

# Corbets Tey School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102362
<b>Local Authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	323627
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lily Evans

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	104
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Parker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Colin Arthey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 June 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Harwood Hall Lane Upminster RM14 2YQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01708 225888
<b>Fax number</b>	01708 220430

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<b>Age group</b>	4–16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Corbets Tey is a fully subscribed special school which caters for pupils who have complex moderate and severe learning difficulties, most having additional language difficulties. More than half of all pupils have moderate to severe autistic spectrum disorder. Since the last inspection the school has gained specialist school status for Communication and Interaction. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children from four years of age who have statements of special educational needs.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Corbets Tey is a friendly and welcoming school with a strong sense of community. An overwhelming majority of parents share a high regard for the outstanding work of this school which is exemplary in most aspects of the education and care provided for pupils. One parent summarises the views expressed by others that, 'This is an excellent school that has the child at the centre of its learning and education culture; it also personalises its approach to the special needs of individuals and optimises learning through a wide variety of mediums'. The very high quality of the leadership of the school has ensured the school has progressed rapidly since the last inspection.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. The planned learning extends appropriately to pupils in Year 1 and 2, who make very good progress from their individual starting points. Staff plan carefully for each child, based on close observation and accurate assessments across all areas of learning. Children's progress is particularly good in their growing ability to communicate through sign and talk, in their behaviour towards others and in their self-control and their self-care. The school builds a close partnership with parents by helping to support them, extend their expertise with their children, and provide a centre to meet with other parents. By the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are ready to make the change to the National Curriculum.

Personal development is outstanding. The school's recent very successful production of 'Speakout' in collaboration with English National Touring Opera company, involved pupils closely in developing the story, the music, singing, dance, artwork and performance. As a result of their experiences, a number of pupils have made big strides forward in their confidence, social skills, and in their sense of self-worth. One parent commented, 'I could not believe it was my boy actually up there on the stage performing to an audience of five hundred.' Pupils are actively involved in supporting the school community through the school council and as prefects. They feel that their views are listened to and valued. They are involved in raising funds for others in the wider community who are less fortunate than themselves. Older students gain maturity in many ways, not least through opportunities for work experience and through enterprise projects such as creating a cafe in school.

The quality of teaching throughout the school is outstanding overall and pupils' enjoyment is of a high order. Leaders have worked hard to enable a distinctive corporate approach by teachers and support staff to delivering learning aimed at motivating individuals to want to communicate, talk and learn. They frequently reward pupils by providing brief stimuli they enjoy. Measures of progress against challenging targets show that strategies used result in pupils' outstanding progress in their time at the school from very varied starting points. The planned curriculum is good because it provides a rich range of first-hand experiences, involving the creative arts and designed to foster pupils' personal development. Planning in English has been reviewed, and gradual, very small steps in learning have been identified. As a result, progress in English has accelerated. The mathematics curriculum is well planned overall, but not in the detail found in English. Consequently, progress in, mathematics, whilst very good, lags a little behind that for English.

The shared vision and action of the headteacher and senior leaders, supported well by governors, have enabled many changes to take place which are having a positive impact on the pupils and

their families. The school has shown through rigorous self-evaluation and the changes introduced since the acquisition of specialist status, that it has outstanding capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

On entry, children have limited communication and skills which are well below the expected levels for their age. Pupils in Year 1, and sometimes Year 2, stay on in these classes when it is judged that the curriculum there best meets their needs. Because of very good teaching and learning, children make excellent progress. The staff plan individual learning programmes across all areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their emphasis on communication by sign, speech and picture symbols helps develop good understanding. Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. The staff team work closely to achieve social and behavioural targets. Children show increasing perseverance and independence in construction activities. They are active learners and they have many opportunities for 'choosing', explorative and creative play, as, for example, in the 'pirate ship' that they have made. The outdoor learning environment is used effectively and safely with due regard for the medical needs of the children.

The staff keep detailed records that enable them to observe small changes, note patterns in behaviours and use the information very effectively to plan the next steps in learning. Strong leadership ensures that provision for children's welfare and safeguarding is promoted very well. There is close contact with parents, who praise highly the opportunities and support given to them when they meet on a weekly basis in school for discussions and training sessions.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Extend current practice in planning literacy skills' progression in very small steps to numeracy, in order to further accelerate the progress of all pupils.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' outstanding progress throughout the school is achieved through the same individualised approach to planning learning as in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Developing pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing is given high priority as pupils systematically learn phonic skills, spelling and writing. Learning is planned very carefully to ensure that all gaps are filled; consequently they make outstanding progress in English. Although progress is very good in mathematics, the school recognises further benefits could come from adopting the detail of planning found in English. In Years 3 to 9 pupils who make sufficient progress are successfully helped to integrate into local schools.

