



St David's Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 132391
Inspection dates 11/12th July
Reporting inspector Leszek Iwaskow HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Type of School | Primary | School address | UKSU |
| School category | MoD | | Ramstein |
| Age range of pupils | 3 - 11 | | BFPO 109 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 0049 6371 42717 |
| Number on roll | 81 | Fax number | 0049 6371 44490 |
| Appropriate authority | Service Children's Education (SCE) | Chair of governors | Squadron Leader Anjie Sutton |
| Date of previous inspection | 8 -11 May 2001 | Headteacher | Mrs V Cook |

| | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Age group | Published | Reference no. |
| 3-11 | 20 th July 2006 | 132391 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

St David's School is a very small school which serves the primary-aged children of the British military community who work on the large American Air Force base at Ramstein in south west Germany. Uniquely, the military community is comprised of Royal Air Force personnel, unlike other schools in Germany. The vast majority of pupils are children of service families; very few are from single parent families, none are 'in care' and only one is of non-white heritage. An increasing number of pupils have a parent on detachment to 'risk zones'. Pupils enjoy comfortable homes and a relatively affluent way of life although a lack of access to extended family support is a negative factor.

The British community has been 'downsized' in recent years. This has been reflected in declining numbers attending the school. Recently numbers have improved slightly because an increasing number of pupils from non-British service/contract families are now attending the school, including Dutch and American. More frequent posting changes, has increased pupil mobility, leading to interruptions in pupils' education and the need to constantly review targets. Equally, support staff are usually dependants of Service personnel which also leads to a high turnover. Most pupils are bussed in, some from quite a distance. The school is relatively isolated from the other SCE schools in Germany.

The attainment of pupils on entry is broadly average. Approximately 10% of pupils are on the SEN register but none have statements. There are no pupils with EAL (English as an additional language) needs.

The current head teacher was appointed in 2003. Recruitment and retention of staff is an issue and there has recently been a high turnover in both teaching and support staff. The school recently received a 'Leading Aspect Award in Excellent Early Years Practice'.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

St David's is an effective school with some outstanding features. The quality of pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding and pupils are very happy coming to school. The headteacher has made a good impact in moving the school forward and this is evident in the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage and improvements that have taken place since the last inspection. However, the school acknowledges that room for improvement remains, especially in developing and managing the wider curriculum as well as providing greater challenge for the more able pupils.

Overall, pupils make good progress as they move through the school particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teaching is good and it is outstanding in the Foundation Stage, where the children benefit from the many real-life practical experiences. Pupils are well cared for and feel safe and secure. Their behaviour is excellent and they are a real credit to the school and their parents.

The core curriculum is now well established and the Foundation Stage is well managed and flourishing. The role of the subject managers with responsibility for subjects outside of the core has made some progress but remains, as yet, not well enough developed and pupils' experiences are not of the same high quality as they are in the core subjects. There are clear strengths on which to build and the school has real potential to become even better.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure that co-ordinators manage and monitor the subjects outside of the core (the foundation subjects) more effectively;
- improve the quality of provision in the foundation subjects through more focussed subject specific training to develop teachers' confidence and expertise;
- provide more challenge for the more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Inspectors agree with the school that overall standards and achievement are good. Standards in the core subjects are above average and most pupils make good progress from a broadly average starting point. Reliable statistical comparisons are often difficult as the numbers taking tests at the end of each key stage are very small. However, the most able pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of.

Pupils get off to a very good start in the Foundation Stage. They benefit from a wide range of experiences which develop their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative expression. The majority of pupils make above average progress in all six areas of learning, but slightly less progress in mathematical development than in language and communication.

Overall standards in both key stages are consistently above national averages, although there have been some issues with mathematics in recent years where performance has been relatively weaker when compared to other core subjects. Performance data shows that the recent school focus on improving attainment in mathematics has been successful with this year's Year 6 pupils achieving well and attaining higher standards. However, the same high standards do not always apply to other subjects in the broader curriculum.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

