

East Wickham Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101406
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	276513
Inspection dates	22–23 November 2005
Reporting inspector	Andrew Marfleet

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr B Hollyer Mrs S Manzi
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wickham Street Welling DA16 3BP
Telephone number	020 8854 0698
Fax number	020 8316 5414

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school has 240 pupils on roll, making it larger than the average infant school. Almost 80% of pupils are from white British backgrounds and 8% are from black African or Indian backgrounds. Five percent of pupils speak another language in addition to English, but only two pupils are at an early stage of learning English. About 17% receive free school meals. The school manages two nurseries on the same site. One makes provision for children with social, emotional or behavioural problems. The other admits children with a range of abilities who transfer to the Reception class at the appropriate age. Forty percent of the pupils in the main school come from the neighbouring borough, Greenwich, and contribute to a varied school profile. Leadership and management have been disrupted over the last two years by long term illnesses.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

* Continue to raise standards, particularly in speaking and listening, writing and mathematics, and for the more able pupils* Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good, including the use of assessment data to plan lessons that provide challenge for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Inspectors agree with the school that teaching is satisfactory overall. Some good teaching was seen in all year groups, but this was not consistent across all lessons. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development well, for example. The good learning ethos that was seen in all classes contributes to the good personal development observed overall. The quality of teaching has improved since the whole school review earlier in the year as a result of better monitoring. In the best lessons, teachers explained clearly what the children had to learn; individual and group activities helped children learn well and with growing independence. In the satisfactory lessons, the teachers tended to be more dominant. Generally, teaching assistants provide valuable support and encouragement, particularly for those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Appropriate provision is made for the few children who are at an early stage of learning English. Teachers provide opportunities to develop pupils' skills in speaking and listening, although they do not always enable them to explain their ideas clearly. Teachers rightly seek to tailor work to children's needs but too great a variety of tasks can mean a lesson becomes unnecessarily complex. Teachers generally know their children well and take pains to assess their progress. They are using this assessment data to plan appropriate tasks in lessons, although this is not yet used in a consistently effective way. The steps taken to improve planning are the result of a strong lead from senior managers, but they have not had time yet to become as effective as they might.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The inspectors agree with the school's view that their curriculum is broadly satisfactory. The curriculum in the main school is broad and balanced and is appropriate to the needs of most pupils, although more still needs to be done to challenge the higher attainers. The curriculum promotes personal development well, showing children how to be healthy and keep safe. There is particularly good curricular practice in the Nursery, which the school is now extending into the reception year. Literacy skills are enhanced by special themed weeks, such as Book Week and the loan of a large model castle, which motivate the children and inspire work across the curriculum. A range of trips and visits support children's learning. Recently a number of clubs

including trampolining at the local secondary school and French for Year 2 have been started, and these are increasing enjoyment as well as learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

We agree with the school that this area is, overall, satisfactory. Care and support are good, but guidance about how to raise standards is only satisfactory. A number of teachers are careful to ensure their pupils understand clearly what is expected of them and how they might improve, but, when asked, some pupils are not fully aware of what they need to do to improve their work. The school looks after its pupils very well, ensuring they are safe and happy. Suitable checks are made to ensure appropriate staff are employed and that children are protected from risks. Staff have received recent training on child protection. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, are well supported in lessons by capable and well informed teaching assistants. The needs of those with the greatest difficulties are well known and understood; high levels of supervision and assistance mean they can make progress in the school environment. Parents say that the school works well with them and that specialist help is organised effectively when needed. Good links are established with parents from the time pupils arrive in the nursery; home visits are undertaken and arrangements to settle in children are carefully thought out.

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I want to thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work. We also enjoyed talking to your teachers and watching an assembly.

What we liked most about your school* you are well looked after and enjoy going to school* you are taught the right things and are learning as well as you should be* you behave well, and get on well with each other* you have a good headteacher; she understands how the school works; she is doing the right things to make it even better with help from other staff* your parents are very happy with the school.

What we have asked your school to do now* help you to do better in writing and mathematics, and to have more opportunities to talk about your ideas in lessons* make all your lessons good ones, so that everyone learns well. We hope you will all do as well as you can at school. Our best wishes for the future!

Yours sincerely

Andrew Marfleet

Lead Inspector