

# Ayios Nikolaos Primary School

Ayios Nikolaos, Cyprus BFPO 59

## Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The leadership of the headteacher is good. She demonstrates compassion for children and a steely determination for all to succeed. This has enabled the school to improve rapidly since the last inspection.
- The ethos and culture created by the headteacher makes an important and distinctive contribution to the school's exceptionally positive values and beliefs. Governors, leaders, staff and pupils model these values very well.
- The headteacher is ably supported by a strong senior team and the school governance committee. Together, they articulate the vision and ambition to inspire all.
- Leadership, provision and outcomes in the early years are outstanding. Children receive the highest-quality experiences and are very well prepared for key stage 1.
- Leaders' strong actions are securing the future success of the school. Just occasionally, their monitoring does not focus closely enough on the learning and progress of pupils.
- The quality of the curriculum plays a vital role in promoting pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. High-quality plans are rightly in place to develop the curriculum in mathematics even further.
- Effective teaching promotes pupils' strong relationships with other pupils and staff. A culture of mutual respect and tolerance is evident across the school's work.
- Teaching is typically good. Teachers routinely plan lessons that provide interesting and varied activities that stimulate pupils' interests. Some activities planned do not challenge the most able pupils in Years 1 to 4 enough.
- Teaching successfully promotes pupils' good learning habits so that they can act on their feedback and improve their skills between lessons. Checks on pupils' learning during lessons are not always used to the same effect.
- Pupils do not routinely use their knowledge, skills and understanding gained in English lessons in other subjects and topics taught.
- Standards across the school are above average in a range of subjects. Pupils' progress from their starting points is good in Years 1 to 6 and outstanding in the early years.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite, well-mannered, kind and friendly to each other and to adults and visitors.
- Pupils report that they feel very safe. They are knowledgeable about a wide range of safety-related issues, including e-safety.

## **Full report**

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

- Ensure that teachers check pupils' learning throughout lessons, adapt activities and move pupils on more rapidly, especially the most able pupils in Years 1 to 4.
- Make sure that teachers insist on the same standard of grammar and spelling accuracy when pupils write in subjects other than English.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - making sure that leaders place greater precision on the progress and learning of key groups of pupils when they monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' learning
  - developing the curriculum in mathematics to include problem-solving and reasoning and fully cover the requirements of the current national curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leadership and management at Ayios Nikolaos are effective at all levels. The headteacher provides high-quality leadership. She and her team have ensured that pupils' standards have improved since the time of the previous inspection. The school successfully delivers its mission of pursuing the values to provide a highly inclusive education for all those who work and learn here.
- Improving teaching so that it is the best possible quality and never less than good is the leaders' core purpose. The headteacher leads this aspect of work well. Systems to improve the quality of teaching are personalised to each individual. Leaders have a good understanding of what makes teaching effective for pupils at Ayios Nikolaos; they evaluate strengths and areas for improvement with skill. Occasionally, not enough precision or emphasis is given to evaluating pupils' learning and progress when conducting the wide range of monitoring activities.
- Leaders' checking of the education being provided at the school is effective and leading to measureable gains in pupils' knowledge and skills across all subjects.
- Leaders ensure that staff have many opportunities to develop their expertise for the benefit of pupils. Training is well planned; it is linked carefully to teachers' targets for improvement and the school development plan. Historical weak performance has been robustly tackled and teachers' strengths are now being used more widely to ensure that pupils' progress is consistently good.
- Middle leaders are unanimous in their view that they are well supported and held to account for their work. Effective training is further strengthening their impact on finding new approaches to improve teaching and pupils' learning.
- The curriculum is extremely broad and well balanced. It enables all groups of pupils to pursue their personal interests and academic development. The effectiveness of the curriculum is reflected in the strong progress pupils make as they move through the school. Leaders have developed high-quality plans to develop the curriculum even further in mathematics in order to fully meet the requirements of the current national curriculum and to further improve pupils' mathematical reasoning skills.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is impressive and contributes significantly to the welcoming ethos created at the school. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated. The school's chosen approach to teaching, with a strong emphasis on developing positive learning behaviours, builds pupils' skills of reflection well. Pupils are reflective not only about matters of faith and personal responsibility but also about their academic work and progress.
- Very carefully planned programmes of study, including the development of pupils' personal skills, provide an excellent foundation for pupils' appreciation of modern British values. Pupils' understanding is enhanced when experiences are blended with rich topics, such as 'The Journey of Life and Death – the ultimate quest'. Pupils' leadership skills are developed exceptionally well through a wide and varied range of activities, including the democratically elected school council.
- Staff at the school know the precise needs of each pupil very well. The detailed

knowledge they hold is used very carefully to tailor support for each pupil. The additional resource allocated for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is considered with care and attention to detail. Therefore, their personal and academic needs are met well and this ensures that they make progress at the same rate as their peers.

