasant for two years. None of the current staff were present at the time of the last inspection. There are 37 pupils in three classes; an Early Years Foundation Stage nursery group, a Key Stage 1 class with some older Early Years Foundation Stage children and a Key Stage 2 class. A small number of pupils have special educational needs. The school meets the current floor standard.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

### Key findings

- This is a good school with a strong sense of community. The school is led and managed well. Pupils learn effectively, making good progress in their relatively short time at the school. The school is not outstanding because there is some satisfactory teaching in each Key Stage.
- Pupils achieve well in all age groups. Pupils successfully gain knowledge and skills across the curriculum. Almost all pupils reach levels that are at or above average. Those pupils who have special educational needs make good progress because of the additional support they receive. Historically pupils in Year 6 achieve above national expectations. Pupils do not always extend their good literacy skills across the curriculum, for example by not writing as accurately as they could and taking care with spelling key vocabulary.
- Teaching is mostly good. Teachers manage the wide age groups in each class effectively and provide interesting and engaging activities. There are a few missed opportunities to make the most of the planned activities to achieve the very best learning. Adults' interaction with the children in Early Years Foundation Stage does not always extend learning as much as it could through asking more open questions and developing dialogue.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding almost all of the time. Incidents of serious misbehaviour are extremely rare. Pupils of all ages get on well together and feel safe. Pupils' attitudes to learning are extremely positive.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through careful monitoring of performance. Lesson observations and rigorous processes to monitor the progress of pupils' learning provide good information from which to plan improvements. Issues relating to very high pupil mobility, changing staff and limited premises are managed very effectively to the benefit of all pupils. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities.

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

- Raise the quality of all teaching to good by:
  - ensuring that all activities in lessons are well thought through and expertly managed so that all pupils achieve the very best learning possible
  - extend dialogue with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage during their activities by using more open-ended questions to extend their thinking.
- Check more systematically that pupils apply their good literacy skills across the curriculum, for example the accuracy of key spelling and other areas of improvement identified in teachers' marking.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

While they are at the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress especially in their key skills of literacy and numeracy. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 6 are on track to reach above average levels of attainment in reading. Reading develops well from an early age. Pupils read with confidence. Older pupils are aware of the importance of punctuation and context to make sense of texts and younger pupils effectively use their knowledge of letter sounds to read difficult words. Pupils successfully develop the complexity of their writing for a range of purposes and audiences across the curriculum. Pupils do not, however, consistently apply their good literacy skills equally in all subjects. For example they do not always give enough attention to the accuracy of their work especially spelling key vocabulary correctly in the subjects they study.

Pupils' attitudes are good and they learn well in their lessons and engage well with their tasks. They gain confidence in applying and developing skills. For example, in one lesson pupils in Key Stage 2 successfully improved their skills in reasoning while investigating certain numerical patterns. In another, Key Stage 1 pupils successfully consolidated their skills of telling the time. Pupils develop a good breadth of knowledge because of their interest in the curriculum they follow.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start with above average skills and continue to make good progress. They grow in confidence in a wide range of skills especially in the areas of communication, language and numeracy. They are happy to share their own views and explain what they are doing. Their social skills develop effectively through play, for example acting out journeys in a 'bus' and 'ship' related to a transport theme, and taking part in other group activities.

In their returned questionnaires most parents felt that their children were making good progress and this is supported by inspection findings. Pupils are well placed to return to schools in the United Kingdom or other schools in Service Children's Education.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers are well prepared and plan interesting relevant activities which pupils enjoy so they make good progress. Lessons have a good balance of whole class and independent work. Opportunities for discussion in pairs and small groups gives pupils a chance to share ideas and contribute effectively to lessons. This helps pupils develop self-esteem, self-confidence and the skills needed to cooperate effectively. Teachers manage the wide age range effectively and vary tasks according to pupils' needs. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour to which pupils respond well. All lessons have a good 'climate' for learning. Parents' views that teaching is good is supported by inspection evidence.

Occasionally, where teaching is satisfactory, the planned activities are not so well thought through or managed effectively and the potential for the best learning is not realised for all pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage there are some missed opportunities to develop learning further through asking children more open, probing questions and to extend dialogue from their responses.

Teachers check pupils' progress carefully through regular marking and monitoring their achievements against nationally expected levels. Information from assessment is used effectively to inform lesson planning. Teachers have regular individual meetings with pupils to discuss progress and then adjust learning targets accordingly. Pupils are aware of their targets and can describe what they need to do to improve. Teachers write helpful comments in pupils' books but it is not always clear that the improvements suggested, for example with spelling, are followed up systematically. The planned curriculum is matched to the needs and interests of pupils and this successfully supports good learning.

