

East Tilbury Junior School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 115010 |
| Local Authority | Thurrock |
| Inspection number | 326109 |
| Inspection dates | 29–30 January 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Maria Coles |

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

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 295 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Ray Osbourne |
| Headteacher | Mrs Sue Collings (Acting Head) |
| Date of previous school inspection | 29 November 2005 |
| School address | Princess Margaret Road East Tilbury Tilbury Essex RM18 8SB |
| Telephone number | 01375 846181 |
| Fax number | 01375 857846 |

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|--------------------------|--------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and is situated in East Tilbury. The school's population is principally of White British heritage with lower than average numbers from other ethnic minorities. The numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with statements of special educational needs are higher than average. The school has had a turbulent year, with the retirement of the previous headteacher and staff illnesses.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

East Tilbury Junior School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Pupils start school with average standards. Their attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement as they move through the school fluctuates between year groups and across the school. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, with the strongest teaching being in Years 3 and 6. Achievement across the school is satisfactory overall.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and varies between good and satisfactory. Some teaching lacks a good match of pupils' abilities to the tasks set, especially for the more able, so that appropriate levels of learning can take place. Where teaching offers suitable challenges for the more able and caters well for a range of abilities within classes, pupils produce a higher quality of work and make greater progress. Pupils who find learning more difficult are supported well in focussed withdrawal groups to enable them to work within the range of their abilities and according to their learning needs.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Effective pastoral support ensures pupils are well cared for although academic guidance through teachers' marking does not always tell the pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. Similarly, assessment information is not always used well by teachers to plan for the next stages of learning.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Pupils are polite, well mannered and understand the difference between right and wrong. They behave well in lessons and around the school and are proud of it. This is demonstrated in the way older pupils take their responsibilities as prefects, house captains and play leaders seriously. School council members represent the views of others well. They are working effectively with pupils from other schools to develop a greater awareness of bullying and how to deal with issues should they occur. As one parent stated, 'My child feels listened to and supported at all times'. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and attend school regularly. They have a good idea of the factors contributing to a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy their healthy school dinners and snacks and many take advantage of the wide range of opportunities for sports to help them keep physically fit.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school rightly has a strong focus on promoting basic skills, although there is a lack of opportunities to link subjects together across the curriculum and use information and communication technology (ICT) to further promote learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher and senior leadership team have worked well to implement a newly improved tracking system for pupil progress that is beginning to be used to identify those who need help and more challenge in their work. It has not yet had time to impact fully on standards by the end of the key stage. Senior leaders have a sense of unity and team spirit. They are actively working together with teachers to foster a greater understanding of, and accountability for, pupils' progress. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the good start made with tracking pupils' progress to raise standards and ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress.
- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that work is consistently well matched to the learning needs of all pupils, especially the more able.

- Develop teachers' marking, and their use of information from assessments and target setting, so that they are better informed about what their pupils do well and the pupils understand what they need to do next to improve.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' standards are consistently broadly average by the end of Year 6 in mathematics, English and science. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in writing is below average, but this issue is being addressed by the school as a priority. School pupil progress data shows that their progress is uneven across the year groups because of the variable quality of teaching. The pupils with learning difficulties and lower attainers are achieving in line with their peers, due to the effective support that they have in class and in small group work. There is good provision for those pupils with more complex needs and with statements of special educational needs to enable them to achieve well with their individual targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and are polite and confident learners who are keen to do well. They understand well how to adopt healthy lifestyles. They know the importance of healthy eating. They grow their own fruit and vegetables, and have gained an award from the local 'East Tilbury in Bloom' competition. They enjoy a wide range of physical education sessions and sports clubs, which keeps them fit and healthy. Most behave well in and around the school. They say they feel safe in school and have someone to turn to if they have a problem, knowing that incidents will be dealt with quickly. Pupils are proud of the roles they undertake as play leaders, house captains and prefects, so that they can for example, help younger pupils feel comfortable. This thoughtfulness towards others extends to their fundraising for charities and their sponsorship of two Kenyan children. This, along with learning a foreign language, gives them a greater understanding of the global community and their place in it. Pupils reflected thoughtfully on issues raised in an assembly about stereotyping. These features all contribute to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They take their responsibilities seriously but do not always have the opportunity to take the initiative and show responsibility for their learning. Their personal qualities and their sound basic skill development place the pupils in a secure position for success in the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils' learning and progress are improving but teaching remains satisfactory because it is not fully effective in raising standards consistently throughout the school. In the best lessons, work is stimulating and challenging, because individual tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities and they feel able to succeed. Pupils are well motivated and respond well, frequently working successfully with a partner. Specific and appropriate learning targets are identified and shared

with pupils so they are clear about what they should do and what they will learn. In these lessons, pupils are excited by the teaching, as one Year 6 boy stated, 'I can't wait until I write my poem tomorrow'.