- The school's funding to increase pupils' participation in physical activity and improve their performance in physical education (PE) and sport is used effectively. Sporting activities are increasingly popular. A high proportion of pupils across the school enjoy taking part in competitive school sports. Activities and clubs, even for the youngest children, are very broad and range from table tennis to trampolining. The well-resourced playground and hall increase opportunities for high-quality whole-class PE and sport.
- Parents value the quality of education the school provides for their children. Satisfaction with the school is therefore high. Nearly all parents who responded to Parent View indicated that they would recommend the school to another parent. Positive responses to all the questions posed are higher than those found typically for primary schools. Parents spoken to, when dropping their children to school, were also very positive about the school.

### **Governance of the school**

- The school governance committee (SGC) has gone through many changes over the last 12 months. Committee members have ensured that, through effective recruitment, the committee now has a good blend of skills on which to draw. As a direct result of their actions, standards are rising rapidly across the school. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school, as well as the areas that still need to improve. The minutes of SGC meetings are detailed and evaluative. Reports are regularly produced and demonstrate clearly how governors hold school leaders to account for the performance of the school. Any concerns about pupils' safety and well-being are followed up rigorously by committee members, who have a sharp understanding of all welfare matters.

### **Safeguarding**

- All involved in the school community are deeply committed to keeping pupils safe. The necessary checks are made to confirm that those who wish to work with children are suitable. Leaders ensure that all staff receive up-to-date training to be able to identify and swiftly act on signs of risk or harm. Thorough written records provide a high degree of reassurance in the way incidents are immediately picked up and tackled. Pupils and parents are confident that issues are followed up.
- The strong emphasis on pupils' personal development promotes their positive behaviour. Respect and courtesy are the norm. De-escalation strategies are emphasised through agreed anti-bullying and behaviour approaches. Where pupils may display some inappropriate behaviour, leaders have appropriate strategies and training in place for staff to deal with any incidents safely. Effective links are evident with a range of outside agencies to cater for vulnerable pupils. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The consistently good quality of teaching is underpinned by teachers' excellent understanding of each pupil's personal needs. Teachers also use their strong subject knowledge and understanding to plan interesting and exciting sequences of lessons that meet pupils' academic needs well. The high expectations teachers set for pupils are enabling all to progress well in a range of subjects.
- Lessons are well planned and carefully tailored to meet the individual needs and aptitudes of most pupils. Teachers make effective use of the school's assessment system to identify what pupils know, understand and can do to ensure that pupils are given the right amount of support or challenge. The good subject knowledge of teachers enables them to track the progress of pupils through different aspects of the curriculum closely.
- The school's chosen approach of teaching helps pupils to reflect successfully on their learning. Information is used to provide interesting, or sometimes controversial, views and work which effectively promotes a deeper understanding and wider curiosity about learning.
- The teaching of English is effective. This helps pupils to be clear both in expressing themselves and in becoming proficient and enthusiastic readers. Pupils' writing skills are promoted and developed well in English lessons. Their handwriting and presentation of work is of a good standard. Pupils write confidently for a range of different purposes and contexts, for example when creating leaflets explaining how they made robots at the local secondary school as part of the 'Mighty Metals' topic. However, pupils do not always apply their knowledge of spelling and grammar to other subjects and therefore the standard of their writing in other curriculum areas is not as high.
- Teachers use their skills well to check and guide pupils in their learning between lessons. The information is used to challenge most pupils, stimulate their engagement and prompt further exploration. The quality of teachers' questioning, along with their classroom management, has improved since the last inspection. However, questioning does not always check pupils' learning closely enough during lessons so they can be moved on more rapidly. Consequently, some pupils' learning falters, especially the most able in Years 1 to 4.
- The range of approaches used in mathematics lessons is supporting pupils' learning and developing their understanding of mathematical concepts well. Clear instructions develop pupils' knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shape properties. Additional activities effectively challenge the most able pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example through linear sequencing patterns and puzzles. Overall, however, planned activities do not place enough emphasis on developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills in order to secure their deeper mathematical thinking.
- Work in pupils' books illustrates a wide range of interesting and varied tasks. Themes, such as 'What happens when I fall asleep?' and 'The Suffragettes', capture pupils' imagination and promote their inquisitiveness. Teachers' marking and feedback is thorough and follows the school's policy of providing clear guidance for pupils' next steps in learning. Pupils are clear about how to act on any points provided.

