

Corbets Tey School

Harwood Hall Lane, Upminster, RM14 2YQ

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and leadership team have made sure that the school has improved quickly and have a clear plan for continuing improvement. The governing body supports and challenges the school well.
- Pupils achieve well. All groups of pupils make good progress and some pupils make outstanding progress. All pupils share a real keenness to learn. The school's focus on improving skills in literacy, mathematics and other life skills is very effective.
- Older pupils respond well to opportunities to develop their independence skills and gain useful accreditation.
- Teaching is mainly good and some is outstanding. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils.
- Pupils are considerate and respectful to one another in and out of lessons. They feel safe in school and those who experience difficulties learn to manage their behaviour well over time.
- 'It's valuable, it's real or we don't do it.' This comment by the headteacher sums up the school's commitment to making school useful and meaningful for its pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all pupils make as much progress as they could in all subjects.
- Some improvements are still quite new and so have not yet had their full effect on pupils' progress.
- Sometimes the targets set for pupils are too focused on developing their social skills rather than their learning.
- When monitoring and evaluating lessons, teachers and senior leaders sometimes fail to place enough emphasis on the impact of teaching on pupil progress.

Information about this inspection

- Two inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at and considered a number of documents. These included the school’s self-evaluation and planning, arrangements for safeguarding and promoting equality, and details of the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed eight teachers teaching 14 lessons; four of these were joint observations with members of the school’s senior team.
- Inspectors joined pupils at lunch times, talked to them in class and heard a small group of pupils read individually.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and a parent governor and with school staff, including senior and middle leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. Discussions were also held with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 45 responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents and carers (Parent View) and had conversations with three parents.

Inspection team

Anne Duffy, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Jackie Blount

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- The school includes pupils at Key Stages 1 to 4. At the time of the inspection there were no children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some pupils on the roll of Havering College take lessons in the school as part of their transition to further education.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs; over half of the pupils have an autistic spectrum condition. There is an equal balance of pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties. Other groups include those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, sensory and physical needs.
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- There are approximately three times as many boys as girls.
- An average proportion of pupils, around 25%, is entitled to support from government additional funding, known as the pupil premium. This funding is for children from service families, those in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school provides advice and guidance to other schools and colleagues through its language centre. It has held specialist status for communication and interaction since 2007.
- The school was last inspected in October 2011 when it was given a notice to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that the improvements that have been introduced help pupils to make the best possible progress in all subjects by:
 - checking that, over time, there is a good balance between social and academic targets for each pupil
 - ensuring teachers and leaders consistently ask the question, 'How much progress did each pupil make?' when evaluating the quality of lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress overall, and some make outstanding progress, through the P levels and the early levels of the National Curriculum. Pupils clearly enjoy school and their attitudes to learning are very positive. Staff are aware of the particular needs of the girls as a minority group, but there is no significant difference between their achievement and that of boys.
- Pupils make an excellent start to their school career. As they move through the school, they make progress very quickly in Key Stages 1 and 2 and maintain good progress in Key Stages 3 and 4. Good achievement overall is supported well by the development of work-related skills and a strong focus on the key areas of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Almost all pupils improve their social and communication skills very well indeed. When pupils' targets are set, academic learning in other areas of the curriculum is sometimes given less importance. As a result, some pupils do not make as much progress as they could across all subjects.
- Increasingly careful analysis allows senior leaders to identify any gaps in progress and raise expectations for groups or individuals who may be disadvantaged. Additional pupil premium funding has been used well to raise achievement for targeted pupils. New technology has been carefully tailored to support their communication. This helps them to access the curriculum and so make at least good progress.
- Students at the top of the school benefit from strong links with the local college and work-experience providers to develop a range of skills. They are actively involved in building up portfolios of work that demonstrate good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. Following a change of curriculum, students are appropriately working towards gaining accreditation through a Life and Living Skills course.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school has worked very hard to improve the quality of teaching and the impact of this is clear. A focus on extending the range of teaching approaches means that teachers have considered the skills they need and now are more confident in applying them. There is a good emphasis on all the practical aspects of teaching, such as planning and arranging the classroom. However, the question, 'How is this helping the pupils to make progress?' is sometimes forgotten when teachers or senior leaders evaluate lessons.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to determine each pupil's needs and to plan interesting and challenging activities. For example, in Key Stage 4, students moved from one carefully-planned task to another as they learnt about using money in different ways. Each member of the staff team worked on a different activity and showed that they had a good understanding of their role and high expectations for each student.
- All staff are committed to the use of communication approaches which are suited to the needs of each pupil. They are confident in the use of different technologies and, as a result, there is a marked improvement in pupils' communication skills. Good support helps pupils to feel a real sense of achievement when they master a new word, sign or use their new tablet devices to answer a question.
- Pupils benefit greatly from the very good relationships which exist in classes. Detailed planning and pupils' positive attitudes mean that no time is wasted as different groups move enthusiastically from one activity to another.
- The most effective lessons occur when pupils are reminded regularly of what they are learning and asked to judge for themselves how well they have done. Even the youngest pupils show themselves able to decide if they have successfully completed a task. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 confidently removed items from their visual timetable when they had completed one

