

Eastcourt Independent School

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

Inspection dates 10–12 February 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good** **2**

Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This is a good school

- Pupils make consistently good progress in a wide range of subjects. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Good teaching inspires pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils achieve well and develop good reading, writing, speaking and numeracy skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils demonstrate high levels of tolerance and consideration for each other.
- Provision in the Reception classes is good. Effective teaching ensures children make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are outstanding. The school provides a close-knit family environment where pupils feel very safe.
- The headteacher, who is the proprietor, ensures that all the standards for independent schools are met. She has high expectations, so that the school is continually improving.
- Leaders work hard to ensure that the quality of teaching is sustained and is improving.
- Pupils report that they enjoy school and feel safe. The vast majority of parents are highly satisfied with the education the school provides.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is no formal process for appraising teachers' performance.
- Teachers do not always set tasks at the correct level so that all pupils make similar progress.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed the impact of teaching in 26 lessons taught by all staff. School documentation was examined including the school prospectus and website, the school's own evaluation of its work, pupils' workbooks and information regarding pupils' progress.
- All policies and procedures were examined including for safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff, parents and pupils.
- There were no staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire Parent View.

Inspection team

Flora Bean, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Helen Griffiths	Additional Inspector
Clementine Olufunke Aina	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Eastcourt School is a selective, independent day school located in Ilford, Essex.
- The school was founded in 1896. The headteacher is the proprietor and her family have owned the school since 1986.
- The headteacher has sole responsibility for the leadership and management of the school. There are no middle managers. She is supported by an administrator and a health and safety manager.
- The school aims 'to produce well-educated, caring, well-mannered individuals'.
- The school admits boys and girls between the ages of four and 11 years.
- There are two Reception classes. All children attend the Reception classes full-time.
- There is a wide range of nationalities in the school. The majority of pupils are from Asian and African Caribbean heritages, which is above average.
- There are currently no pupils with special educational needs or with a statement of special educational needs. Also, there are no pupils at the early stages of speaking English.
- The school has a good number of pupils who win academic and music scholarships to local secondary grammar and independent schools.
- The school was last inspected in July 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing a more rigorous appraisal system so that teachers are set clear targets so that they can improve their performance further
 - ensuring teachers set tasks at the correct level to match the needs of different groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has ensured that all the independent school standards are met, including those for the Reception classes.
- The headteacher has high expectations and ambitions for the pupils. She knows her school well and strives to maintain and develop the quality of provision further. As a result, pupils attend regularly and are well prepared and move confidently to the next stage of their education.
- The school sustains a very positive and caring atmosphere. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour are outstanding. The school strives to ensure equality of opportunity and to eliminate any kind of discrimination. The school is a harmonious and tolerant community.
- The range of subjects covers all the required areas of learning. In addition to the strong focus on literacy and numeracy, science and information and communication technology (ICT), the humanities and French are taught. Pupils' artistic, aesthetic and creative skills are well developed in art, music, dance and drama lessons. Weekly physical education lessons ensure that pupils have regular exercise and develop good games skills. Extra-curricular clubs enhance pupils' experience and contribute well to their academic and personal development.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers know the pupils well, monitor their progress and set challenging tasks in lessons for them. However, on occasion, tasks set do not always match the needs of different groups of pupils and progress is slowed.
- The school has good systems for checking pupils' attainment and progress. Through regular testing in all subjects, pupils know how much progress they have made and what they need to do to improve. Results of tests are recorded and information is regularly sent to parents so that they are well informed of their children's progress. The school organises frequent workshops for parents to attend with their children, so that parents understand how their children learn in school. This is much appreciated by parents and supports pupils' learning well.
- The headteacher's recent focus on improving the quality of marking has been highly successful. Pupils' work is regularly and well marked, with helpful comments so pupils know how to improve.
- Teaching provides many valuable opportunities through an excellent personal, social, health and citizenship programme (PSHCE) for pupils' personal development. Within this diverse cultural community, pupils learn actively about British values and acknowledge, accept and celebrate difference. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well. Through assemblies, visiting speakers and charitable events, pupils learn about the world beyond them and develop caring and positive attitudes. They display high levels of responsibility and maturity.
- The headteacher supports teachers well. However, appraisal systems are at the early stages of development. It is not yet rigorous in ensuring that observation of teaching and learning results in clear targets with follow up to improve the quality of the teaching and learning still further.
- The school's arrangements for ensuring the safety and security of pupils are outstanding. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of pupils at all times.
- Procedures for safeguarding, including for safe recruitment, are rigorous. All staff are appropriately trained and are aware of their responsibilities for the pupils. The school ensures that pupils understand the need to keep safe, both in and out of school.
- **The governance of the school:**

