

Ayios Nikolaos Primary School

BFPO 59, Cyprus.

Inspection dates

8–9 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is not consistently good in Key Stage 2. The good teaching in the early years (FS1 and FS2) and Key Stage 1 is not replicated in all other year groups.
- Some teachers in Key Stage 2 do not check pupils' progress in reading regularly or help them to improve, through systematic and regular teaching.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in their learning in science. Standards of writing in English lessons are not replicated in subjects such as history and geography.
- The most able pupils do not make consistently good progress in lessons because teaching does not always challenge them.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality and amount of work pupils will complete in lessons are not consistently high.
- Senior leaders do not check the quality of teaching well enough in some year groups. They do not do enough to improve the quality of teaching quickly.
- Members of the school governance committee (SGC) do not hold the school to account as they should. The committee does not receive the information it needs to ask leaders challenging questions.
- School leaders have not secured the full confidence of parents. Some parents feel that leaders do not respond well to their concerns.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils settle into the school community quickly. They feel safe and are happy at school. Pupils behave well and are polite and friendly.
- Pupils get off to a good start in the early years. They continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The systematic teaching of the sounds letters represent (phonics) enables younger pupils to get off to a good start in their reading.
- Teaching promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through a rich and broad curriculum. Pupils have regular opportunities to think about a range of moral and spiritual issues.
- Achievement in writing and mathematics is improving and attainment is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Her Majesty's Inspectors observed teaching and learning during 17 lessons and scrutinised pupils' work in their books and learning folders, including work from the last academic year. Almost all of the lesson observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils in Years 3 and 4 read their books and talked to pupils about their reading.
- Inspectors talked to pupils informally during break times and in lessons. They met with three groups of pupils, including the school council and curriculum task group.
- Inspectors analysed achievement data for different groups of pupils including the most able pupils and those with special educational needs. They compared the outcomes for pupils who have attended the school for longer or shorter periods of time.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders and members of the school governance committee including the Chair and Vice-Chair. The lead inspector held a telephone meeting with a representative from Service Children's Education (SCE).
- The inspection team evaluated a range of evidence and documentation that the school provided, including information about the curriculum, minutes of SGC meetings, safeguarding records, behaviour logs and monitoring records.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally and considered 52 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors considered 32 questionnaires completed confidentially by staff at the school.

Inspection team

Michelle Winter, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jane Wotherspoon

