



Prince Rupert School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 132389
 Local Authority Service Children Education
 Inspection number Not applicable
 Inspection dates 19-20 September 2006
 Reporting inspector Josephine Nowacki HMI

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

The inspection of the day care was carried out under Children Act 1989: Part XA (as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000) and, where (funded) nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Rinteln
School category	Comprehensive		BFPO 31
Age range of pupils	11-19		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0049 5751970320
Number on roll (school)	268	Fax number	0049 5751970340
Number on roll (6th form)	70		
Appropriate authority	SCE	Chair	Lt Col A Dickinson, RE
		Headteacher	Mrs Sue Marshall
Date of previous school inspection	16-25 October 2000		

Age group 11-19	Published 19-20 September 2006	Reference no. Not applicable
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Prince Rupert school is situated in Rinteln in Germany. It is administered by Service Children's Education (SCE) and provides education for the children of service and Ministry of Defence personnel. The school is situated away from the military units it serves. Many of the children face lengthy journeys of an hour and a quarter each day to get to school. Approximately one third of the students board on a weekly basis. Prince Rupert takes students at Year 7 from three primary schools, at Year 9 from a feeder middle school and at Year 12 from the local 11-17 school. The impact of military postings results in high levels of instability for students. Many arrive at any time in the academic year, often with gaps in their learning.

At the time of the inspection, nearly all students were white British. Approximately 12% have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and just over 1% of students have statements of special educational need.

The Headteacher has been in post since the last inspection and there has recently been a management restructure. Staffing at the school is relatively stable, but difficulties in recruiting support staff and long term illnesses of key personnel have impacted on achievement and standards in some areas, including English and mathematics.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

'I would just like to say that Prince Rupert is an excellent school and my child has developed very well, educationally, socially and personally throughout his time at school'. This is the view of one parent but reflects the views of many others, and inspectors wholeheartedly agree. All staff are very aware of the difficulties students face because of military life and everybody goes the extra mile to ensure that each and every one of them receives superb care and support, that their physical and emotional needs are well met and they settle into school life quickly. As a result of this, the school is a safe and secure environment where students can learn and develop into thoughtful and sensitive young adults and also enjoy themselves!

The Headteacher, ably supported by her senior management team, leads by example, and sets high expectations for the school. Her commitment to improving the life chances for all students is unswerving. This commitment is evident at every level of management in the school, and, as a result, standards have risen to levels generally well above the national average since the last inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants are dedicated to providing lessons that are stimulating, enjoyable and help most students to learn and make very good progress from average and sometimes below average attainment on entry. Whilst most students achieve very well, some of the more able students could be making better progress. The school acknowledges this and is taking action to put it right.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Most students in the sixth form achieve the grades expected of them, although some do better than this. Others do less well, even though the teaching is very good, generally because the courses offered are not really appropriate for them. The problem arises mainly because students cannot return to the UK while their families remain in Germany and so they have little alternative but to enter the sixth form even though they do not want to. In response, the school has introduced more vocational qualifications and these are now becoming highly successful: the proportion of students gaining high grades is much higher than the national average.

Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision

Grade: 1

'We love boarding here' was the universal reaction from the students who make up a third of the school's population by boarding at Prince Rupert School during the week.

The quality of the boarding provision is outstanding and meets all National Minimum Standards, encouraging students to become self reliant and independent. Pupils have spacious rooms and the girls especially have personalised these attractively to make them homely and comfortable. The atmosphere in the boarding lodge is friendly; students enjoy being with their friends and look out for one another. Boarders are well cared for and their privacy is respected. Arrangements for prep are strong. Students have very good access to computers, books and to help from staff. The academic progress of boarders is monitored closely so that those in difficulty receive targeted support.

The strong boarding team is well led and managed. A great deal of effort goes into planning interesting activities for boarders and ensuring that they feel welcome, happy and secure. Boarding makes a major contribution to the pupils' happiness, well-being and progress, and to the positive ethos in the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Focus more on the quality of provision for potential high achievers
- Provide more vocational courses for 14-19 year olds.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2 Sixth form: Grade 2

Students achieve very well from average and sometimes below average starting points. In the external tests for English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 most students reach standards that are usually well above the national average. The overall trend since the last inspection is one of good improvement. Students of higher ability perform slightly less well than other groups of learners and girls usually do better than boys. Performance in English, although remaining above national average, has been below that of mathematics and science. The school has identified all of these issues and effective actions have been put in place to tackle them.