The headteacher, who is also the proprietor, has sole responsibility for governance. She is very aware of her responsibilities for all aspects of the school and for her duty of care for the pupils.

She has begun to implement a system of appraisal for staff to ensure the quality of teaching continues to improve.

The premises are well maintained, safe and secure and have plenty of space for indoor and outdoor learning and play.

The headteacher ensures that safeguarding procedures are robust. She ensures that the administration and maintenance departments work effectively to maintain the welfare, health and safety requirements.

Through careful financial management, the school is well resourced and maintained so that staff and pupils have a good working environment.

The headteacher has a full teaching programme as well as her responsibilities for leading the school. Some external support has been established recently so that all policies and procedures are up to date

and reviewed as required.

The school liaises well with parents and carers, who receive all necessary information. The school website and prospectus provide the required information on all aspects of the school including the procedures for handling complaints.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. From the youngest children in the Reception classes to Year 6, pupils demonstrate mature and highly positive attitudes to learning. There is no disruption in lessons. Pupils work responsibly and collaboratively.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and appreciative of the school and their teachers. There is an atmosphere of tolerance, harmony and consideration for each other. They are reflective and spontaneous in their responses and positively celebrate others' success. Even the youngest children in the Reception classes display excellent levels of control and consideration for each other as they work and play constructively together.
- Parents say that the behaviour in the school is excellent and that their children develop highly positive attitudes to learning.
- There is no reported bullying. In discussion, pupils acknowledged that sometimes there is a disagreement but there is always a teacher available or the headteacher to call on for help to solve an issue. Staff are responsive in alleviating any discord and always ready to praise good and altruistic behaviour.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe when using computers and how to consider risk. Leaders ensure that the promotion of extremism and political views is prohibited, so that all the independent school standards for this aspect are met.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Careful consideration has been given to all aspects of pupils' safety and supervision, whether on the school premises or on the regular outings to the park for physical education. In discussion, parents confirm that their children feel extremely safe in school.
- Attendance rates are high.
- Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils and safe recruitment of staff are stringent. Staff are appropriately trained, including in child protection, fire safety and first aid including for the early years. Staff are highly aware of their responsibility for the children in their care.
- The independent school standards for behaviour and safety are fully met.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The headteacher has ensured that teaching is consistently good, and improving. As a result, teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is always good. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. They are responsive to the imaginative tasks set for them and are inspired to learn. However, on occasion, tasks set do not match the needs of different groups of pupils and, as a result, progress slows.
- Teaching demonstrates a strong focus on developing key literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to practise their skills. They develop fluency in reading from an early age and many are avid readers. They develop excellent skills in writing fiction and non fiction across a variety of subjects. Teachers place a strong emphasis on presentation, grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Pupils develop excellent speaking and listening skills in discussion and debate and participate in all aspects of their work.
- Basic skills in mathematics are taught and regularly consolidated as pupils move through the school. Topics and key concepts are revisited and revised until they are firmly understood. As a result, pupils can apply numbers easily, for example in using their multiplication tables for calculations and problem solving.
- Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge. They almost always adapt their lesson planning and use probing questioning to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Through the varied and stimulating range of learning activities, pupils develop excellent learning strategies. They are inquisitive, ask probing questions and are quite prepared to research for themselves if a particular topic has sparked their interest.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed throughout the school and have a clear supportive role in lessons

to aid learning effectively.

