

Eastcourt Independent School

1 Eastwood Road, Goodmayes, Ilford, Essex IG3 8UW

Inspection dates

14–16 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders are rigorous in evaluating the school's effectiveness and have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Pupils' personal and social development is outstanding. Pupils are confident, happy, hard-working and resilient. They reflect leaders' commitment to helping them 'grow into caring, well-educated individuals'.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is rich and provides pupils with a depth of knowledge in a wide range of subjects. Pupils enjoy and benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities.
- Children in the early years enjoy a positive, successful start to school life and are very well prepared for the next phase of their education. However, learning spaces do not consistently support their early literacy and mathematics skills and, sometimes, planned activities are not focused sharply enough on learning.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good and ensure that pupils' outcomes are good. There is a strong climate for learning in the school.
- Occasionally, teachers do not build on pupils' writing skills by setting suitably challenging work. This means that the higher-attaining writers do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Excellent relationships underpin all aspects of the school's work. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Their conduct is impeccable. They feel safe from bullying. They play and learn harmoniously together.
- Pupils enjoy school. As one pupil put it, 'School is absolutely my home from home.' Pupils attend regularly. Leaders take swift action to address any incidents of poor attendance or lateness.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers successfully build on higher-attaining pupils' starting points in writing.
- Enhance the early years provision by ensuring that:
 - learning spaces are consistently effective in supporting children to apply their early literacy and mathematics skills
 - planned activities have a clear and consistent purpose and focus on learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have ensured that the school meets the independent school standards. They keep meticulous records to show their compliance with the standards.
- Leaders are accurate and rigorous in their evaluation of the school's work. They are reflective and act upon the advice they receive from their advisory group. They respond positively and effectively to challenge because their priority is to provide the best education possible and to continue to improve the school.
- Leaders have been successful in creating a harmonious community within the school. Pupils and staff respect and care for each other. Most parents and carers are delighted with the work of the school and staff are proud to work there.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. The curriculum policy outlines a clear rationale for a well-rounded curriculum. Pupils develop secure knowledge and make good progress in the wide range of subjects taught. The curriculum is balanced. It places appropriate emphasis on developing numeracy and literacy skills. In addition, pupils benefit greatly from their work in art, music, physical education (PE), technology, history, geography, French and science. The curriculum is enriched by a range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, art and music.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils show respect and tolerance for people who have different faiths, beliefs and cultures from their own. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. The curriculum is developing their understanding of democracy. Throughout the school, display boards show pupils' understanding of their rights, roles and responsibilities. Assemblies are led skilfully by staff, exploring themes including equalities and respect. During the inspection, pupils were visibly moved by reflecting on Ramadan, which was linked to the issue of food shortages in a thoughtful and sensitive way.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress regularly. They have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and give helpful feedback to improve teachers' practice. Professional development has had a noticeable impact on the quality of teaching of phonics and writing since the previous full inspection. Leaders have also provided workshops to parents to help them support their children in this area.
- Most parents are happy with the work of the school. A parent teacher association has recently become a positive force within the community.

Governance

- The school has no form of governance. The headteacher is supported by her senior leadership team. She secures external advice from an advisory group.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school.

- Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding are well trained and ensure that staff also receive appropriate training. This is commissioned from the local authority. The staff are well informed and knowledgeable about potential safeguarding risks in London and in the local community. Staff are vigilant regarding pupils' care and safety. They share a consistent understanding of referral procedures and leaders draw on the expertise of external services appropriately and when necessary.
- The medical room and first aid provision are of the highest quality. Facilities are comfortable and safe and provide all necessary equipment to care for children who are unwell or requiring medical attention. Welfare staff are caring, diligent and thorough in their work. Records relating to accidents or sickness, however minor, are scrupulously kept. Parents are well informed about any concerns. Staff adhere meticulously to any medical care plans which are in place. Pupils rightly feel safe in their care. Staff not only care for any medical needs, they take time to chat, boost pupils' self-esteem and send them off happily back to class. This is a very special feature of Eastcourt's provision.
- Leaders ensure that relevant pre-employment checks are made when staff are recruited. The record of these checks is detailed and meets requirements.
- Leaders ensure that the site is safe and secure. All risk assessments are detailed and up to date. The premises meet all the requirements of the independent school standards for health, safety and welfare.
- The majority of parents who gave feedback to Ofsted expressed confidence in the school's ability to keep their children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge in the range of subjects taught. They work hard to capture pupils' interest and make learning fun.
- Mathematics teaching is a strength and, in particular, the oldest pupils in the school benefit from exceptional teaching in this subject. For example, Year 6 pupils engaged in an algebraic treasure hunt, working together to solve clues and win points. They demonstrated excellent problem-solving skills and impressive collaborative skills and they achieved standards which were above those expected for their age.
- Teachers are responsive to professional development and training and keen to improve their skills. They have worked hard to improve their teaching of phonics and writing since the previous inspection. Teachers select activities, games and tasks which interest pupils and help them to develop their skills of blending for reading and segmenting for spelling. The professional development provided to teachers to support the development of questioning has had a good impact. Teachers use questions well to challenge pupils' thinking and to develop their reasoning.
- Pupils benefit from excellent specialist music, PE, technology and drama teaching. For example, during the inspection, pupils were inspired by a music lesson which focused on repeating vocal rhythmic patterns (ostinato). They made clear progress within the lesson and experienced success with the task. Teaching was highly engaging and fun. Pupils experienced quick success in their learning.
- Most teaching draws on effective assessment to plan next steps for pupils, thereby challenging them to achieve the best that they can. However, not all teaching routinely

plans writing activities which build on the most able writers' skills and knowledge. This affects the progress that these pupils make in writing, which is weaker than the progress they make in mathematics.

