

# East Tilbury Infant School

Princess Margaret Road, East Tilbury, Tilbury, RM18 8SB

**Inspection dates** 6 – 7 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. Although there have been recent gains in achievement they are at early stages and there has been too little improvement in pupils' writing.
- There are weaknesses in some pupils' spelling, how well they form letters, the neatness of handwriting and how well pupils link ideas together to form sentences.
- Teaching requires improvement. Whilst teaching is improving, not enough is yet good.
- Teachers do not consistently make sure that pupils pay attention to what they are saying.
- There are inconsistencies in marking and teachers do not always make it clear how well pupils are doing, what they need to do to improve or make sure pupils follow any guidance they are given.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy school and are keen to do well.
- Pupils behave well. They say they feel safe and that bullying is rare, and that when it does happen, it is dealt with well.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress.
- The acting headteacher provides good leadership. Together with other leaders and governors she works well to maintain the work to raise standards and improve pupils' progress.
- Leaders provide good training and support to help teachers improve their teaching skills.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed nine teachers in 21 lessons or parts of lessons. Three of these were observed with senior leaders to check how accurately they evaluate teaching.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, governors and representatives of the St Clare’s Co-operative Academy Trust (SCCAT).
- Inspectors examined documents about the school’s work, including information about the achievement of pupils, development planning and the school’s self evaluation.
- They took account of 14 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, and the school’s own survey of parents’ and carers’ views.
- Inspectors took account of 43 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Edward Wheatley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Richmond

Additional Inspector

Anthony Woodward

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than most infant schools. Pupils come from mainly White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well-below average and none are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average, and the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is the additional government funding for children looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who have a parent in the armed forces.
- The acting headteacher, and acting deputy headteacher took up their posts in April 2013. A new headteacher has been appointed for September 2013. The previous headteacher has moved to work for SCCAT which East Tilbury Infant School is part of.
- There have been several other recent changes in teaching staff.
- The school became an academy in April 2012. The predecessor school, East Tilbury Infant School, was judged to be good when it was last inspected in July 2010.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to at least good by making sure teachers:
  - use effective methods to gain pupils' attention when they require it
  - always tell pupils exactly how well they are doing, what they need to do to improve their work, and making sure that pupils follow the guidance they are given.
- Raise standards, especially in writing, by making sure that pupils:
  - spell correctly
  - form their letter accurately
  - write neatly
  - link ideas together to form complex sentences.

## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils** requires improvement

- Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2, and after a period of falling have started to rise. The improvement is best in reading and mathematics, where standards are broadly average. In writing, standards are below average, and improvement is slower.
- Pupils enter Year 1 with skills broadly as expected for their age, except in language and communication where skills are below expectations. Overall their progress requires improvement, although it is improving quickly in reading and mathematics. In writing progress is improving though more slowly.
- Standards in writing are below average, but they are improving and some pupils write well. However, some pupils write untidily and do not form their letters accurately. Pupils sometimes spell commonly used words incorrectly, and do not link ideas together well enough to form complex sentences.
- Nevertheless, pupils frequently write lengthy letters, explanations, diary entries and stories, and these contribute effectively to their growing confidence to write independently.
- Pupils' reading is broadly average. Those who find reading hard know how to link sounds to letters to help them read unfamiliar words, and do so accurately. They enjoy reading and use books regularly in lessons to find out information, and to read stories.
- Pupils have average mathematical skills. They carry out mental calculations competently, learn to locate features on maps using simple grid referencing, and to give directions using north, south, east and west and distances measured in steps taken.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. The support they receive enables them to gain the skills they need and to work well either independently or with other pupils.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding make the same progress as other pupils. In the current Year 2 these pupils' attainment is less than a term behind other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. The school makes good use of the funding to provide extra resources for reading, writing and mathematics to support their learning.
- Children enter the Nursery with broadly expected skills for their age, except in language and communication where their skills are well below those expected. They make good progress and most children gain the skills expected by the end of Reception, except for language and communication where skills are below those expected for their age.

### **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- Teachers use assessment information well to make sure work is matched to pupils' learning needs, and they are fully aware of the urgency to help pupils catch up on past underachievement. Extra activities are readily available to support the most-able pupils and suitable activities and individual support are provided for those pupils who learn slowly.
- Teachers provide a wide range of activities that successfully keep pupils' interest and attention.

They often include items that fascinate and capture pupils' imagination. For example, the use of Victorian diary extracts produced a sense of wonder among pupils and prompted their own efforts in writing a diary.