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ayios Nikolaos is situated on the Eastern Sovereign Base Area of Cyprus. It is smaller than average.
- Most pupils are from families with one or both parents who are serving military personnel. Some parents are civilians who work for the Ministry of Defence or who choose to send their children to the school.
- A few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils who need help from beyond the school to support their needs is low.
- Children attend Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) on a part-time basis and attend full-time when they join Foundation Stage 2 (FS2).
- There have been a number of staff changes over the last year including several newly appointed support staff and four new teachers who joined the school in September 2014.
- The school's population changes frequently during the year as pupils join and leave at various times, depending on their parents' postings. On average, pupils stay at the school between two and three years. Pupil mobility is usually at its highest in the summer term of each year.
- The school meets the government's floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress by Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to ensure that pupils' progress and attainment are consistently good across year groups and subjects by ensuring that:
 - the good practice that exists in the school, particularly in FS1 and FS2 and Key Stage 1, is shared
 - the regular and effective teaching of reading skills for younger pupils is replicated in all classes
 - teachers plan work which matches pupils' needs, fills the gaps in their learning and builds on their existing skills
 - expectations of pupils, including the most able, are always high and lessons challenge them to complete their work and achieve their best
 - expectations of pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics are consistently high and pupils have good opportunities to develop investigative skills in science lessons.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing a consistently rigorous system to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2
 - ensuring that teachers receive the training and support they need to improve, which is matched to their particular needs
 - ensuring the SGC has the necessary information it needs to hold the school's leaders to account, and monitor the school's progress
 - working closely with parents and carers to ensure they have confidence that their concerns will be considered and addressed.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Systems to check the quality of teaching and learning are not robust enough to assure consistency against a backdrop of staff changes. Teachers in the early years and Key Stage 1 receive regular feedback on the quality of their teaching and senior leaders follow up targets for improvement quickly to ensure matters have improved. This rigour is not replicated across Key Stage 2.
- Procedures to manage the performance of teachers are not effective in holding all staff fully to account and improving their teaching. Very recent systems to evaluate teaching and pupils' longer-term progress are appropriate but not fully developed. As a result, senior leaders do not have a clear overview of the quality of teaching over time, which takes into account progress data, evidence from pupils' work and the results of monitoring activities.
- Most staff are proud to work in the school and understand what it is trying to achieve. However, a small proportion do not have full confidence in the school's leaders and feel they are not supported well enough to improve their teaching. Senior leaders can identify the main strengths and weaknesses in lessons but do not always communicate these well enough to all teachers.
- Whole-school training has been effective in improving some elements of teaching, such as marking. The school's recent focus on improving teaching and achievement in mathematics has also proved successful. Attainment and progress in mathematics have improved. Other areas of leadership are developing including those who are new to their roles and leaders for English and Key Stage 2.
- The school tracks the progress of pupils carefully. Meetings are usually held with leaders each term to hold teachers to account and to ensure that pupils do not fall behind. Leaders make clear their expectations for pupils' progress across the year. However, they do not set clear enough targets to encourage better than average progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. The school promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through the spiritual arts lessons, a variety of extra-curricular activities, visits to the local area and visitors to the school, such as authors. Pupils talk openly and confidently to each other about a range of issues and relate these to their own experiences. Pupils learn about a range of world religions and beliefs, which helps to promote the British values of tolerance and respect for others.
- Almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire feel their children are well looked after and are happy and safe at school. However, a significant proportion does not agree that the school is well led and managed.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity well, particularly in its care and support for newly arrived pupils, who do as well as pupils who spend a longer time at the school. Pupils who have special educational needs are also well supported.
- Safeguarding arrangements are appropriate. The necessary pre-employment checks are made to ensure that adults are cleared to work with pupils. Staff, including those new to the school, receive child protection training, including how to identify possible signs of abuse and they are aware of the school's procedures should they have any concerns. Adults act appropriately and swiftly if there are any concerns about the welfare of pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the SGC recognise that they have not held the school to account well enough and this is reflected in the minutes of their meetings. There is a degree of frustration surrounding the quality and range of information members receive from the headteacher to help them carry out their responsibilities.
 - The committee does not receive enough regular and detailed information about the quality of teaching and the school's performance.
 - SGC members have planned to visit the school more regularly to see things first hand but these visits are yet to take place.
 - Members of the SGC facilitate some of the strong community links that contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The positive ethos and respectful relationships between adults and pupils pervade the work of the school.
- The new 'Good to be Green' system to promote good behaviour is working well. Pupils are keen to be recognised for behaving well.
- Attitudes to learning are usually good in lessons and positive relationships ensure that lessons run smoothly. Pupils are encouraged to take risks in their work and understand that getting things wrong is an essential part of learning.
- Spiritual arts lessons contribute well to pupils' feelings of self-worth. These lessons provide pupils with good opportunities to consider their place in the world and their relationships with others. Consequently, pupils are confident and polite. They listen to each other well.
- Most pupils say they have a friend to play with. Pupils have some concerns about a very small proportion of pupils who do not always behave well but they feel that staff deal well with these incidents.
- Attendance is above average. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance work well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Almost all parents who responded to the online questionnaire agree that their children are safe at school.
- Pupils move around the school safely and sensibly. Break times are orderly and calm.
- Pupils understand what the main forms of bullying are, including those associated with using technology. They say that bullying hardly ever happens and that adults do their best to deal with it.
- The school records and monitors incidents of behaviour to ensure that matters are improving and to identify any emerging issues so that action can be taken.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across year groups in Key Stage 2. Teachers' expectations are too low in some classes when pupils are not given enough time to complete their work and pupils do not finish tasks.
- Teachers do not always adapt tasks in lessons to ensure they build on pupils' existing skills or challenge pupils well enough. Consequently, pupils, particularly the more able, do not always produce the outcomes that reflect their capabilities. Pupils say that the work is sometimes too easy. The school does not have an agreed approach to ensuring that the more able pupils are consistently challenged in lessons.
- Leaders have set expectations for teaching but not all staff follow these. For instance, some teachers in Key Stage 2 do not build on the good teaching of reading lower down the school. Pupils in some Key Stage 2 classes do not have regular reading lessons to assess their needs or build their skills and comprehension.
- Despite these specific weaknesses, there is a strong culture of reading in the school. The teaching of phonics and early reading skills is effective lower down the school. An excellent range of books and enrichment activities promote pupils' enjoyment of books and they talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors.
- Pupils now write at length on a more regular basis and many respond well to these opportunities to practise their skills.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved. Basic numeracy skills are usually taught well.
- Teachers' respectful and positive relationships with pupils create a good climate for learning. Pupils who are newly arrived settle well and are well supported, so they quickly become part of their classes. Adults act as good role models for pupils. They use praise to promote good attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to take risks in their work and to think of making mistakes as an important part of learning.
- Marking has improved and there are some good examples of effective feedback for pupils, from which other teachers can learn. The school's focus on spelling and grammar has meant that pupils now receive more specific feedback on these important aspects when teachers mark their work.
- In effective lessons, teachers ask searching questions to deepen understanding and fill gaps in learning. For instance, pupils in Year 6 have daily opportunities to work on areas of work they find difficult. In early morning sessions, they consolidate learning in mathematics by using computer programs to practise basic numeracy skills.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive helpful support from learning support assistants in lessons and small catch up groups. Their progress usually matches that of other pupils.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Progress is not even across year groups. Pupils make good progress in FS1 and FS2 and in Key Stage 1 but progress slows in Key Stage 2, particularly in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils often make good progress in Year 6 to ensure they have the necessary skills for the next stage in their education. However, some of the pupils in Year 6 are currently working below expectations in writing. This is because their progress has not been even across year groups.
- Because of the effective teaching of reading and phonics for younger pupils, a higher than average proportion of Year 1 pupils reach the required level in their phonics check.
- Almost all pupils make the expected progress from good and improving outcomes at the end of Year 2 to Year 6 but too few make better than expected progress, particularly in reading.
- By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, their attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. However not enough pupils achieve the higher Level 5 in reading and mathematics
- Pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics is not matched in some other subjects. Pupils do not make good progress in developing their investigative skills in science because some of them do not have enough opportunities to carry out investigations. Pupils' work in some foundation subjects, such as history and geography, does not match the standard in their English books.
- Pupils who attend the school for two or three years achieve similarly to those who have attended for longer periods of time. Transition arrangements are good and pupils quickly settle into the school.