- Regular checks on pupils' progress are used to identify any who are falling behind or who require additional support. Pupils have regular homework, which increases as they move through the school. Teachers mark pupils' work well with constructive comments to help pupils know the areas to improve. Leaders have ensured all the independent school standards for teaching and assessment are met.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is consistently good because teaching is strong and supports pupils' learning well.
- From the thorough approach in teaching in the Reception classes, pupils are well prepared in their literacy and numeracy skills when they move to Year 1. The vast majority enter Year 1 with skills that are above expected levels for their age. Many are already fluent readers, with excellent listening, speaking and numeracy skills. They are excited to learn and approach their work with enthusiasm and curiosity. Progress continues to be rapid across all areas of learning and good support for those who require help is given to ensure that none fall behind.
- The move between year groups is smooth. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils have achieved expected levels of attainment. The vast majority exceed the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- At Key Stage 2, the strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy ensures pupils continue to make good progress. Pupils develop excellent reading and comprehension skills, write well at length for both fiction and non-fiction purposes and demonstrate increasing ability to solve mathematical problems and apply their skills well. In regular ICT lessons, pupils learn well and apply their skills intelligently across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils' workbooks demonstrate good progress and a good volume of work covered.
- The most able pupils have excellent literacy and numeracy skills and read widely across many subjects at levels above, and well above, those expected. Examples of pupils' creative writing, in workbooks and on display, demonstrate good, and sometimes outstanding, progress.
- Pupils reflect on their work carefully to help them make accurate checks about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Excellent use of interactive whiteboards ensures that photographs and pictures enrich the learning environment and stimulate discussion in many subject areas.
- Pupils have well developed aesthetic, creative and artistic skills from innovative art, music, dance and drama lessons where teaching is consistently good. In art, for example, pupils developed excellent watercolour techniques in their paintings using a variety of Van Gogh paintings as stimuli.
- The majority of pupils continue to work at levels above those expected for their age. Any pupil who requires help is given regular support to maintain good progress.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 all pupils have reached levels of attainment in line with, or above, those expected for their age. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and move with confidence to their new schools. Many gain scholarships to local grammar and independent schools.
- The headteacher has ensured pupils make consistently good progress because they are taught well. She has ensured that all the independent school standards for this aspect are met.

The early years provision

is good

- Children are eager to learn in the Reception classes. Many have already attended Nursery so that they understand the daily routines of school and what is expected of them.
- They demonstrated excellent responsive attitudes to learning and enjoy stories, imaginative play and a willingness to share and play together. For example, in a literacy lesson they listened very carefully to the story of the lion and the mouse and were able to retell and re-enact the story well using key words, sounds and actions. They listen patiently to each other, learning to be good participators.
- Children enjoy a wide range of subjects and activities which support their development in all key areas of learning. Both indoor and outdoor activities are stimulating and challenging with a good balance of adult and child-initiated led activities.
- Teaching is consistently good. Children are increasingly adept in communication, language, reading and writing to a very high degree. Adults plan imaginative sessions, including making excellent use of interactive whiteboards for stories and work on letters and sounds. Parents are rightly delighted with how quickly their children read and are learning to write. Children read and write well, sounding out words from their secure knowledge of letters and sounds.
- The teachers work closely with parents so that they have a clear understanding of their children's interests, strengths and areas for development.

- Teachers monitor progress carefully. Appropriate provision is put in place for children with any special learning needs. All children are well catered for, with good individual support if required. The teaching assistants are well deployed to ensure children's needs are well met.
- Teachers keep detailed notes of the children's progress and plan the next steps in learning and development for key literacy and numeracy activities. Activities are carefully linked to learning, as when children were using money while they were pretending to be shopkeepers. Children regularly play outdoors. Resources are plentiful and well used to promote all the areas of learning.
- In discussion, parents indicate that children feel safe. There are no behavioural issues and children report that they enjoy school and play happily with others. The behaviour and safety of the children are outstanding. Safeguarding policies are implemented rigorously and staff take their responsibilities for the safety of children seriously.
- The leadership of the early years provision is good, and leaders have ensured that all the independent standards are met. Discussions with the headteacher and the early years leader indicate that the school has an accurate understanding of early years provision, training requirements and areas to develop further.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook.

School details

Unique reference number	102869
Inspection number	447187
DfE registration number	317/6055

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	Day
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Christine Redgrave
Headteacher	Christine Redgrave
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 July 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,300
Telephone number	020 8590 5472
Email address	admin@eastcourtschool.org.uk

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