The small class sizes enable teachers to provide effective additional help when pupils need it. This means that those pupils who have special educational needs make good progress.

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

Pupils are very courteous and get on extremely well together almost all of the time. In class they work together very effectively in groups and pairs and help each other. Pupils of all ages interact well. In discussions with the inspector and in their returned questionnaires they said that they had no concerns about poor behaviour and that they feel safe in school. While they say that sometimes there may be disagreements they are not concerned about bullying or harassment and any such incidents are very rare. Pupils cope well living on the Mount Pleasant complex in close proximity with each other both in and out of school. Parents' returned questionnaires overwhelmingly show that they have no significant concerns about behaviour and this view was also reflected in discussions with them.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They learn about road and fire safety through projects linking with expert personnel from the Mount Pleasant complex and also have a good understanding about how to keep safe when using the Internet. They were recently involved in designing posters to promote flight safety which have been displayed around the complex.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and willingly engage with the tasks set for them. They spoke with great enthusiasm and interest about some of their projects and recently completed tasks, for example in a project about weather, demonstrating that they had enjoyed their learning.

The nature of parents' 'operational' postings to Mount Pleasant mean that there are higher than average requests for authorised absences during term time. However, taking this into consideration, pupils' attendance is above average.

## **Leadership and management**

The deployment of staff and resources are managed wisely in order to maximise and bring the greatest benefit for all pupils. Careful deployment of staff means that pupils in the multi-age classes can be taught in smaller groups as necessary. This helps to provide additional challenges to stretch pupils or give extra help so that pupils can gain more confidence in a particular area of learning, for example the consolidation of pupils' understanding of letter patterns and their sounds to aid spelling and reading. The school site has quite restricted accommodation but its use is managed well in order to support the activities undertaken.

Teachers have clear roles and responsibilities which they undertake diligently. This is having a positive impact both on curriculum development and pupils' progress. The roles and responsibilities established provide a capacity to improve and help the continuity of school development as staff come and go on relatively short contracts. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is new in post and has established more rigorous practices to monitor and assess children. Subject leaders new in post have analysed accurately where the school needs to improve the curriculum in English and mathematics. For example more emphasis is being placed on using and applying knowledge to solve mathematical problems. Opportunities for training are limited in this remote location but teachers share their own expertise, use internet resources, work with occasional visiting professionals and use video conferencing to remain updated.

The curriculum is well organised and issues of long-term planning, identified in the last inspection, have been resolved. Pupils are involved in imaginative activities which make the most of the school's unique setting, drawing on excellent links with the expertise in the military complex and the unique environment of the Falkland Islands. Learning about the weather with the metrological office, making broadcasts and videos with the forces broadcasting services, learning about and being involved with Falkland Islands conservation projects, very effectively extend learning and provide memorable experiences for pupils. Staff are also adept in using pupils' experiences out of school to enhance lessons, for example using pupils' knowledge from family visits to see wildlife and the broader Falklands environment.

Pupils develop an understanding of other faiths and cultures in geography and religious education and expand their range of peer-group contacts by sometimes meeting pupils from a school in the nearest local settlement. Pupils have the chance to learn French and Spanish and this too helps to broaden their cultural knowledge. Pupils set up a French café and invited guests to sample some French

cuisine. In this small-school community staff know the pupils very well and are alert to their needs. Careful monitoring of pupils' achievements, the regular one to one discussions with pupils and frequent contact with parents helps to ensure that all pupils are treated equally and not discriminated against.

The school is well supported by the school governance committee who take their role very seriously and have good structures in place to maintain regular links, for example undertaking themed visits to the school, in addition to holding regular meetings. Parent governors regularly meet with the headteacher. The governance committee works closely with the school and other military services to ensure that safeguarding procedures meet requirements.



## 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	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.**



1 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Mount Pleasant Primary School, BFPO 655**

Thank you very much for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school. I found it very interesting to watch you learning in your lessons and talking to you about what you think of your school and your work. You were very polite and friendly at all times.

You go to a good school and you make good progress in your lessons. You work hard and your behaviour is excellent. You told me that you feel safe and that you were not concerned about bullying because that sort of behaviour is very rare.

You learn about very many interesting topics. I was very interested in your work about penguins and how you were learning so much about the Falkland Islands while you were there. You develop good writing skills but you do not always take enough care to make sure that your spelling is correct, especially words that are special to the topics you are studying.

Your lessons are mostly good and you learn well, but sometimes you could learn even more if the activities had been introduced differently by your teachers. I have asked your headteacher to check that all your lessons give you the best opportunity to learn well. I have also asked that adults talk a little more to the youngest children during activities to make sure you have a good chance to explain what you are learning. You can help by checking the accuracy of your work when you have finished an activity.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Towl  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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