

St David's Primary School

Schulestrasse 4, 66877 Ramstein-Miesenbach, Germany

Inspection dates 9-10 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in their key skills of English, mathematics and science. Pupils' reading skills develop very well in all age groups.
- Teaching is improving and mostly good. Some is outstanding. Teachers have excellent relationships with their pupils who receive much individual help because of the small class sizes.
- The school is successful in ensuring any gaps in pupils' education, as a result of moving to and from various schools, are quickly identified and overcome.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding overall. Pupils get on well with each other and they feel safe in school. The school has a very purposeful atmosphere. Lessons are not interrupted through inappropriate attitudes or behaviour.
- There is a clear drive from the headteacher and senior team to improve the school. The recent improvement in teaching phonics has had a very beneficial impact on pupils' reading from an early age.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching in Key Stage 1 and 2 is not always precise and clear enough to ensure that all parts of lessons are highly effective. This means that sometimes pupils' achievements are not consistently good or outstanding.
- Although pupils' achievements are good overall they are not making consistently good progress in improving their higher order writing skills.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited all classes and observed all teachers. Additionally parts of several other lessons were observed across all year groups. Most lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils read and looked at their workbooks.
- Meetings were held with pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2, senior staff, the chair of the school governance committee and by telephone with a representative from Service Children's Education.
- A group of parents representing children in each year group met with the inspector. Two further parents also requested meetings with the inspector. He reviewed responses from 18 parents who used Ofsted's online 'Parent View' survey in addition to two letters from parents.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at other key documents and policies, action plans and the school's self-evaluation.

Inspection team

Daniel Towl, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St David's is situated in south west Germany. It is a smaller than average-sized school.
- Almost all families have a parent serving in the military and are linked to a nearby air-base.
- Numbers have fallen since the last inspection reflecting changes to reductions in military postings nationally. Most pupils stay a maximum of two years and arrive and leave at any time in the school year and in any year group. One third of pupils will be moving at the end of the school year.
- The school occupies the ground floor of a building which has other multiple uses.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British Heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus is average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement by rapidly eliminating any aspects of teaching that do not promote good or outstanding progress by:
 - ensuring all lessons are well thought through, precise and 'crystal clear' so that pupils are in no doubt what they have to do and what they should achieve
 - ensuring that all tasks' have an appropriately high challenge for all pupils, especially the more able
 - ensure that marking and any 'one-to-one' assessments are followed through rigorously so that errors do not re-occur
 - ensuring that there is not an over-reliance on text books and commercial worksheets which may limit pupils' own responses.
- Ensure that pupils have ample opportunity to write at length and develop greater accuracy and higher order skills while writing for different purposes.
- Increase the opportunities for members of the school governance committee to more formally gain first-hand knowledge of the how the school operates on a day-to-day basis.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Although pupils enter the school at different times of the year and at various points within key stages they settle quickly and make good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs make the same good progress as other pupils during their time at the school. Parents whose children have received additional help were very pleased with their progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start at the school. They start Year 1 with the levels of development relevant to their age.
- In recent years, most pupils leaving Key Stage 2 have gained skills that are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Pupils do not always write at length often enough to develop more consistently their higher order skills.
- Across the school pupils make their the best progress in reading where it is often outstanding, especially for those pupils who arrive at the school behind where they should be. Good individual support and a strong, well organised approach to ensuring that pupils have good phonic knowledge (knowing the letters and the sounds they make) successfully help pupils become confident readers. This enables them to tackle texts appropriate to their age and interests. This is having a positive impact on learning overall.
- Senior leaders are aware that they now need to extend and use pupils' phonic knowledge to help pupils become more accurate with their spelling and improve the accuracy of written work.
- Achievements in science are consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, develop a good understanding of how to go about carrying out practical investigations, learning precise approaches and gaining knowledge in wide range of science topics.
- Pupils' mathematical skills develop well, especially in their ability to perform calculations and develop efficient methods. They successfully learn how to collect and use data and gain awareness of shape, space and measures.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is mostly good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers know their pupils well and make the most of the small group sizes to successfully support all pupils with their work. Pupils receive a lot of personal attention if they get stuck.
- Pupils gain confidence in these small groups because they can contribute more often and this promotes their self-esteem. Everyone is valued and respected.
- Teachers work effectively with teaching assistants, who make important contributions to pupils' learning. Pupils like their teachers and teaching assistants.
- There are high expectations of behaviour and lessons run smoothly and without interruption. This is very supportive of good learning.
- While teaching is mostly good there are times when it loses 'crispness' and clarity and tasks are not challenging enough. Despite their willingness to complete their tasks, pupils do not always achieve as much as they could do. Sometimes an over-reliance on textbooks and commercial worksheets limits pupils' own responses.
- In an outstanding science lesson older pupils very carefully made equipment needed to carry-out an investigation. Instructions were clear and pupils knew exactly what they had to do and responded with high quality work at a brisk pace. This enabled them to complete their investigation about woodlice accurately and within the given time.
- Pupils' work is assessed carefully. Teachers have a good knowledge of the levels their pupils are reaching. They regularly mark pupils' work but the comments to help improvement are not always followed through rigorously. This leads to some pupils continuing to make similar mistakes in future work, especially in their written tasks.

