

Inspection of Eastcourt Independent School

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

Inspection dates: 15 to 17 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of Eastcourt Independent School. Their enjoyment of school is unmistakable. Pupils' attitudes are excellent and they lap up learning. They are highly motivated, keen, and aspirational for their future. Pupils work hard. They are respectful of others, treating everyone with consideration and warmth.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They live up to the high expectations of behaviour that teachers have of them. Day-to-day routines are so well embedded that teachers rarely have to remind pupils about how to behave. Staff promote an anti-bullying culture in the school. If bullying ever happens, leaders deal with it fairly and swiftly. Any issues are sorted out effectively by staff.

Leaders set the tone of the school through their care and sensitivity. The highly positive atmosphere runs through the school, from lessons to play time and after-school clubs. Parents and carers were positive about their children's experiences of school. Pupils not only feel safe but are kept safe.

Pupils study a wide range of subjects but they could be doing better in their learning. This is because the curriculum does not identify clearly what pupils need to know. This limits the depth of pupils' learning in Years 1 to 6.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are highly committed to the school's success. They are caring, compassionate and have every pupils' well-being at the heart of all that they do.

Leaders ensure that pupils receive a broad curriculum. In the Reception class, for example, children develop their social and emotional skills particularly well. Leaders ensure that children develop their understanding across all areas of learning effectively. Parents said that it was easy to see staff if they had a concern. Pupils felt that everyone is treated as an individual.

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum and how it is put into practice in the classroom. This has helped to improve pupils' learning in some areas. For example, leaders ensure that they check pupils' understanding regularly. This helps to pick up any misconceptions they may have and adapt the curriculum in response.

The recently introduced phonics scheme is helping to improve the way reading is taught. Children in the Reception class learn how to use the sounds letters make to read words effectively. The scheme starts early so that pupils become increasingly fluent readers as they move up the school.

Despite similar work in other areas, including mathematics, science and art, there are weaknesses in the way that pupils in Years 1 to 6 develop their knowledge of subjects. Curriculum plans show the overall topic or theme but do not clearly identify the important ideas that pupils need to learn. This makes it difficult to ensure that

the planned curriculum is applied consistently in classrooms. Pupils find their lessons interesting, but often the work that they are given does not help to deepen their knowledge of subjects. As a result, there is a ceiling placed on pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Nevertheless, the needs of pupils with SEND are identified and met effectively.

Staff receive a range of professional development opportunities, including in phonics. Leaders are conscientious in their support of staff, ensuring that their workload is manageable. However, professional development opportunities for staff are not consistently strong in developing their expertise in teaching different subjects.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' excellent behaviour. They do this in lots of little ways, from the way they celebrate pupils' achievements to the example that they set throughout the day. Teachers value pupils' contributions to lessons and treat them with great respect. In return, pupils are extremely polite and courteous. Lessons go ahead without interruptions. In the early years, children are taught to follow routines and instructions, which they do extremely well.

Leaders develop pupils' personal development effectively. This includes a well-considered personal, social, health and economic education programme. Pupils are taught about the importance of respect for people who might be different from them. Pupils regularly raise money for charity. Teachers encourage pupils to stay safe, including online and outside of school. Leaders follow government guidance about relationships and sex education.

Pupils have lots of opportunities which aim to develop their interests and talents. For example, pupils take dance lessons or do gymnastics, often to a high level. Before and after-school clubs, such as chess and sports, extend pupils' experiences considerably. Leaders aim to broaden pupils' cultural understanding, including through art, drama and music.

The proprietor and advisory board provide strong support for leaders, helping them to improve the school. Leaders and members of the advisory board fulfil their statutory duties effectively, including for the early years foundation stage. They ensure that the independent school standards are met and the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there are rigorous checks on the suitability of the staff they employ. Records are detailed and diligently maintained.

Leaders and staff know the pupils, and their families, well. They are quick to identify any concerns and respond in good time. They work closely with parents to provide suitable help.

Regular training ensures that staff spot potential concerns quickly. There are clear procedures for reporting these to leaders and for following them up with external agencies. Pupils also know how to report any concerns, for example by dropping a note into the worry box. They get plenty of advice on how to keep themselves safe.

The safeguarding policy is up to date and in line with statutory guidance. This policy is made available to parents on the school's website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Although leaders have reviewed and revised the curriculum for many subjects, there are weaknesses in the way the programmes in subjects such as mathematics, science, and art and design are designed and implemented in Years 1 to 6. Subject planning does not identify clearly what component knowledge pupils need to develop over time. As a result, pupils do not develop deep subject-specific skills across many subjects. Leaders need to ensure that their curriculum thinking clearly identifies the essential concepts that they want pupils to learn in each subject. Leaders need to also be clear how these essential concepts are sequenced in a way that builds pupils' knowledge and skills in a logical way.
- Leaders do not ensure that professional development for staff focuses on subject pedagogy as well as subject knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that professional development addresses subject pedagogy more systematically. For example, they should support teachers to select activities that focus on developing and deepening pupils' knowledge and skills.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	102869
DfE registration number	317/6055
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10252144
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Proprietor	Christine Redgrave
Headteacher	Christine Redgrave
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,100
Telephone number	020 8590 5472
Website	www.eastcourtschool.org.uk
Email address	admin@eastcourtschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 to 16 May 2019

Information about this school

- Eastcourt Independent School caters for boys and girls aged from three to 11.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in June 2019 when it was judged to be good.
- The school is situated in the London Borough of Redbridge.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science mathematics and art. They talked to pupils about their learning in these subjects and looked at their work. They met with subject leaders and teachers to discuss the curriculum. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to discuss their views about the school, including behaviour and safety.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, who is also the proprietor. Inspectors also met with the deputy headteacher and staff responsible for safeguarding.
- Inspectors held phone discussions with members of the advisory board.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of policies and documents provided by leaders.
- Inspectors checked staff vetting checks and safeguarding procedures. They also checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Jaeggi	Ofsted Inspector

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