The school judges that pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The inspection team are of the opinion that the school is being unduly modest and rate them as outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school. As one parent remarked, 'I have difficulty in getting him to come home!' Pupils are developing into confident, independent learners. Their working habits are excellent. They pay close attention to their teachers, get on with tasks and show a real desire to learn. The behaviour of pupils is exemplary both in the classroom and outside in the playground. They show respect for people and property and care for those younger than themselves. Pupils are courteous, polite and relate well to adults.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is reflected in the very positive attitudes and concern that they display towards others. They have a very clear understanding of fair play and a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils of all ages are developing a good understanding of

what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They appreciate the need for physical exercise and a balanced diet. They are conscious of the advice to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. A school council has recently been established through which pupils voice their opinions about the school and suggest ways of improving it. They are beginning to learn about democracy and the responsibility associated with decision making.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that teaching is good overall. It is outstanding in the Foundation Stage where the teaching meets pupil's learning needs very effectively. Pupils are purposefully engaged and are given opportunities to explore the world around them and develop into independent learners. Notable features are the teachers' high expectations of pupil's behaviour, the imaginative activities that stimulate learning and the high quality relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils are well prepared for the National Curriculum.

Good teaching was observed in both key stages. These lessons were characterised by; planning that clearly stated what the pupils were expected to learn and was shared with them, good subject knowledge that was reflected in activities which engage and stimulate pupils, clear explanations, effective questioning that enhanced pupils' understanding, and classroom management that instilled good working habits. The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils is good. Assessment is used well to identify pupil's needs and to plan the next steps in their learning. These factors result in most learners making good progress. Marking of pupils' work is helpful and motivating, this is particularly evident in English although it is less apparent in the other subjects. Teaching is less effective when the purpose of the lesson is vague, pupils' learning needs are not catered for, monitoring of pupils progress during the lesson is minimal and consequently too many opportunities for intervention, in order to support and enhance learning, are lost. The more able pupils are not always being stretched in all classes.

The impact of teaching assistants on learning is generally good and outstanding in the Foundation Stage. This is evident where the teacher and the teaching assistant share planning, enabling support to be effectively focussed. On some occasions too much time is spent observing the teacher teach and this is unproductive. Effective systems are in place to track pupil's progress and set

targets for improvement in English, mathematics and behaviour. Pupils are aware of their targets and are intent on attaining them.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

The school considers that the curricular provision is good. Inspectors disagree and judge it to be only satisfactory overall but with some good aspects. The pupils gain a great deal from the many visits and extra curricular opportunities provided for them. They talk with enthusiasm about their visits to Berg Altena, the Tutankhamen exhibition in Bonn and skiing in the Bavarian mountains. These excursions support and develop their personal growth, team work and collaborative skills as well as stimulate their curiosity. However, teachers do not exploit the potential of the visits in the classroom by adding real substance and a personal context to learning in history, art, geography or design and technology for example.

Pupils learn a great deal about American culture due to the proximity of the large American enclave. They are aware of the 4th of July and Thanksgiving. However, they are less exposed to the rich opportunities offered by living in Germany. The children's German language speaking is underdeveloped and they only have a limited understanding of the rich traditions and cultural heritage of the 'host nation'. The school has recognised this and has made the development of this aspect of the curriculum a priority. New links have recently been established with a nearby German school and there are plans to make better use of the locality in this beautiful part of Germany.

The curriculum provided in the Foundation Stage is of very high quality. Pupils have very good access to the six areas of learning and there is a good balance between child initiated and adult directed activities. Learning is very well linked to real life, such as when the children visit the local shops to purchase the fruit and vegetables they have chosen for their morning snacks.

The school has focused on improving standards in core subjects and this curriculum is well established. However, pupils are not always being exposed to sufficient quality experiences in other subjects. In some classes, teachers are not always covering what has been planned and they are dipping into subjects rather than delivering a sequence of related lessons. As a result, the broader curriculum is not being delivered in sufficient depth or in a consistent enough way to build up a real understanding and develop skills progressively.

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support

The quality of care, guidance and support is good and this reflects the view of the school. Pupils feel safe and secure. All staff care for each individual and this is evident in the quality of relationships that underpin a 'family' ethos. The warm, friendly environment is recognized and appreciated by parents. Teachers and support staff have clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and this culminates in the development of good working habits that play a significant part in the progress that pupils make. The support for pupils with learning difficulties is good. Individual learning plans for such pupils contain learning targets and progress is carefully monitored. The progress that these pupils make is as good as that made by other groups.