- Pupils are encouraged to look critically at their own and others' work. A small group of older pupils, for example, discussed with their teacher the quality of recent work and this led to clear ideas about how to improve in the future.
- Younger pupils enjoy their phonics lessons and do well. Where it is taught best it is sharply focused, brisk and fun.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils, respond very well to the high expectations of staff. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning and to the school community as a whole, which is calm and purposeful.
- Pupils are courteous. They consistently respond maturely to questions asked of them in lessons. They listen respectfully to each other's responses. This strongly supports pupil's social and moral development and successfully helps to build their self-esteem. They willingly work together in lessons and help each other.
- Most parents have positive views about behaviour at the school. This was strongly supported by a group of parents who met with the inspector. Of the parents who completed the on-line questionnaire a few had concerns about behaviour and bullying. This was not supported by other inspection evidence. The older pupils who spoke with the inspector said that bullying or racism of any sort was rare and issues were dealt with quickly. Parents who met with the inspector responded similarly. Pupils told the inspector that they liked the school's approach of rewarding their positive behaviour and good deeds through the 'shining examples' initiative.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe including using the internet. The school's recent health and safety week successfully covered a wide range of topics including fire safety, safety around dogs, taking care in the sun and how to reduce stress. These and other activities led to a 'top ten tips' about keeping safe.
- The school's approach to safety is rigorous but pragmatic in order to keep pupils' activities as broad as possible. The joint public use of the building is extremely well managed with regard to pupil safety. Robust risk assessments enable curriculum enrichment such as keeping animals, including chickens, and growing vegetables for pupils to eat and taking part in local and residential visits.
- Pupils attend well. The few longer absences that have occurred are because of illnesses or the deployment of parents to new postings. Absence is followed-up rigorously.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and staff are a dedicated team. There is a clear ambition, led by the headteacher, to maintain high standards and continue to improve the school. The senior team work very well together and this is helping to successfully bring more rigour to checking the quality of the school's work. The senior team have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Most parents are happy with the way the school is led and managed.
- Teaching has improved. It is regularly monitored and areas for development are identified and worked on appropriately as part of teachers' performance management. Senior leaders' notes from lesson observations, though, are not always rigorously focused on the impact of teaching on learning.
- Pupils' achievements are carefully checked. If pupils fall behind effective action is taken to provide any additional support required. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps whether this is within this school or in new schools in the United Kingdom.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and those who are not making the progress expected is well managed. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored. Where there are concerns a range of different support is carefully organised for individuals or small groups. This

is successfully ensuring that almost all pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress.

- The Early Years Foundation Stage is managed very effectively. The latest requirements of curriculum and assessment are fully met. Children are carefully monitored through a rigorous assessment process. A good balance of learning activities is maintained through careful planning.
 - The drive for improvements in key skills has not diminished the school's ability to provide a rich, broad and stimulating curriculum. Pupils successfully develop a wide range of knowledge and skills in subjects such as history, geography and the environment. Creativity is well developed through art and music. The school provides a wide range of clubs and outside visits. Links with the local community and close-by military base also provide good opportunities for cross-cultural learning.
 - Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet the current regulations.
 - The governance of the school:
 - The School Governance Committee has an appropriate understanding of the school's strengths. It has used its expertise well to consider and support the headteacher on several strategic and resourcing issues that the school is dealing with, reflecting changes in pupil numbers and overarching changes within the Service Children's Education service. In this small community several members of the committee are also parents. This enables close links to be established. However, a more formal approach to gathering first-hand knowledge of the school's daily work to inform the committee for its support and challenge of senior leaders has yet to be firmly established.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	132391
Local authority	Service Children's Education
Inspection number	410001

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	44
Appropriate authority	Service Children's Education
Chair	Wg Cdr Robert McLucas
Headteacher	Mrs Val Cook
Date of previous school inspection	7-8 July 2009
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