

# 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>	338492
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Martin Beale

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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	281
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carol North
<b>Headteacher</b>	Shelagh Cosgrow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Princess Margaret Road East Tilbury Essex
<b>Telephone number</b>	01375 859360
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@easttilburyinfant.thurrock.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 16 lessons, observing 10 teachers, and held meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. Informal discussions were also held with parents as they arrived with their children at the start of the day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised assessment information, pupils' books, records of pupils' progress and improvement plans. They analysed 60 responses to the parental questionnaire and 18 to the staff survey.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how effectively teachers plan lessons and make pupils aware of the purpose behind what they are doing
- the benefits of the links with the neighbouring junior school and local secondary school
- the role played by school leaders in supporting improved practice and driving the school forward.

## Information about the school

Most pupils are from White British backgrounds in this above average sized school. Few are from homes where English is not the first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has fallen but is still above average. Their needs are mostly associated with moderate learning difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and three Reception classes.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

East Tilbury Infant is a good school. It has improved in some key areas since its last inspection and has developed outstanding features under the headteacher's thoughtful and determined leadership. The most notable of these outstanding features are:

- the high quality of the care, guidance and support provided for all pupils which helps them to feel completely safe and secure in school
- highly effective links with other schools and outside organisations to extend learning and provide additional expertise in support of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable
- a close and fruitful partnership with parents, which helps them to be fully involved in their children's learning.

Parents are pleased with the school and greatly value working with their children in class at the start of the day. Almost all parents agree that their children enjoy learning and that they are kept safe in school. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and are confident that adults are able to help and support them when the need arises. They behave well and are considerate towards others, helping to make this a cohesive community.

The Nursery and Reception classes give the children a good start to their school lives. They settle quickly as a result of close links with home and thoughtful induction processes, and make good progress from starting points broadly as expected for their age. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Attainment, as shown by Year 2 assessments, is above average by the time they move on to the junior school. Their good academic development and strong personal qualities give a firm platform for success in the next stage of their education, into which great care is taken to ease their transition.

Several factors contribute to the pupils' good achievement, including:

- a considerable proportion of good or better teaching that gains and retains their attention
- a series of interesting and carefully planned learning experiences that develops skills such as writing through stimulating and interesting activities
- the sharp focus on understanding the needs and circumstances of each individual and the tailoring of support accordingly
- the rigorous use of assessment information to plan individual learning in lessons and to identify where support is needed if they fall behind their targets.

Teachers make learning interesting through careful lesson planning that matches activities closely to the pupils' needs. They use resources including new technology

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creatively to develop new ideas and stimulate thinking. The gap between the attainment of girls and boys is closing as a result of concerted action taken by the school. There is still some work to be done to improve the consistency of teaching across the school. This includes giving pupils greater responsibility for their learning by refining the procedures for guidance so that pupils know exactly what they need to do in order to improve.

The headteacher has high expectations of pupils and staff, setting them challenging targets and providing targeted support for their achievement. Strong teamwork is a central element of the school's success. Capacity is developed within teams at all levels so they can take greater ownership of developments and support the drive to improve provision, particularly teaching. Thorough and accurate self-evaluation based on the rigorous monitoring of learning and the careful analysis of assessment data acts as a very secure base from which to identify the next steps in the school's development. These factors and the school's recent successes give it good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Help pupils to take greater responsibility for their learning by:
  - phrasing learning objectives and success criteria in terms the pupils can understand
  - providing feedback and guidance for pupils that enables them to understand precisely what it is they need to do to improve their work
  - providing time for them to follow up on their teacher's comments.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

The pupils' positive attitudes support their learning and good progress. They greatly enjoy the activities provided both within and beyond the classroom. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, develop their skills at a good rate. Most concentrate well and persevere with tasks set. They work either by themselves or in a group without direct guidance, although a small number need closer attention at times from their teachers and other adults. Pupils have many opportunities to apply their basic skills and develop valuable qualities such as teamwork, collaboration and independence. Paired and group work is very productive, particularly when pupils share their ideas in discussion with a partner.

Pupils are polite and welcoming, often using sign-language to greet others. They are very considerate towards each other in the playground and other shared areas. They are aware of how to stay safe, knowing not to go into parts of the playground until adult supervision is present. They respond well to the school's drive to help them become more independent, such as through 'Three-then-ask' where pupils try to solve problems or resolve difficulties before asking an adult. Pupils now have a greater understanding of cultures and lifestyles other than their own. They understand fairness and equality and

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are curious about the world around them.

Pupils enjoy engaging in artistic and cultural activities. They understand the importance of diet and exercise, take action to improve their health and are keen to participate in sporting activities. Pupils make a valued contribution to the life of the school and the local community. They have a voice through their 'Learning Councils' and support many charities. Their awareness of the need to save the world's resources is raised through activities such as 'Green Day', gardening and various environment clubs.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Classrooms are calm and welcoming places in which the pupils' learning can thrive. Their behaviour is very effectively managed and interactive displays support their learning. Teachers adopt a wide variety of methods to add interest and motivate young minds, such as when a 'beach' was created in a Year 2 class to stimulate ideas for their writing. Additional adults are well deployed, making good use of their time to support learning and assess the progress of individuals including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nevertheless, not all teaching consistently engages the pupils,

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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and helps them to understand the purpose behind what they are doing and how to be successful. Furthermore, while marking is very thorough pupils do not always have the opportunity to improve their work as their teacher's detailed comments are not easily understood.