Good links with external agencies, such as education welfare and educational psychology help to sustain pupils' progress. Child protection procedures are in place. There is no evidence of bullying by pupils and this is confirmed by the pupils themselves. However, there is no doubt that, should it occur, the pupils would know who to turn to for help. The induction arrangements for new pupils are good and they settle in quickly. Pupils are set, and are aware of, their learning targets in English, mathematics and in their attitudes to work. Marking of pupils' work in English is informative in that it explains how they can improve. However, in some classes, it is less effective in mathematics and almost non-existent in other subjects.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Inspectors judge the leadership and management to be satisfactory overall. The headteacher has initiated many positive changes over the last few years and this is evidenced in the significant improvements in the Foundation Stage, and the way she has tackled issues from the previous inspection. Provision for physical education and facilities for games are much improved. There have been noticeable improvements in outdoor play facilities for all ages and effective use is now being made of the limited open space. Equally, discrete ICT lessons ensure all pupils receive their minimum entitlement. She has a clear vision for the school and has recognised weaknesses in areas such as mathematics, which resulted in focused support and resources to help raise standards. She has managed to initiate improvements despite the small size of the school, recent staffing issues and the peripheral position the school has in relation to other SCE establishments and support.

The role of subject leaders was acknowledged as being unsatisfactory three years ago and systems have been put into place to develop their responsibility and effectiveness. This has been supported with training to raise awareness of their role. However, outside the core subjects, management remains inconsistent and less effective. In particular, there is insufficient rigour in the monitoring process and weaker practice is not being sufficiently challenged or supported. As a result, pupils are getting a raw deal in some subjects. Subject leaders are using good methodology such as pupil audits to gauge pupils' perceptions but these are not being analysed with sufficient rigour to inform improvements. Where teachers have received good support and good practice has been shared, such as in planning and developing the mathematics curriculum through a collaborative approach, real progress has been made. However, subject leaders are far too often working in isolation and not being held sufficiently to account.

The greater majority of parents are supportive of the work of the school. Improvements are well thought out and action is taken with the pupils' best interests and needs very much at heart. However, a minority of parents do not believe that their views are taken sufficiently into account. Senior management should work more closely with parents so that they appreciate why decisions are made. The SAC (School Advisory Committee) is keen to develop the role of critical friend to the professional staff. Based on the progress already made, the school has a good capacity to improve.

Grade: 3

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Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</i> | School Overall | 16–19 |
|---|----------------|-------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 | |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 3 | |
| The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage | 1 | |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 | |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 | |
| The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by learners | 2 | |
| How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 | |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 | |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 | |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 | |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 | |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community. | 2 | |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 | |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 2 | |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 | |

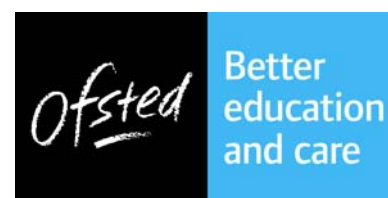
¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|------------|--|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 | |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 | |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 3 | |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 | |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 | |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 | |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | |
| Does this school require special measures? | No | |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No | |

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | Delete as appropriate |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily. | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise. | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse. | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health. | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe. | Delete as appropriate |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements. | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place. | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism. | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them. | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | Delete as appropriate |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships. | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them. | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | Delete as appropriate |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills. | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams. | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form. | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy. | NA |

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St David's Primary School
UKSU
Ramstein
BFPO 109

Dear Children

You may remember that we recently visited your school to look at all the things you do and how well you are learning and maturing. We enjoyed our visit and would like to thank you for all your help. You clearly enjoy coming to school because it is a good school. It could be even better! Most of you are making good progress in your lessons and you particularly benefit when the teachers provide you with lots of practical activities to make your lessons interesting and rewarding.

You also enjoyed visiting your partner German school, going skiing in the mountains and observing the Corpus Christi celebrations at the church opposite. You could make greater use of the beautiful area in which you live to learn more about the many local traditions and customs as well as use this opportunity to improve your German.

We were particularly impressed by the way you are so well behaved and enjoy helping each other. We know that many of you have fun playing sport and making use of the improved outdoor play facilities. You all are aware of the need to eat healthily and it is good to hear that you pester your parents and encourage them to buy 'healthy' food.

We have asked your teachers to make your lessons even more enjoyable especially those subjects such as art, history, geography etc which you study in the afternoons.

We thought you are very lucky to have such a wonderful opportunity to attend a school in such a beautiful area and we are sure that when it is time to move on you will remember your time at St David's with fond affection.

Thank you again

Leszek Iwaskow HMI
Christopher Keeler HMI

Her Majesty's Inspectors