- Teachers make sure there are many opportunities for pupils to work together and to share responsibilities. This encourages pupils to make learning decisions for themselves, to respect others and take other pupils' opinions and ideas into account. This promotes pupils' moral and social development effectively.
- Teachers' questioning is generally good and encourages pupils to take part in discussions and to contribute their own ideas. This encourages pupils' development of speaking and listening skills, and their ability to explain their understanding.
- Classroom assistants support pupils well. They provide good guidance and direction when needed, but also ensure pupils learn to work independently and to join in learning with other pupils.
- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to write in most subjects. However, they do not always use effective methods to encourage accurate spelling or help pupils well enough to form their letters accurately. They also do not ensure pupils always write neatly, or link their ideas together to form complex sentences.
- While marking is often detailed and gives pupils a good idea of what they do well and what they need to improve, this is not always true. Sometimes teachers do not give a clear enough indication of how well pupils are doing, what they need to do to improve their work, or make sure that pupils follow advice when it is given.
- Some teachers do not have effective methods of making sure pupils stop work and listen when they are expected to. This slows the pace of progress.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to gain independent learning skills. Work is challenging and adults provide good support and guidance for children which encourage the development of good social skills.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils have good attitudes to school. They enjoy school and readily take part in learning activities. They thoroughly enjoy playing in the school grounds with its imaginatively and carefully designed resources and activities.
  - Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. When they do not pay attention to the teacher it is nearly always because they are engrossed in the activities they have been set.
  - Pupils have a very good understanding about the different kinds of bullying. They say that there is very little bullying behaviour of any kind. If there was they would go to an adult for help, and the problem would be resolved very quickly.
  - Pupils feel safe and behave safely around school, in lessons and in the playground at break and lunch times.
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- Relationships are very good. Pupils treat each other well with a good understanding of the principles of respect and compassion that they are encouraged to show throughout the school.
- Attendance is average and has improved steadily in recent years. Persistent absence has reduced considerably because the school works hard with families and pupils to encourage regular attendance.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The acting headteacher provides good direction for the school's improvement. She works effectively with other leaders to raise standards and to improve the progress made by pupils. Leaders have an extremely good understanding of the school's strengths and take action quickly to deal with its weaknesses. Their efforts are evident in the reversal of the downward trend in standards, and the gradual improvement in progress.
  - Good leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage have already ensured children make good progress.
  - The school has acted quickly to appoint staff to fill vacancies, and has eliminated inadequate teaching. Training is effective and new staff and leaders are supported well to make sure teaching improves to be at least good, and the school is well on the way to achieving this.
  - Teachers' targets to help them improve their work are closely linked to pupils' progress, teachers' personal professional development, and the school's priorities to raise standards and improve progress.
  - The school is well supported by the senior staff and other schools of SCCAT, in which it plays its own part in promoting pupils' achievement. It is also well supported by the local authority. These links have contributed effectively to improvements in teaching and in developing leadership and management skills.
  - The school organises the subjects it teaches well, and makes sure that basic skills, writing in particular, are taught in all subjects to help drive up standards. Trips and visitors to the school contribute effectively to pupils' learning. The school provides a wide range of out of school activities that pupils enjoy. Along with the well organised personal, social and health education programme, the range of learning experiences promotes pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
  - Parents and carers are pleased with the school and this is reflected in the school's own frequent surveys of parents' and carers' views. Parents are welcome visitors, and are well supported when they have concerns about their children.
  - The school works effectively to make sure all pupils have opportunities to succeed. Although standards are not as high as they should be, they are rising and pupils' progress is improving. Levels of attendance are rising and teaching is improving. These improvements demonstrate the school has capacity for further improvement.
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■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governors and senior staff of SCCAT are well informed about the school. They question the acting headteacher and other leaders and are fully aware of how standards and progress in this school compare with that of pupils in other schools. They hold the school to account for how it spends its funds to promote pupils' progress. They check the impact of the use of pupil premium funds to raise standards. They have a thorough understanding of how the school checks the quality of teaching and how teachers' progress on salary scales is linked to pupils' progress, their professional development and contribution to helping the school achieve its priorities. The governors and SCCAT ensure the school meets safeguarding requirements, and that the school checks the suitability of staff appointed to the school.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138065
<b>Local authority</b>	Thurrock
<b>Inspection number</b>	412623

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	297
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carol North
<b>Acting Headteacher</b>	Julie Donnelly
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01375 859360
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