

# East Tilbury Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115014
<b>Local Authority</b>	THURROCK
<b>Inspection number</b>	295392
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mary Summers

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	287
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Carol North
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Shelagh Cosgrow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 February 2006
<b>School address</b>	Princess Margaret Road East Tilbury Tilbury Essex RM18 8SB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01375 859360
<b>Fax number</b>	01375 840382

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school serves a socially diverse area within South Essex. Most pupils who attend live in the local community. Nearly all are White British but a few minority ethnic backgrounds are represented in smaller numbers. Attainment on entry to school is below that typically seen for this age group and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. The school was issued with a Notice to Improve in February 2006 as inspectors judged some aspects of its work to be inadequate.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school provides a good and effective education for its pupils. School leaders assess the school's effectiveness as satisfactory but they are simply too modest in their judgement.

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Standards, especially in literacy, have risen significantly since the last inspection and are now above nationally expected levels by the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievement is good. This is because of school leaders' strong commitment to helping pupils of all abilities achieve success in their personal and academic development. Very good systems for collecting and monitoring data about pupils' progress have meant that adults are aware of and take responsibility for the learning of every pupil. Consequently, individual needs are identified and met effectively. Some excellent provision for pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities means they achieve especially well. Teaching is good.

Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress, most meeting the goals set for them in all areas of their learning by the time they transfer to Year 1. They have access to an exciting range of experiences which stimulate language development and help them develop sound personal and social skills. The school's curriculum and its systems for caring for pupils are both good. Pupils learn how to keep safe and healthy and develop a good understanding of key personal skills such as responsibility and helping one another. They also gain a good deal of independence, and are encouraged to evaluate their own learning in the weekly class learning forum. These good personal skills, along with high levels of literacy and numeracy, mean that pupils are prepared well for the future. However, their awareness of other cultures, especially those reflecting the complex nature of Britain's multi-ethnic society, is insufficiently developed.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average. They take a very active role within the school community, meeting regularly as a learning council to discuss elements of school improvement. Overall, behaviour is good although, occasionally, the challenging behaviour of a few pupils distracts others from their learning.

The school gives good value for money. Leaders and managers at all levels provide a firm steer to the school's work. They keep a close check on what is happening and so maintain an accurate view of what is working well and what needs to be improved. Governors discharge their responsibilities well. Together with the headteacher, they have enabled the school to make good improvement since the last inspection and ensure that it has the capacity to continue to do so.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase pupils' understanding and appreciation of cultures and lifestyles other than their own.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above average for their age. They build successfully upon the firm foundations established in Nursery and Reception when they enter Years 1 and 2. Standards gained in national tests and assessments in Year 2 were higher than

in other schools in 2006. This is in contrast to previous years, when standards were often much lower than average in reading and writing.

In 2006, 91 per cent of pupils reached expected levels in reading, compared with 73 per cent in 2005. The picture was similar in mathematics and shows the success of the school's strategies for supporting all pupils and particularly those with learning difficulties. Standards in writing also rose substantially and were above average but not quite as high as in reading and mathematics. The school continues to focus on this as a key area for improvement. The most able pupils achieve well, with more pupils than average reaching the highest levels. Targets for pupils' attainment in 2007 are high and provide a good degree of challenge for this particular group, which contains a significant number of pupils with statements of special educational need.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral and social development are good. Pupils appreciate the need for rules and understand the responsibilities of being part of a school community. However, their awareness of cultural diversity in modern day British society is not sufficiently well developed. Behaviour is generally good, although a few pupils display very challenging behaviour from time to time.

Pupils like school, and their attendance is good. They know how to keep safe and healthy. They take an active role in the school and local community, singing in the local church for parents and friends. They work together well in class, and their good literacy and numeracy skills ensure they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. These are strengths which parents recognise. One wrote, 'Children achieve well and also learn morals, respect, caring for themselves and others which are skills needed to cope with life'.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils respond well to the warm and positive atmosphere which teachers create in their classrooms. They know that their efforts will be valued and are confident to ask for help if necessary. Literacy teaching is especially successful and this is why standards have risen so significantly recently. Each pupil's needs are assessed very carefully. Individual targets are set and pupils know exactly what elements of their work they have to improve to reach the next level. Lesson plans are constructed carefully to meet pupils' different needs and support assistants are deployed very effectively to provide additional help and encouragement to any pupils who find the work difficult. Very occasionally, teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour well enough and this affects the learning of others in the class.

