

Dhekelia Primary School

Dhekelia, Cyprus, BFPO 58

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school because

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (FS1 and FS2) develop their knowledge and basic skills well. They are confident and keen to learn.
- Pupils' achieve well because they make good progress. Pupils who have been at the school for a year or more make particularly good progress.
- An above-average proportion of pupils attain the standards in reading, writing and mathematics expected for their age by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is usually good with some that is outstanding and, as a result, all groups of pupils achieve well.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils work and play well together in a safe and secure environment. The positive attitudes they bring to lessons enhances their learning.
- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. Expectations of pupils and staff are high and this is why the school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection.
- The school governance committee is effective in holding the senior leadership team to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in mathematics particularly in Years 3 and 4, is not as good as it is in English.
- Subject leaders in English and mathematics review pupils' progress regularly. However where action is required to enhance the progress of individual pupils it is not sufficiently clear what it is that they should achieve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 16 lessons, 11 of which were undertaken jointly with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, staff with subject and phase responsibilities, the Chair of the School Governance Committee and one other member. A meeting was held with a group of pupils. A telephone conversation was also held with the school's adviser.
- A range of documentation was considered including: the school's self-evaluation; reports by the school's adviser; analysis of the school's performance data; records of monitoring of teaching and learning; the improvement plan and minutes of meetings held by the school governance committee.
- The inspection team considered 72 responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View. Thirty responses to the staff questionnaire were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Christopher Keeler, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Adam Higgins	Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this 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 exceptionally high.
- 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 meets the government's targets for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher took up her appointment at the end of November 2011. An assistant headteacher took up her post in July 2012 and a new Key Stage 2 leader joined the staff in September 2013. A temporary teacher responsible for a Year 3/4 class commenced at the beginning of the spring term and will remain until the end of the current academic year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the progress pupils make in mathematics, particularly in Years 3 and 4, by:
 - ensuring that teachers identify pupils' misconceptions quickly during lessons and take immediate steps to address them
 - having appropriate resources available to support pupils' learning during lessons
 - ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants use correct mathematical language in order to develop pupils' understanding and promote mathematical thinking.
- Develop the effectiveness of subject leaders by:
 - making sure that actions taken following a review of pupils' progress have clear and specific targets that relate to the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils are expected to acquire.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- When children join the school in Foundation Stage 1, their skills and knowledge are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that, by the end of Reception, a similar proportion to those found nationally is ready for learning in Year 1.
- In the phonic screening check at the end of Year 1 in 2013 the proportion of pupils reaching national expectations was in line with the national average. An analysis of school progress data together with evidence gained during lesson observations during the inspection indicates that this is likely to improve significantly this year. Pupils apply their knowledge of phonics well when meeting unfamiliar words and this provides a good basis on which to develop fluent, confident readers in the future.
- An analysis of the high proportion of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 that joined the school at different times during the academic year indicates that the majority were performing below that expected for their age. They make good progress. However, the pupils who have spent longer at the school make the best progress.
- Results of Key Stage 1 tests and assessments were above average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2013. Attainment at the higher level, Level 3, was also above average although not as high in mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is good. In 2013, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded the national average. Discussions with pupils, a review of the school's information on pupils' progress and the work in pupils' books suggests that this level of performance is on track to be sustained in 2014. However, the rate at which pupils progress in mathematics, particularly in Years 3 and 4, could be even better.
- More-able pupils achieve well because teachers' expectations of what they are capable of achieving are high. The proportion of pupils on track to reach the higher levels, Level 5 or above, in English and mathematics is likely to rise significantly in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. This is because the quality of support is good and their progress is closely monitored by senior staff.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is mostly good with some that is outstanding. This is why pupils make good progress. This view is shared by the overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire Parent View.
- Teachers know their pupils well. Work is planned carefully and pupils are, in the main, able to cope with what they are asked to do during lessons. This is because most teachers are quick to notice when pupils are finding the work too demanding and take steps to provide more suitable tasks or adapt their teaching strategies to help pupils learn more effectively. However, this is not always the case and this can inhibit progress. This is especially so in mathematics and particularly, although not exclusively, in Years 3 and 4.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge especially in teaching reading and writing. It is generally the case in mathematics too but there are instances where resources to aid learning are either not accessible or are inappropriate for the task. On occasions, teachers and teaching assistants do not always use correct mathematical vocabulary when explaining key teaching points. This confuses pupils and leads to misunderstanding which, in turn, impedes progress.
- Teaching is good or better when pupils are involved in their learning because interesting activities hold their attention and expectations of what they are capable of achieving are high. In such circumstances pupils find learning fun and progress well.

