

Brüggen School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132379
Local Authority	Service Children's Education
Inspection number	346475
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson HMI

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	205
Appropriate authority	Service Children's Education
Chair	Lt Col A Fallows
Headteacher	Mrs Di Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2007
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and the vice chair of the school governance committee. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the school improvement plan, examples of leaders' monitoring, records for tracking pupils' progress, and samples of pupils' work. Questionnaires submitted by 49 parents were scrutinised along with those completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how effectively pupils learn and make progress between Years 3 and 6
- the success of the school's strategies to raise standards in writing
- how well teachers use assessment strategies, including targets, to promote good learning and progress
- how effectively leaders at different levels monitor the school's work and make changes for the better.

Information about the school

The school serves families from the military community at the Javelin Barracks. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. A few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are no pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed unit catering for children in Foundation Stage 1 and Foundation Stage 2. In common with most Service Children's Education schools, many pupils join and leave the school during the year. Since the last inspection there has been high turnover in teachers, teaching assistants and the chair and vice chair positions on the school governance committee.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Brügggen School has improved in some important areas since its last inspection and its overall effectiveness is good. The school is a caring place in which to learn and work. Pupils find adults very fair and supportive. They enjoy the varied and interesting activities and are happy at school. Many parents are also pleased with the school. Its work in helping pupils to keep safe and to lead healthy and active lives is particularly highlighted. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have focused on the right priorities and have had a clear impact. The school is well led and has some key strengths, including the quality of teaching, the curriculum and in the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Good planning, skilful questioning and well-focused teaching are evident in most lessons. Pupils are given precise and helpful short-term targets. Teachers make learning interesting and enjoyable and invite pupils to reflect on and talk about their learning. These good qualities are not fully consistent, however, in Key Stage 2. Occasionally, the planning and the teaching strategies are not effective, time is not used well and pupils' understanding and learning are not checked well enough during the lesson.

Pupils' overall learning and progress are consistently strong in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2. They slow to satisfactory in Year 3 but pick up during the rest of the key stage, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Standards are broadly average at Year 6 but writing is weaker than reading and mathematics. The school has focused on improving writing standards for some time, with mixed success. The strategies that the school has put into place are having a positive effect in most classes. There are some examples of very good progress in writing. Here assessments and short-term targets are used effectively alongside careful, detailed marking to identify what pupils do well and to point the way forward. This good practice is not as evident in Year 3, where writing targets are not as precise and regular and pupils not routinely involved in setting and reviewing them. More generally in Key Stage 2, the quality of pupils' writing in topic work is not as good as the work completed in literacy lessons and those dedicated solely to writing.

The headteacher's evaluation of the school is accurate and supported by a range of evidence. Individual pupils' progress is monitored through checking their assessments but there is a long gap between January and June when their progress is not reviewed sufficiently. This is especially important for the few pupils who have made slower progress in reading and/or writing during the earlier part of the year.

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The school's track record since the last inspection in improving key aspects, including pupils' achievement, demonstrates its good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of pupils' learning and progress in Key Stage 2, especially in Year 3, by:
 - sharing the good practice that already exists, particularly in relation to planning, setting short-term targets, and the range of strategies for checking and promoting pupils' progress during lessons
 - ensuring all teachers make the best use of the time available to have the maximum impact on pupils' learning.

- Sharpen the quality and effectiveness of leaders' monitoring by:
 - checking individual pupils' progress more regularly during the year
 - focusing more closely on the learning of individuals and groups of pupils when lessons are observed or pupils' work scrutinised.

- Improve pupils' standards in writing by Year 6, by:
 - ensuring pupils in all classes are given helpful and precise short-term targets for the steps they need to take next
 - involving pupils more actively in reviewing and setting their targets
 - making sure that marking is sufficiently specific to help pupils improve their writing
 - having similarly high expectations of pupils when they are asked to write in lessons other than literacy.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils lower down the school are taught about letters and sounds in a coherent and consistent way. This is improving standards by Year 2 in reading and writing, particularly at the higher Level 3, and contributing to the above average standards by Year 2. Although these standards do not continue to Year 6, the pupils now in Year 6 who have been in the school for two years or more have achieved well in writing and mathematics.

Pupils work hard in lessons and persevere with their learning, especially in the lessons that generate high levels of interest. Their concentration and involvement slips only occasionally when lessons are not as motivating and move at a slower pace. They enjoy working collaboratively and sharing ideas or answers to questions with a partner when asked to do so. Pupils' behaviour is good and this received a strong endorsement from parents. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils' moral and social development is good. They are friendly and open and willing to talk frankly about their opinions, the things that affect them and are important to them in their lives. The playground is a very active place where adults on duty also join in with play and model good relationships and social skills. Pupils show initiative, willingly take

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responsibility and show strong commitment to supporting charitable causes. They enjoy taking part in events in the local community and with other local schools.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers build good relationships with pupils and some teaching is extremely effective and engaging. A striking example occurred in Year 1, when pupils were coming up with a wealth of ideas during role play before devising their own rule books for pirates. This led to imaginative writing. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils to help them in their learning. The teaching of phonics is now much more consistent in Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and some effective sessions were observed. Marking is mostly good but opportunities are sometimes missed to help pupils improve their work. This occurs when teachers' comments are too general and relate more to how well, or not, pupils have worked rather than to the specific writing or mathematics focus.