- Teachers ensure that pupils read widely and often at school. They help them to develop decoding skills early and support their comprehension skills well. Homework diaries help parents to support their children in reading.
- Pupils have an extremely positive attitude during lessons. Teachers make sure that pupils are confident about taking risks and they encourage resilience. Pupils learn from their misconceptions and mistakes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are confident and happy and they achieve well. They have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning.
- They are kind, respectful and welcoming. They have a thirst for knowledge and a genuine desire to learn about the views and experiences of others. Inspectors had many intriguing and interesting conversations with pupils of all ages across the school. Pupils are unfailingly interesting, witty and highly engaging.
- Pupils develop their understanding of citizenship through the curriculum. They demonstrate British values strongly through their attitudes to each other and to people beyond their school community.
- Pupils are kept safe at school. They show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe online. They have strong awareness of healthy living and speak enthusiastically about the impact of PE on their health and well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct in classrooms, in the playground and when moving around the building is impeccable.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school and that any rare minor behaviour incidents are dealt with swiftly. School records support this view.
- Pupils play harmoniously together. They sort out any minor conflicts maturely and sensibly.
- Pupils attend well, and the large majority of pupils are rarely late for school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education when they leave the school. They are successful at gaining a place at the secondary school of their choice. Parents

often update leaders on pupils' successes and achievements after they have left the school.

- Standards are high in Year 6, with all pupils working at expected standards for their age in reading, writing and mathematics, and many pupils exceeding them.
- The proportion of pupils exceeding the expected standard for their age is higher in mathematics than in writing. This is because teachers do not consistently challenge the most able pupils to attain as highly as they could. Pupils across the school read with confidence and enjoyment.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in the full range of subjects taught.
- Pupils in Year 1 demonstrate phonics skills which are at least typical for pupils of their age. Some pupils are working above expected standards in this aspect of their learning.
- Teachers and leaders regularly monitor the progress that pupils make and support any individual pupils who need to catch up with their peers.
- There are excellent examples of high-quality pupils' work across the school which demonstrate the good progress pupils make. Beautiful artwork is a particular feature in some classrooms.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have ensured that all the relevant statutory requirements are met. Leaders are reflective, responsive and ambitious in their plans for the continuing development of this phase of the school.
- The early years shares with the rest of the school a strong focus on children's welfare, health and safety. Individuals thrive under the care and guidance of adults who are committed to helping them achieve, have fun and feel valued.
- Children's behaviour is on a par with that of the older pupils in the school. They are polite, friendly and helpful, and they collaborate and share extremely well. They are respectful and interested in visitors and keen to talk about their learning, their school and almost any theme that pops into their mind! They are inquisitive children who are excited by learning.
- Children start school with skills and knowledge which are broadly typical for their age. Children's books and their 'learning profiles' show that they make good progress from their starting points in all areas of learning. Information held by leaders shows that the proportion of pupils who achieve a good overall level of development by the end of the Reception Year compares favourably with children nationally. Children are well prepared for the next phase of their education.
- Practitioners make learning interesting and inspiring when they work with groups and individuals. They also demonstrate high expectations. For example, children were enthused by the shop role play. Teaching was skilful and helped children to count up to 30 to work out their change. As a result, children make strong progress.
- Children enjoy specialist drama lessons and perform to a high level due to high-quality teaching. During the inspection, they confidently practised their 'Thriller' routine, listening and focusing carefully to the guidance the teacher gave them.

- Practitioners also develop children’s early reading and writing skills well. Phonics teaching is strong. Parents are given good guidance from teachers about the next steps in children’s learning.
- Occasionally, planned activities which are not led by adults are not sharply focused on specific learning outcomes. This has an impact on the progress children make. Not all the indoor and outdoor learning spaces are equally effective in prompting, supporting and inspiring children to apply their early literacy and mathematics skills. Leaders agree that this is a focus for development. Indeed, they had begun to make improvements before this inspection was complete.

School details

Unique reference number	102869
DfE registration number	317/6055
Inspection number	10092446

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	287
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mrs C Redgrave
Headteacher	Mrs C Redgrave
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,500
Telephone number	020 8590 5472
Website	www.eastcourtschool.org.uk
Email address	eastcourtschool@talk21.com
Date of previous inspection	6–8 February 2018

Information about this school

- Eastcourt Independent School is a selective day school. The headteacher is the proprietor and is supported by a senior leadership team and an advisory group. There are no trustees and there is no governing body.
- The school's last full standard inspection took place in February 2018, when the overall judgement was inadequate. In September 2018, a progress monitoring inspection took place and judged that all the independent school standards which had not been met at the time of the previous inspection were met.
- The majority of pupils come from Asian and West or East African backgrounds.
- The early years provision consists of two full-time Reception classes.

- There are no pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- No pupils are in the care of the local authority.
- No alternative provision is used by the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all year classes. Some observations were undertaken with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with members of the leadership team and talked with leaders about their roles and the impact of their work.
- Inspectors undertook detailed checks on the premises with leaders to ensure that the school was compliant with the relevant independent school standards.
- Meetings were held with pupils to discuss their learning, to listen to some of them read and to hear their views on the school. Pupils took an inspector on a 'curriculum tour' of the school.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons, during playtimes and as they moved around the building.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school, improvement plans, curriculum plans and checks on the quality of teaching. They examined school records relating to safeguarding and behaviour.
- Inspectors took account of the 61 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the 19 responses to the staff survey and the 24 responses to the pupil survey. Inspectors also gathered parents' views as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a large sample of books to see what progress current pupils have made across a range of subjects.

Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Cox

Ofsted Inspector

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