- Other adults are a vital part of the team and its success in this school. They support pupils well in lessons through high-quality support and challenge, helping pupils to develop their basic English and mathematical skills as well as support their learning in other subjects across the curriculum. Around the school, they support pupils during lunchtime, assist with supervision at breaktimes and run additional clubs.
- Homework is used well to supplement lessons, reinforce learning or prompt further enquiry.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have a very well-developed understanding of how to be a successful learner. In lessons they debate and discuss their learning in a considered and thoughtful manner. Pupils' deep understanding of others' views is reflected in the harmonious way they work and learn together.
- All parents who responded to Parent View reported that they feel their child is safe in school. Pupils also report that they feel safe at all times. Pupils spoken to showed a deep understanding of what it means to say you feel safe.
- Pupils report that they feel very safe because aspects of safety feature strongly in the school's curriculum, such as how to light fires at the Forest School. Pupils have a very mature and well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations in and out of school.
- Pupils have been taught how to keep safe when using new technologies and are confident about what to do and who to talk to if they feel unsure about something. They develop a good understanding of how to use social media safely when reviewing their reading books using the secure online peer review system. The secure discussion forum for pupils in key stage 2 provides a highly safe and effective environment to practise social media communication online.
- Care for those pupils who need additional support is thorough and well documented. Strong working relationships with a range of outside agencies, such as the army welfare services, help to ensure the safety of these pupils. Those pupils who join the school other than at the normal times are helped to settle very quickly so that no time is lost with their learning.
- Planned activities prepare pupils very well for life beyond school. Pupils' understanding about how their learning in design and technology may help them in the future is developed well when working alongside the Royal Engineers to construct and evaluate bridge designs. Such experiences bring learning to life for pupils in real contexts and develop their understanding of how to apply their learned personal skills to everyday living.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning across a range of subjects. Those who

spoke with an inspector in lessons, around the school and in meetings were equally positive about all aspects of the school. Pupils are especially welcoming of the way everyone at the school looks after them and prepares them for life after Ayios Nikolaos, and beyond school.

- Behaviour in lessons is typically good. Pupils are confident that any issue, no matter how minor, will be dealt with. They are proud of the part they play in the life of the school. Pupils conduct themselves with pride. Around the school, they are polite, calm, orderly and, most of all, friendly. The school environment is immaculate, with not one sign of litter to be seen, reflecting the way pupils care about themselves, each other and their school.
- The welcoming school culture and ethos permeate all aspects of the school's work, including daily teaching. Most pupils develop a mature approach to managing their own learning behaviour. Their well-developed reflection skills, teamwork and ability to cooperate with each other play a strong part in their academic achievement and, in particular, their personal development.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View agree that pupils are well behaved. Staff also state that pupils' behaviour is of a good standard. Absence rates are consistently below the national average. Systems to follow up absence or missing children are thorough. There have been very few exclusions for the past three years.
- Current pupils keenly shared their positive views of behaviour with inspectors. All hold a deep understanding of different types of bullying and report that it is infrequent at the school. The high number of pupils who join are welcomed wholeheartedly into the school community. Inspectors spoke to a number of parents whose children joined the school other than at the normal times. They were pleased about the school's profoundly positive impact on their children's confidence, attitude and progress since they started at the school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Children in the early years make outstanding progress. Throughout the nursery (FS1) and Reception (FS2) provision, children experience a very wide range of stimulating activities and teaching that leads to their rapid and sustained progress. Over the last few years, outcomes at the end of FS2 have been well above the national average for all areas of learning.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been above the national average for the last two years. High-quality, precise and lively teaching of phonics indicates that this positive trend is likely to continue for all pupil groups.
- The design and delivery of the curriculum plays a strong part in pupils' good academic progress and their outstanding personal development.
- Pupils make good progress from their different starting points throughout the school. School records show that children make rapid progress through early years from levels of skill typical for their age. School data and work in the books of key stage 2 pupils show that the proportion of pupils making the expected, and better than expected,



rates of progress is above average when compared to the national figures.