Teachers use a wide variety of strategies to engage pupils' interest and maintain their concentration. Computer technology, group and paired discussion and practical activities all contribute well to pupils' effective learning. Vibrant displays in classrooms and public areas recognise pupils' efforts as well as providing helpful hints about how to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of the curriculum is good. It allows pupils to be creative and to extend their literacy and numeracy skills through practical projects. Interesting topics such as 'The aliens are coming!' are used to stimulate pupils' imagination and promote a sense of fun. The school has worked hard to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils. To this end, it has very successfully implemented a new programme of teaching in English. This allows pupils to be taught in focussed ability groups, which are changed frequently to reflect their progress. The school also provides additional 'catch-up' programmes for those who are struggling with their numeracy, speaking and listening skills.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme strongly promotes the school's core values and makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. There is scope for the school to enrich pupils' knowledge and experience of their own and other cultural traditions further. Strong links with parents mean they take a very effective part in their children's education. Pupils enjoy the wide variety of lunchtime and after school clubs on offer. These develop pupils' skills in areas such as the creative arts, sport, and design and technology. A diverse programme of visits and visitors, for example artists and musicians, make learning interesting and exciting for the pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Arrangements to support the care and welfare of pupils are good. The environment is safe and secure and child protection arrangements are well established. All pupils, especially those who are vulnerable or who have learning difficulties and disabilities, are cared for very well. Pupils' needs are quickly assessed and staff quickly identify where support is required. The school makes good use of outside agencies to help pupils with particular difficulties. Some pupils have complex emotional and behavioural problems and, although they receive careful guidance and counselling, they still find it difficult on occasions to behave well in lessons.

The school has a rigorous programme of assessment in place and this means that they can provide parents with good information about the progress that their children are making. Learning conferences, where teachers, parents and pupils meet together to discuss targets, also help to ensure pupils make good progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The outcomes for pupils are at the heart of the school's work. Senior leaders have a very clear picture of what is working well and what needs to improve. They gain accurate information through a comprehensive programme of lesson observations and analysis of data. Teachers have recently been enabled to take a more active role in data analysis. Their involvement has contributed to the rise in standards seen in 2006. However, this is not fully embedded and senior managers recognise the need to continue to work with teachers to ensure that assessment data is used effectively to inform planning. Careful monitoring and evaluation procedures help inform key decisions regarding provision for individual pupils and allow the school's budget to be directed well to meet areas of need.

The governing body provides effective support and advice and is instrumental in making key decisions about the school's future. They can do this because they have a good knowledge of the school's work gained through regular visits and carefully organised committee meetings. Governors also play an important role in promoting the school's position within the local community. This further strengthens the home-school partnership which contributes greatly to pupils' good progress.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	2

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
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
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 March 2007

Dear Pupils

East Tilbury Infant School, Princess Margaret Road, East Tilbury, Essex RM18 8SB

Thank you all so much for your very warm welcome and for sharing with us your views about the school. The other inspectors and I really enjoyed our visit, watching you learning, looking at your work and chatting with you in the playground. Special thanks must go to the members of the school council who gave us a great deal of information which helped us reach our final conclusions. Everything we saw and heard convinced us that you go to a good school.

These are the things that we thought were especially good.

- You all work very hard and achieve well - the standards you reach in national assessments are higher than in many schools.
- You are growing up as confident, polite, well-behaved young people who enjoy learning and know how to keep safe and healthy.
- Teachers and other adults take good care of you and give you help if you need it.
- Your parents help you really well with your literacy work when they come into school each morning.
- The people in charge of your school know what they need to do to make it even better.

There is one thing that we think the people in charge could do to make your school even better.

- They could help you learn more about different cultures so that you can become really good citizens when you grow up.

I know you will continue to work hard and support your teachers and other adults so that they can help you do your very best at school.

Yours faithfully,

Mary Summers

Lead inspector