Designing a more creative and appealing curriculum, providing interesting starting points for writing, providing off-site visits and developing outdoor learning are part of the successful attempt to raise the attainment of boys. There is a sharp emphasis on developing basic skills and linking learning between subjects to make the pupils' experiences more memorable. The outdoor areas are used extensively to support learning and to build on the pupils' experiences in Reception. Programmes are adapted carefully to challenge pupils with particular talents. Enrichment activities are varied and their take-up is high. Sporting activities particularly benefit from close links with the local secondary school.

The school has an extremely clear understanding of the circumstances of the pupils, and uses this to identify the precise difficulties faced by pupils and to carefully tailor support programmes. The advice of external agencies is sought where needed and is used to very good effect to help the school to support pupils with specific needs. Procedures to ease the pupils' movement through the school are highly effective. Thoughtful and carefully planned arrangements mean Year 2 pupils are not daunted by their move to the junior school. Although attendance is only average, the school is working successfully with families to reduce levels of absence.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher is a very good role model, and places the promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination at the heart of the school's work. All members of staff support her vision and are committed to developing their performance. Leaders at all levels identify areas for development and tackle them through a range of effective strategies including coaching others to improve aspects of their performance. Their impact on the consistency of teaching is gathering pace. As a result, leaders can point to examples where practice has improved in response to their intervention.

Governors also reflect the school's ethos and values in their work. They challenge staff to justify the impact of action they are taking, and are involved in shaping the school's direction. Governors ensure that procedures for safeguarding the pupils and vetting all

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those who work in the school are constantly under review and regularly updated. Parental views are sought and acted upon systematically, such as when erecting a new fence in response to their concerns about the safety of their children.

The school has established a highly effective relationship with home and works very closely with the families of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Its context is fully understood and used to plan a wide variety of activities to support community cohesion locally and more widely. This includes working with the local secondary school and other agencies to provide specific events and support for pupils and their families. The evaluation of the impact of these activities is used to plan what can be done next. The headteacher and governors are strongly committed to working with others and take a leading role in the area including a project with local schools to develop teaching and learning coaches. The school would not be able to support pupils or enrich their experiences effectively were it not for the expertise brought in through these partnerships.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress as a result of effective teaching, a carefully planned curriculum that focuses on all areas of learning and the use of assessment to match activities to the children's immediate needs as well as their interests. The children are happy and enjoy all that is provided for them, developing very positive attitudes to learning. Most children reach and several exceed expectations by the time they leave Reception, although this varies slightly from year to year.



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The environment both inside and outdoors is welcoming and full of stimulating activities that grab and hold the children's attention. Adults plan appropriate activities for individual children based on an accurate assessment of their individual needs and interests. These are balanced well between those where adults take the lead and opportunities for the children to take responsibility for their own learning. Nevertheless, a review of provision by the phase leader has identified that activities do not always engage the more able children enough, which is a matter now being tackled by staff. The children develop independence, work collaboratively and learn to share and take turns. Their behaviour is very good.

Assessment information is used to identify priorities for the development of the provision. Effective leadership and teamwork by staff ensures that the children are purposefully engaged in developing their skills and understanding in all areas of learning. The children's safety and security are of paramount importance to all staff. Engagement with parents is a particular strength. The children's smooth start is built in part on parents coming into class and involving themselves in learning whatever their children are doing. This fosters a strong sense of pride for both parents and their children.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

**Views of parents and carers**

Responses to the questionnaire show that parents are very happy with the school's work. The inspection team concurs with their positive views, particularly those about the good quality of the teaching which helps to prepare their children well for the next stage of their education, that individual needs are carefully met and that the school is well led and managed. The team also agrees that parents are provided with plenty of information about the progress of their children and are given every opportunity to support their learning. The team found no evidence to support the view of a few parents, who feel the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at East Tilbury Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 281 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	60	23	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	63	20	33	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	52	29	48	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	55	24	40	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	62	23	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	57	26	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	53	26	43	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	65	19	32	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	48	29	48	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	22	37	62	5	8	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	33	34	57	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	48	29	48	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	58	25	42	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



14 July 2010

Dear Pupils

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

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school recently. We agree with you that East Tilbury Infant is a good school. We noted your pride and enjoyment of school, and how very safe you feel. We agree with you that your teachers take very good care of you. Your behaviour is good, and you work and play well together. We could see how much you and your parents value the opportunity to work together in class at the start of each day. We were also struck by your politeness and the respect you show to adults.

You are prepared well for going to junior school. You make good progress during your time in school, learning the skills you need for the future. This is because you are taught well and have interesting things to learn. Those of you who find learning more difficult also make good progress because of the support you receive, particularly from classroom assistants.

Everyone is trying hard to make the school even better. We have asked the teachers and other adults to make it clearer to you what you are going to learn in each lesson and how you can improve your work. This is because at times we found you did not always understand the lesson's learning objectives or the comments teachers had written in your books.

You can all play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and show pride in your school.

I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale

Lead inspector

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