The abilities of Year 10 and 11 students vary widely within the year groups as well as year on year. By the end of Year 11, the most able pupils reach Level 4 in the National Curriculum in mathematics and English. All pupils gain external accreditation or awards in a number of subjects. The most able pupils achieve the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) at Foundation level for mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), while most pupils gain accreditation in a range of subjects including English, ICT, mathematics, science and food studies.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils enjoy school very much and the strong sense of community is reflected in their joyous singing in assembly and the good levels of attendance. Their spiritual, moral and social development is excellent but cultural development is less strong. Pupils have a wide range of uplifting spiritual and social experiences such as in their recent performance of 'Speakout', realising their individual talents such as for singing, dance, acting and playing drums. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They feel safe at school and know how to keep safe when they are working with potentially dangerous tools. They understand about living a healthy lifestyle and some pupils grow vegetables at gardening club. They have very strong sense of community and are very caring and thoughtful towards each other, such as in befriending younger pupils at break times. Their behaviour in and around school is exemplary and incidents of bullying are rare. The school council are proud of their roles and, following a successful presentation to the Parent Friends Association, have been closely involved in planning the new adventure playground. Pupils learn many practical and useful skills which prepare them very well for their future. These include budgeting, cooking and food safety. All pupils in Years 10 and 11 benefit from work experience activities both in school and in the wider community and also learn about some of the many uses of leisure time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently high. All staff manage potentially difficult pupils very well. Individual targets for learning are finely tuned and recording of progress towards them is part of all daily routines. Teaching assistants have very good skills and are thoroughly versed in delivering the special programmes of learning on a 1:1 basis for pupils who have severe autism. In those cases, pupils have short, fast-paced activities and successes are briefly rewarded before moving on. This ensures pupils are fully engaged in learning and make fast progress. Gradually, these pupils are able to participate in small groups. To promote pupils' understanding, teachers level work precisely to meet a wide range of needs and effectively use resources, including interactive whiteboard programmes, for example in mathematics. Teachers and teaching assistants skilfully level questioning to match pupils' abilities. Where group lessons take place, teachers make learning intentions clear and they review progress with pupils at the end of each lesson.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is broad and based on a themed approach with an increasing emphasis on creativity and real life experiences. The swimming pool with its 'magical' lighting is used in an initiative to develop language through water experiences and swimming. All learning is based around opportunities for developing social skills and core skills in English and mathematics with a good emphasis on ICT, although planning for mathematics teaching does not match the detail of English. Pupils particularly enjoy French lessons and are keen learners. They greatly enjoy music and singing, especially when everyone comes together in assembly, current favourites being songs from their show. Visits and visitors connected with each topic ensure pupils have a good understanding of the curricular themes. The school recently won an award

for the whole-school work on a recycling project. Clubs are popular at lunchtime when pupils can choose to attend, for example, story book club or gardening club.

The core curriculum at Years 10 and 11 are the courses in which students can gain accreditation. It is also much wider than this and includes work experience, leisure experiences and physical education. Pupils also have opportunities for many visits relevant to their studies, including a highly prized residential cricket week.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school provides excellent safety and levels of care and support for pupils, families and carers. There are robust procedures for the safeguarding of pupils which fully meet the statutory requirements. Detailed risk assessment of premises and activities takes place and appropriate detailed checks are made concerning all adults who work with pupils. The school knows when pupils are upset or worried and staff are on hand to care for them. There are clear procedures for dealing with any bullying or racist incidents that may arise although there have been no instances in recent years. There are very good links with professionals outside of the school and excellent links with parents.

Procedures and use of assessment to track the progress of pupils are thorough, analytical and consistently used throughout the school. Effective monitoring and moderating ensure teachers' assessments and target setting for individual education plans are accurate and appropriate. Pupils can talk about what they have learned in lessons and the more able pupils know what to do to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher and senior staff share their ambition for the school with the whole staff. They all work with dedication to ensure pupils have the best experiences and make as good progress as possible. Since the last inspection, and achieving specialist status, the school has set challenging targets not only for academic achievement but also for the personal development of pupils. Surpassing their targets has had a positive impact on raising the achievement of pupils and allowing them to reach new heights in their social skills. This has been underpinned by rigorous staff training and coaching to bring about a corporate and consistent approach, which includes developing the skills of newly qualified teachers. They have also provided training and support for an education officer working in Nigeria as part of their commitment to their specialist status and to sharing their expertise. The school's good planning for promoting community cohesion meets the needs of its pupils with particular strengths in links with local schools and the wider community.

Funds allocated in relation to specialist status have partly funded the construction of the language support centre which is used exceptionally well. The senior managers deliver training courses in the centre, in local schools and further afield. They work closely with local authority personnel in developing courses to benefit professionals and parents. Governors give strong support and commitment to the school in many ways and ensure statutory duties are fulfilled. The parents' association contributes very valuable funds to enable the school to develop and improve facilities such as play areas and the swimming pool.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

**Achievement and standards**

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

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

21 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Corbets Tey School, Upminster, RM14 2YQ

I am writing to thank all of you for making my visit to your school so enjoyable. It was a pleasure to see you all hard at work in your classes. I agree with you and your parents that your school is excellent! I really enjoyed listening to your singing in assembly, especially the songs from 'Speakout'. I know that all of you feel very proud of your achievements in the show. It helped many of you to be more confident, especially those of you who performed solo.

Your teachers and classroom assistants teach you very well and because of this you make very good progress, especially in your reading and writing. It was lovely to see the work you have done in art around the school and the lovely pictures you have made using the computers. It was especially enjoyable to see you enjoying your French lesson and to hear you singing in French. Your teachers ensure that you have many enjoyable experiences, including work experiences and visits away from home. In Years 10 and 11, it was good to see everyone working towards their awards in English, mathematics, science, ICT and food technology. The school works hard to ensure you are safe from harm and you told me that you do feel safe. The teachers work very well with your parents to make sure that you are getting all the help that you need.

I have asked the school to plan tiny steps in learning in mathematics just like you have in English so that you can make the best progress possible.

Yours faithfully

Lily Evans

Lead Inspector