The early years provision

is good

- Most children start school with skills typical for their age. A small proportion are more able. Staff recognise these children quickly and provide activities to build on their existing skills. A small proportion of pupils have significant needs. They too are identified quickly and support is organised for them including through strong partnerships with external agencies on the island.
- Almost all children make expected progress and many make good progress. The proportion of children meeting and exceeding the early learning goals at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (FS2) is above average. This prepares children well for their learning in Year 1.
- Extensive resources and the exceptional environment contribute well to children's breadth of experience in FS1 and FS2 classes.
- Children's personal and social development are promoted well. Children are confident to use good resources to extend their learning. They play alongside, and frequently with, each other well in a variety of situations. For instance, a group of children in FS2 worked co-operatively to build a wall. Adults helped them to extend their language through purposeful questioning.
- A strong emphasis on teaching phonics from the Nursery year (FS1) helps children to begin reading words confidently. Teachers make good links to writing and those pupils who are ready begin to write words during these lessons.
- A culture of reading is established early. Children have regular opportunities to enjoy stories and to take books home.
- Adults in the early years work well with parents who contribute to on-going and full assessments of children's learning at home and in school. Teachers use these assessments to plan activities which will extend learning and build on children's interests.
- The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is aware of where practice can be improved and regularly checks what works well and what can be improved.
- Occasionally the quality of the interactions with children, by less experienced staff, do not match the high quality usually found. This means that, sometimes, children's learning is not extended as well as it could be.

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	132414
Local authority	Service Children's Education
Inspection number	446698

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	140
Appropriate authority	Service Children's Education
Chair	Lt Col Bill Anderson
Headteacher	Sarah Baillie
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2012
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