- In response to effective teaching, rates of progress are good overall for pupils currently at the school. This reflects the school's successful efforts to ensure that the quality of teaching is equally strong across the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are catered for well. They receive personalised support and challenge during daily lessons. Close liaison with external specialists and agencies enables bespoke academic plans to be devised. These are delivered with high quality. Consequently, these pupils make good gains in confidence and thrive academically, progressing at similar rates to their peers.
- The older most able pupils respond enthusiastically to the stimulating challenges presented to them. Pupils are provided with additional challenge when working alongside secondary-age pupils at King Richard's School. Older pupils demonstrate a good understanding of mathematical formulae, for example to solve problems involving the area and circumference of circles. However, the same level of expectation and challenge is not evident for most-able pupils in Years 1 to 4, and therefore their progress is slower.
- Pupils' reading skills develop rapidly due to the interesting and varied themes and topics covered. Teachers build on the strong, lively and engaging teaching of phonics successfully further up the school through spelling, punctuation and formal grammar activities in the English curriculum. High-quality, challenging texts sustain the older most able pupils' strong learning and provoke challenging debates on topics.
- A large number of pupils arrive or leave other than at the normal times. Regardless of their starting points, needs or abilities, pupils quickly make up any lost ground from the moment they start. When pupils leave at the end of Year 6 they typically reach above-average standards in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge of writing to plan tasks that enable pupils to practise their skills in English lessons. However, the same level of expectation is not always evident in other areas of the curriculum. This is one of the reasons that standards in writing lag slightly behind other subjects.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- The leadership of the early years is outstanding. Leaders ensure that children get off to a flying start through highly effective liaison between the FS1 and FS2 classes. Close working and sharing of information means that the transition process for children who move into Reception is seamless.
- Staff prioritise keeping children safe. They work carefully with parents at all times to make sure that children's personal and emotional needs are developed just as effectively as their academic learning. Children feel very safe and their attitudes and resilience to tackling new activities and learning are extremely impressive.
- Staff develop very supportive relationships with and between children. As a result, children relish the chances they get to learn with and from each other. This underpins their highly successful progress during Reception, especially in developing their communication, language and literacy skills. For example, children avidly discuss poetry



when reading with adults and develop their knowledge of sounds. Two children enjoyed playing with sounds when imagining 'zooming to the moon' as part of their topic on space.

- Children also make large gains in developing their self-confidence and readiness to learn. Children greatly enjoy their learning and behave extremely well. This is because they are equally included in a stimulating range of indoor and outdoor learning experiences.
- The Forest School adds considerably to children's positive experience in Reception. Children develop their imagination and an awareness of space when climbing trees and branches. They develop good levels of basic control to cut up sticks and grip equipment. They learn about safety when collecting firewood.
- Children learn equally well when choosing their own practical work. This is because adults watch and listen carefully to each child during activities. The moment any child becomes disengaged, staff act swiftly to support them. If necessary, staff adapt an activity, prompt a further challenge or move on to different activities to restore or maintain the child's interest.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use the information they know about children to carefully plan the next steps in each child's learning journey. Staff noticed that children's understanding of people and their communities required further improvement so planned activities to promote this aspect of the curriculum. For example, children carefully used their developing writing skills to label food bought during role-play activities from the imaginary shop. High levels of concentration, thinking and perseverance were evident.

## School details

Unique reference number	132414
Local authority	Ministry of Defence Schools
Inspection number	10019064

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	132
Appropriate authority	Ministry of Defence Schools
Chair	Nat Baker
Headteacher	Sarah Baillie
Telephone number	0035 2395 7548
Website	<a href="http://www.school-portal.co.uk/GroupHomepage.asp?GroupID=723205">www.school-portal.co.uk/GroupHomepage.asp?GroupID=723205</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:ayn.secretary@scseschools.org">ayn.secretary@scseschools.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	8–9 October 2014

## Information about this school

- Ayios Nikolaos is a smaller-than-average primary school with a nursery (FS1). Children attend the nursery for part of the day.
- The school serves the children of British Forces and civilian families based at Ayios Nikolaos station.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are both below average.
- In common with many other Ministry of Defence schools, the number of children and staff who join or leave other than at the normal times is very high. Most of the movements are continuous rather than whole-unit movements. 93% of all pupils either left or joined the school in the 2015/16 academic year.
- Since the last section 5 inspection, there have been a number of significant changes to the SGC and support staff. The current chair of the SGC has been in post since

January 2016 and the vice-chair since September 2016.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school does not receive any pupil premium or sports premium funding. The school uses its delegated funding to support the development of sports and PE in the manner typically seen of schools in England.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in lessons. They reviewed pupils' work, talked to pupils in lessons and analysed samples of work across a range of subjects.
- Meetings were held with different groups of pupils to discuss their views about the school and to listen to pupils with a range of abilities read.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, middle leaders and seven members of the school governance committee, including the chair.
- Inspectors viewed a range of documents, including information on pupils' achievement, the school's current assessment information and its summary self-evaluation report. They also looked at the school's improvement plan, documents relating to safeguarding and records of behaviour and attendance.
- The inspectors took account of the 45 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to some parents at the beginning of the school day.

## Inspection team

Richard Light, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Catherine Leahy

Her Majesty's Inspector

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