In less successful lessons, that nevertheless are satisfactory, pupils are not sufficiently well challenged, particularly the more able pupils. Sometimes, lessons are too focused on the input from the teacher, the pace is slow and insufficient time is given to pupils' learning and practising their skills. The skills of teaching assistants are frequently used well. The assessment and marking of pupils' work is satisfactory overall but inconsistent. It does not refer often enough to pupils' individual targets or to ways for them to improve in the future.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum with appropriate attention placed on developing their literacy and numeracy skills. Staff are at the early stages of linking subjects and developing a skills-based curriculum so that learning becomes more relevant and, pupils have, for example, more opportunities to develop their computer skills within different subjects. Staff modify the curriculum effectively for pupils who need extra help with their learning but there is inconsistency in the way the needs of more capable pupils are met. The personal, social and health education programme is effective in helping pupils to understand their own needs and behaviour, as well as those of others. A range of sports activities encourages pupils to raise their fitness levels. The well-established choir takes part in a variety of local performances. An extensive range of popular school clubs helps pupils to develop new interests and improve their skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff build good relationships with pupils and support their personal development and well-being effectively. Teachers and learning support assistants devote a great deal of time to supporting individual pupils and groups. They work well with parents and outside agencies and support is well organised and informed. As one parent of a boy with learning difficulties said, 'I am satisfied that his needs are catered for'. Child protection arrangements meet requirements and systems to promote pupils' health and safety are carefully managed. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Systems for tracking and recording pupils' academic progress and attainment have improved but their use to guide pupils' learning does not ensure that they make the best possible progress. Pupils are aware of the National Curriculum levels they are working at and how to move to the next level. They are not always clear how this is to be achieved in relation to specific pieces of work in class.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The acting headteacher, senior leadership team and consultant headteacher have worked well together in bringing about consistency to leadership and management. The monitoring of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement has been approached more systematically. This approach is being evaluated well. Helpful feedback to staff has raised the number of lessons judged as good. School leaders are beginning to use the information gathered from the new

pupil progress tracking system and other self-evaluation activities more effectively to inform them of the strengths and weaknesses in the school.

Subject leadership is at an early stage of development but is satisfactory. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory, with stronger links being forged with local community groups and pupils showing a growing awareness of international issues. Governance is satisfactory. A small minority of parents have raised concerns regarding bullying in the school. Inspectors found that the school has taken effective steps to counter any bullying behaviour, including devising anti-bullying strategies with other local schools, online confidential questionnaires for pupils to express their concerns and rewards for positive behaviour.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 3 |
| 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? | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 3 |

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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

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| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 3 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 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 | 3 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 3 |

Leadership and management

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 3 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 3 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 3 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 3 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 |
| 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**

2 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Tilbury Junior School, East Tilbury, RM18 8SB

Thank you for making us feel so welcome on our recent visit. We enjoyed watching you at work and at play and were impressed with how sensible, confident and well mannered you are. We know that many of you take advantage of the many sports and music opportunities that the school provides for you. We were impressed with how well all the older pupils undertook their responsibilities and looked after the younger ones. We know that you all enjoy school and are keen to do well in your learning, and where your lessons are good you make better progress. You reach standards at the end of Year 6 that are similar to children in many other schools and make sound progress. We think that your school is satisfactory.

There are a few things we would like your school to do to improve:

- extend the good start made to tracking your progress to raise standards and ensure that you all make consistently good progress
- improve the quality of teaching by making sure that work is consistently well matched to your learning needs, especially the more able
- develop teachers' marking, use of assessment information and target setting so they you are better informed of what you do well and understand what you need to do next to improve.

We hope you can help by making sure that you continue to work hard and follow your teachers' advice.

Wishing you all the best for the future.

Maria Coles

Lead Inspector