- Relationships are strong and pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. This is because teachers plan interesting lessons and manage behaviour well. Pupils are keen to pose and answer questions during lessons and take an interest in what they are doing. As a result, they are developing a love of learning and this is a significant factor in the good progress they are making.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and the quality is high. Comments reflect a good balance between praise and ideas about how they may improve. Pupils look forward to reading the teachers' comments and say how they 'help them to improve'.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

is good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. During lessons the overwhelming majority of pupils listen attentively to the teacher and are keen to participate in activities. On occasions, a small minority of pupils do not concentrate as well as they should although this does not disrupt the learning of others because teaching assistants and teachers are quick to give appropriate support.
- Pupils show respect to each other and work cooperatively during lessons. They have a good sense of right and wrong, are polite, and respectful towards adults and visitors to the school.
- During breaks pupils play well together with older pupils keeping a watchful eye on those younger than themselves. Pupils take turns to act as playground buddies to ensure that no pupil is left out. This works particularly well when pupils first come to the school, which is a regular occurrence. As a result, they settle quickly.
- Pupils in all phases report that bullying in school is rare. They are confident that should it arise it would be dealt with swiftly. Pupils know what is meant by bullying. They appreciate that it comes in various forms both verbal and physical and can often be related to 'difference'. Pupils are acquiring an increasing awareness of prejudice in relation to racism and homophobia.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good understanding of personal safety. They appreciate the dangers that exist in their immediate environment particularly in respect of road safety and use of the internet.
- Links with external agencies are effective and, as a result, pupils are able to receive specific support and guidance for a range of social and emotional issues.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who completed the on-line questionnaire Parent View indicated that their child feels safe. They believed that their children are happy and well looked after.

The leadership and management

is good

- The school has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. This is in no small part down to the impressive leadership of the headteacher. She has lost no time in tackling weaknesses in teaching and management at all levels and this has led to an increase in achievement. The headteacher is ably supported by members of a strong senior leadership team.
- An emerging strength of the school is the developing sense of teamwork. There exists a commitment to providing the best possible experience for pupils during their time at Dhekelia so that they can blossom intellectually and socially.
- The quality of self-evaluation is good. As a consequence, senior leaders are acutely aware of the school's strengths as well as aspects that require further improvement. The school improvement plan provides an effective vehicle through which changes for the better can be managed and delivered. Improved teaching and higher achievement are testimony to the strong desire to secure improvements.
- Arrangements for performance management are rigorous and effective. Clear targets are set for teachers that reflect whole-school priorities and individual performance in relation to the quality of teaching. This has been a significant factor in driving improvement.

- The curriculum was reviewed in the summer of 2012. This has ensured progression between classes, year groups and phases. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop skills and knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics across the broad curriculum. Pupils' learning is enhanced by a range of sporting, musical and cultural activities. The school makes the most of the expertise and resources that the military and the host nation can provide.
- Effective systems to check pupils' progress throughout the school support the regular meetings between teachers, senior managers and subject leaders to discuss how well each pupils is doing. This enables the potential for underachievement to be identified and action taken to support those pupils who are at risk of falling behind. However, expectations in terms of the skills and knowledge that pupils are to acquire as a result of targeted support are not precise enough. This can lead to a lack of focus and urgency by teachers when planning lessons and assessing progress.
- The school meets the requirements for safeguarding pupils.
- Service Children's Education (SCE) has provided good support to the school since the previous inspection. The last few years have been challenging yet rewarding as achievement has risen and looks set to continue to do so. A key feature has been the good support given to the headteacher both by SCE and colleagues working in other schools on the island.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the school governance committee (SGC) have a good understanding of the strengths of the school as well as areas for development. They are knowledgeable about teaching standards and pupils' achievement and how these relate to performance management. They appreciate the challenges presented by exceptionally high levels of mobility and acknowledge how the school's leaders mitigate against this resulting in a dip in achievement. Members of the SGC demonstrate a strong sense of care towards both pupils and staff and this complements the sense of teamwork that is so evident at the school.

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	132417
Local authority	Service Children's Education
Inspection number	433027

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	192
Appropriate authority	Service Children's Education
Chair	Lt Col Kevin Grantham
Headteacher	Rachel Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 January 2012
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