At the end of Year 11 the number of students gaining 5 or more GCSE A*-C grades has generally been above the national average between 2003 -05.

Students perform consistently well in food technology, French, German, ICT, geography and health and social care. Almost everyone in the school leaves with at least one GCSE pass.

Overall students, including boarders, make very good progress. There is little difference in the achievement of different groups of students. Students with special educational needs make good and sometimes excellent progress.

Standards in the sixth form are satisfactory. Pass rates at GCE A-level are slightly below the national average but the percentage of students achieving pass rates of grades A-C is above that of similar SCE schools. Value added data show that, overall, students make satisfactory progress, although a small number make progress that is better than this. Sixth form students on vocational courses achieve very well and a high proportion of students achieve grades much higher than those predicted by their GCSE scores.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1 Sixth form: Grade 2

Prince Rupert School is highly successful in minimising the impact of the turbulence of military life by providing excellent pastoral and academic support, and thus creating confident, courteous and highly motivated students who quickly settle and find friends at whatever time they join the school. Students genuinely enjoy their education, participate fully, enjoy their sport, and know very well how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy. Their behaviour is excellent. Students relate confidently to adults and care for and support one another very well. Attendance rates are at the national average. There are valid reasons for student absence both authorised and unauthorised. The school follows these up rigorously.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is demonstrated by the way in which they develop their own views, understand the difficulties and challenges faced by others, and make an active and useful contribution to society. The school and boarders' councils provide very good formal opportunities for students' views to be expressed. As they move through the school the students acquire the knowledge and practical skills necessary to equip them extremely well for the next stage of their lives, and they leave as well balanced, articulate and confident young people. Many of those who are transferring schools because of another posting say 'I wish I could stay at PRS longer'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers and teaching assistants provide a welcoming environment that is conducive to learning. Most students make very good progress because the quality of teaching is good and a significant proportion is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and make excellent use of their subject knowledge to foster a desire for learning. Students respond well. They are inquisitive, work well together and produce high standards of work. However, in some lessons, insufficient attention is given to the needs of the most able students. Assessment of students' work is good. New procedures have been introduced in some subjects to improve feedback to students. Where this has been done, students appreciate the detailed guidance they are given. Monitoring and reviewing of students' progress is robust and data is used well to set appropriately challenging targets. The identification of students with learning difficulties is rigorous and leads to very high levels of support; many of them make excellent progress as a result of this.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The overall quality of the curriculum in Key Stages 3 and 4 is good. It includes all the main subjects but in addition, new courses have been introduced to meet students' needs; for example, a BTEC in Public Services. In the sixth form, the curriculum meets most students' needs but this is not the case for everyone. The school has introduced innovative ways to address this; for example, on-line courses with live links with tutors in the UK. The innovations are new and early evidence is that they are successful in meeting the needs of more students. However, the school recognises that further development of the 14-19 curriculum is needed. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship as well as other aspects of the curriculum contribute effectively to pupils' personal development. So do the opportunities for sport and other cultural activities outside the formal curriculum. Examples are the good social programme for boarders and, on the final day of the inspection, the charity fun run.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support in both the school and boarding lodge is outstanding. The school's innovative and inclusive approach truly means that 'every child matters' and that each one gets the care and support they need to succeed. There are careful procedures for assessing and tracking students' progress and this means that the staff are proactive in identifying problems at an early stage and can put in place the right kind of help to sort

things out. Working arrangements with outside agencies are excellent, and this ensures swift and effective action when needed. Within the school, the care and support for pupils is so well organised that everyone is working as a team to help the students achieve their potential. The effect of this is that students with learning difficulties and disabilities make at least as much progress as their peers and develop very good self-esteem. The staff take every opportunity to reward the students' efforts, good conduct, achievement and personal progress. They appreciate this and strive to do better. Procedures for child protection and safeguarding pupils are excellent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The quality of both leadership and management is outstanding. The leadership of the Headteacher in providing a vision for the school which is clearly focussed on the needs of pupils is impressive. Her relationship with staff and pupils is excellent; in particular by the way in which she encourages staff at all levels to participate in making decisions and all pupils to participate through the School Council. As a result, she has been able to bring about difficult changes; for instance, the restructuring of the workforce. In turn, managers at all levels also lead very well resulting in the positive ethos of the school which benefits all pupils.