activity and were ready to move to the next. Slightly older pupils shared with their teacher how well they had done and proudly put a 'next steps' sticker onto the footstep shapes which marched up their wall.

- Teaching makes a very strong contribution to the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the pupils. From the early stages, they learn to be aware of others, and develop a growing understanding of other peoples' lives and cultures. Pupils benefit greatly from the opportunities to perform and work together, for example when their classroom becomes a different country for a week.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- All parents and carers who completed the Parent View questionnaire, as well as those spoken to, agree that their child is happy at school. This is reflected in the pupils' good behaviour and the harmonious atmosphere within the school.
- The communication needs of pupils who find it difficult to express themselves verbally are met very well so that their frustrations ease considerably over time. Responses to pupils with behavioural difficulties are consistent and effective.
- Instances of bullying, including any racist or gender-based comments, are very rare and are taken seriously if they do occur. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and contribute to making the school a safe place to be. For example, classes take responsibility for a different area and pupil-made health and safety posters are clearly displayed around the school.
- The school's emphasis on building self-esteem is very effective. Pupils mix very well together and are highly supportive of each other. Opportunities to be spectators at both the Olympics and the Paralympics clearly did much to raise ambition and determination. At the pupils' request, regular staff/pupil exercise sessions are now held.
- Older students develop a strong sense of responsibility. Independent skills learnt through outings, residential adventure trips and work experience stand them in good stead for the future.
- With the few exceptions that are explained by health needs, students attend school regularly. Competition for the best class attendance certificate is strong.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. Together with the deputy headteacher, she has been extremely effective in raising expectations and ambition across the school. One member of staff said, 'There is clear leadership, guidance and support; we're all going in the same direction.' All staff are committed to creating equality of opportunity, tackling any discrimination and improving life chances for their pupils.
- Good processes and systems for evaluating the work of the school have been put in place and many have had noticeable effect. These new approaches are having a significant impact on the quality of teaching and on pupils' progress, but the school knows that there is scope to improve even further if these aspects are to become outstanding.
- The system for the management of teachers' performance is very thorough and covers pupil progress, professional development and the school's identified areas for improvement. There are 50% of teaching staff who have moved into the upper pay spine for salaries and inspectors found that this was generally a fair reflection of their skills and responsibilities.
- Changes to the curriculum have begun but are not yet finalised. A good start has been made on making lessons more fun and creative. This is reflected in the increase in pupils' enjoyment and attendance, as well as their achievement and in their strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Regular coffee mornings and newsletters provide good opportunities for parents and carers to become involved in the life of the school. Parents and carers who were spoken to were very

appreciative of the school's work. 'They see you, and they're there for you,' said one.

■ The school's arrangements for safeguarding are secure. For example, senior leaders take timely and appropriate action when any child protection concerns are brought to their attention. The school works well with a range of agencies to support pupils and their families.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– Governance has been significantly strengthened over the past 18 months. The governing body is well informed and has a good grasp of all the available performance information about the school. Members ask challenging questions of the headteacher and senior staff and hold the school to account for teaching quality and pupils' achievement. Governors keep a clear overview of the school's salary structures and how managers undertake performance management and set targets for teachers. They are aware of the pupil premium funding and how it is being used to support those pupils' learning. The governing body ensures that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. It has been well supported by the local authority as it has worked with staff to improve the school.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102362
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	399633

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Lamb
Headteacher	Emma Allen
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 October 2011
Telephone number	01708 225888
Fax number	01708 220430
Email address	office@corbetstey.havering.sch.uk

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