The school has worked hard to plan an imaginative, broad and interesting curriculum which builds links across subjects and develops specific skills. Pupils report they enjoy the topics and the visits and visitors associated with them. Good opportunities are provided to learn outdoors including lessons such as mathematics and science. The school quickly identifies pupils who need additional support and there are examples of pupils benefiting considerably and making good progress. Links with the Unit Welfare Officer and other support agencies are good. Attendance is promoted effectively and any persistent absence is tackled appropriately.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The questionnaires completed by staff for the inspection were entirely positive. Written comments from both teaching and non-teaching staff demonstrate that staff feel valued and supported and part of a strong cohesive team. There is good commitment to equality of opportunity and procedures are in place to make sure that all pupils achieve well. The senior leadership team's monitoring of pupils' progress is systematic and determines where focused additional teaching needs to take place to speed up the progress of individual pupils. This has improved pupils' achievement, particularly in Years 5 and 6, but has not yet led to good progress in every year group. One reason for this is that the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's evaluations of observed lessons are too general in relation to the quality of learning. They lack detail on how well different groups of pupils learn.

The school has well established and strong partnership with the military community. Positive links have also been established with the host nation and local community. The school acknowledges that links with other parts of the world beyond Germany and the Service Children's Education community are not as well developed.

Requirements for safeguarding pupils are met and the responsibilities of staff are clear and well known. Appropriate training is in place with good attention to recruitment checks. Continuity in governance has been affected to some extent by mobility and changes in membership. However, members of the school governance committee receive informative reports from the headteacher, including information on pupils' standards and achievement. The vice chair, who is currently covering for the chair, has a good understanding of the school's priorities. Members have more limited involvement in the school's self-evaluation.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities	3

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met	
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	n/a

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start Foundation Stage 1, their skills and abilities are just below those normally expected. The good provision means that, by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, outcomes are generally above expectations for their age. Teachers and teaching assistants provide a broad range of opportunities across all the required areas, with plenty of opportunity for exploration and creative play. Plans and approaches are rooted in a secure knowledge of how young children learn. Teachers ensure a good balance between activities that allow children to make choices and follow their interests and those that have a more specific, directed focus. The base is very well resourced. This includes the outside area, which is used very well throughout the day to promote children's learning and development. Vibrant indoor displays also create a stimulating and colourful environment for the children.

All staff work effectively as a team and the safety and welfare of children is given high priority. Ratios of adults to children are generous and staff are managed and deployed well so that everyone is clear about the focus of their work. There is a clear commitment to involving all children and staff keep a sharp eye out for any who are playing alone or may feel excluded. Most of the teaching assistants interact very effectively with the children and draw on a range of questioning techniques to promote their ideas, thinking and talk. Good use is made of photographs to record children's experiences and regular opportunities are planned to develop early writing skills. Staff observe children carefully on an informal basis and know the children well. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to record observations to include in children's individual learning profiles.

The arrangements for combining Foundation Stage 1 and 2 in a single unit are new from this year and they have been successful. The changes have been managed and introduced effectively and staff are positive about the revised approach. The headteacher has played a key role in the improvements and is continuing to keep a careful oversight of the unit's work while the school is in the process of recruiting a new leader for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents' questionnaires show that the very large majority are pleased with the school's work. Parents' positive comments far outweighed negative ones. No parents expressed any concerns over the pupils' behaviour and 100% confirmed the school keep pupils safe and promotes healthy lifestyles. Positive comments often related to parents' satisfaction with the progress their children are making and how happy their children are at school. Inspectors' findings endorse all these views. There were no common themes arising from the very few negative comments from parents. Their comments were nonetheless explored during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brüggem School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	65	15	31	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	49	25	51	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	26	53	20	41	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	53	18	37	5	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	53	21	43	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	24	49	22	45	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	47	26	53	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	17	35	25	51	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	26	53	18	37	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	43	24	49	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	47	23	47	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	49	21	43	2	4	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	29	59	14	29	6	12	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brügggen School, BFPO 35, Germany

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited it recently. Many of you spoke to us about your work and what it is like to be a pupil at Brügggen School. We would like to thank you very much for helping us in our work. A special thank you goes to the two groups of pupils who had a meeting with an inspector.

We found that your school is good. It is giving you a good education and you learn a lot during the time that you are at Brügggen. There are several things that are good: you are taught well; the teachers organise lots of interesting things for you to do, including visits and visitors; and all the adults look after you to make sure you feel safe and happy. Another important thing that is good about the school is you. You all get on well together, support one another and behave well. This makes the school a happy place to go to each day. Your parents told us that they are also pleased about this and the progress you make. Even though your school is good, there are some things that we have asked the headteacher and staff to do to make it even better.

- In most lessons, teachers plan work that is at the right level for you, tell you what you need to focus on to get better, give you really helpful targets and opportunities to think about how well you have met them. We have asked that all teachers do this.
- We have asked the headteacher and other leaders to check how well each of you is learning when they come to your lessons to watch you learn or look at your books.
- Your writing is not as good as your reading and mathematics and we have asked that all teachers give you good guidance and help with your writing, not just in literacy lessons but in topic and other lessons too.

I am sure you will all try hard to do your best at school, particularly in your writing, so that next time we visit we will see even more improvement.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Dickinson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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