Management at all levels is also excellent. A really positive feature is the extent to which managers know the school – its strengths and weaknesses. This is as a result of their own thorough monitoring and also their careful use of data and advice provided largely by SCE. As a result, the school's development plan is accurate in terms of content and priorities and focuses correctly on raising standards even further. The strong emphasis on understanding pupils' needs means that equality of opportunity is well supported resulting in pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities making very good progress in their academic work and personal development. Effective links are made with other organisations to ensure that pupils are well looked after.

Staff are suitably qualified and adequate in number. Though not the fault of the school, it sometimes takes a long time to recruit new staff but the school copes well with this. CRB and other checks are thorough and protect pupils. Resources and accommodation are well managed and well used to achieve excellent value for money.

Managers have ensured that weaknesses identified during the last inspection have been addressed. This together with managers' ability to identify new issues and respond to them effectively ensures that the school has excellent capacity to improve.

Staff and pupils are ably supported by the School Governance Committee despite the inevitable difficulties in members sometimes fulfilling their duties; for example, because of military service.

Effectiveness of the registered day care (where applicable) Grade: 1 – 4

Recommendations or actions to improve the registered day care (where applicable)

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Effectiveness of the funded nursery education (where applicable) Grade: 1 – 4

Recommendations or actions to improve the funded nursery education (where applicable)

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Inspection judgements

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

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
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	

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1	
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

The effectiveness of the registered day care (where applicable)

The quality and standards of the registered day care	N/A
How effective is the day care in helping children to be healthy?	
How effective is the day care in protecting children and helping them to stay safe?	
How effective is the day care in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	
How effective is the day care in helping children to make a positive contribution?	
How effectively is the day care organised?	
Does the day care meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides?	Yes/No
Has the day care improved since the last inspection?	NA
Does the day care require enforcement action?	Yes/No
Does the day care require a notice to improve?	Yes/No

The effectiveness of the funded nursery education (where applicable)

The quality and standards of funded nursery education	N/A
How effective is the funded nursery education in helping children to achieve and enjoy their learning?	
How effective are teaching and learning?	
How effective is the partnership with parents and carers in promoting the nursery education?	
How effective is the funded education in helping children make a positive contribution?	
How effectively is the funded nursery education led and managed?	
Does the funded nursery education meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides	Yes/No
Is the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development education fostered?	Yes/No
Has the nursery education improved since the last inspection?	Yes/No/ NA
Does the funded nursery education require a notice to improve?	Yes/No



*Prince Rupert
Rinteln
BFPO 31*

22 September 2006

Dear Students

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team into your school. We enjoyed our visit very much and really appreciated the time many of you gave to talk with us and to let us know your views. The purpose of our visit was to find out what your school does well and the areas that need to improve.

This what we found:

- Prince Rupert is a really good school!
- You work hard, make good progress and enjoy yourselves.
- Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and help you to achieve good results.
- Everyone cares a great deal about your well-being and goes to great lengths to help you to settle in to school life and to make sure you feel safe and secure.
- Your behaviour is good and you support each other really well, especially when times are difficult. You also work hard to help others in other countries who are less fortunate.
- Those of you who board during the week are well looked after and there is always someone to talk to. All of you said how much you enjoyed boarding. We were impressed with how nice you'd made your rooms.

We have made a few recommendations so that the school can be even better:

- Some of you should be given the opportunity to make even better progress.
- In the sixth form, more could be done to give some of you a choice of courses which are more suitable.
- Some of you need to attend school more, and when you know you might be away, you need to get your parents to ring the school and let them know.

Thank you again for your contribution to the inspection. We wish you the very best of luck for success in the future.

Josephine Nowacki,
Her Majesty's Inspector

