

# Victor Seymour Infants' School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102980
<b>Local Authority</b>	London Borough of Sutton
<b>Inspection number</b>	376792
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 November
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Rogers

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>	320
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr M Rowlands
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs H Matt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9–10 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Denmark Road Carshalton SM5 2JE
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<b>Fax number</b>	020 8847 3380
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<b>Age group</b>	3–7
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who watched 16 part lessons, observing 13 teachers altogether. They also made shorter visits to classes to look at displays and observe individual pupils and groups at work. Overall, each class was visited several times. Inspectors scrutinised planning, talked to pupils and looked at their work. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and school leaders. Inspectors also looked at school documentation including safeguarding records, monitoring files and the school development plan. They met with parents and carers at the school gate and analysed survey responses from pupils and staff, as well as 101 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether all groups, especially boys, make at least good, consistent progress, especially in writing.
- The quality of teaching in all cohorts and all subjects and the effectiveness of the use of regular feedback to enable pupils to improve.
- The quality of the curriculum and whether it offers good opportunities for pupils to learn basic skills and information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects.
- The quality of leadership at all levels including subject leadership and whether subject leaders are effectively involved in the monitoring of teaching.

## Information about the school

Victor Seymour is a larger than average infant school. It has a Nursery that caters for 52 children in two daily part-time sessions. In addition, the school manages a children's centre and there is a privately run pre-school on site, both of which are subject to separate inspections. The number of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is rising gradually year on year and, at about quarter of the pupils, the percentage is now average. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is just below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also broadly average. Most of these pupils have difficulties with speech, language and communication.

**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

Victor Seymour is a good school. Strong relationships and a caring ethos enable pupils to make good progress with their basic skills and in their personal development. There have been several significant improvements since the last inspection, mainly due to the very effective leadership and vision of the headteacher. Her skills were highlighted by several parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire. One comment read, 'Victor Seymour is a lovely school with dedicated staff and a brilliant head.' The questionnaire replies confirmed inspectors' views of the school and were overwhelmingly positive. Another parent typically said, 'I cannot praise this school enough and doubt any other school could do better.'

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to do well in Key Stage 1. The school's assessments show that by the time they reach the end of Year 2, many pupils are working at above average levels in reading and mathematics. There have also been improvements in results in writing, but these have been more variable. This is because the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 and results for boys are relatively lower, being broadly average. Pupils' progress is much better than at the last inspection because there has been a concerted drive to improve provision. Good teaching is supported by a range of appropriate interventions. Notable attention is paid to meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who have difficulties with language. Leaders understand that accurate assessment is crucial and continue to work on ensuring that pupils know exactly what they have to do to be successful. This work is already very helpful in engaging pupils and showing them what is expected of them. However, it is not yet consistent, so teachers do not always give more-able pupils enough feedback in their marking to enable them to improve as rapidly as possible.

The school's work on curriculum development has ensured more opportunities for pupils to practise their basic skills and to learn to use ICT. Pupils enjoy a lively and engaging curriculum which pays good attention to developing social skills and other aspects of their personal development. Consequently, they have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe, behave well and are knowledgeable for their age about how to keep healthy. Although the school itself is a very cohesive community opportunities for pupils to communicate with pupils from further afield are limited. This is because the school's plans for this work are still in the early stages of development.

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The headteacher has worked hard and effectively to develop a successful team. Senior leaders have a good grasp of the school's strengths and are very clear about what remains to be done to raise standards still further. This is because they and subject leaders monitor teaching carefully. This, and other improvements implemented since the last inspection, shows that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Raise attainment, especially in writing, still further by ensuring that teachers:
  - plan more effectively to meet the needs of more-able pupils
  - give pupils clear, specific feedback on how to improve their work.
- Increase opportunities to promote pupils' awareness of people from different backgrounds both in the United Kingdom and further afield through careful planning and evaluation of opportunities for pupils to interact with other communities.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Children enter the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are, on average, typical for most four year olds, although boys enter the school with significantly weaker skills in language and writing in most cohorts. All groups of pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. The progress made by boys is similar to that made by girls, but they attain less well in writing in some year groups because of their lower starting points. The school has worked hard and effectively to close the gap by designing boy-friendly themes such as 'Superheroes' in Key Stage 1. Year 1 boys were seen eagerly participating in writing activities where they had to describe characters such as Spiderman. Leaders know that there is more to be done in this area, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Teachers plan conscientiously to meet the needs of all pupils. They are successful in supporting those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with language difficulties. Pupils who need support with English because it is not their mother tongue also make good progress. These pupils were observed receiving good support through intervention groups, mainly run by teaching assistants. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in their end of Year 2 assessments has steadily improved, but teachers did not always have high enough expectations for all pupils in lessons seen. A few pupils told the inspectors that work was sometimes too easy for them. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy their lessons hugely. This is supported by the fact that attendance is above average and all of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire said that their children liked school.

Pupils' good personal development is demonstrated by the way in which they

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collaborate well and play together harmoniously. Behaviour on the playground is excellent, due to the well-planned adult support and activities on offer. Behaviour around the school and in classrooms is generally good, but pupils sometimes fidget a little if teachers talk for too long. Pupils are proud to belong to the school council, keeping others informed about ways in which they improve their school, especially the environment. They also enjoy helping in their local community and collecting for charities.

*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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning because teachers go to great lengths to make lessons enjoyable. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and the cross-curricular approach means that lessons are more relevant now, especially to boys. There are also more opportunities for teaching basic skills in other lessons. For example, the whole of Key Stage 1 were learning about the First World War in a topic centred on Remembrance Day. As well as developing their historical knowledge Year 2 pupils were excitedly practising their question-writing skills, ready to interview an old soldier who was coming in to school. The teaching of ICT has also improved and good use is made of the school's computer suite. Pupils even come in to school early to do extra mathematics on the computers.

Pupils behave well because they like and respect their teachers. They work well independently and stay on task because of well-prepared, exciting resources.

<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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Teachers also make good use of questioning and paired discussion to keep pupils engaged and develop their thinking skills, and lessons are lively. However, lessons are not always pitched at a level that will stretch the most able. Teachers have improved their use of assessment and are becoming skilful in telling pupils what they expect from them and in helping them to evaluate their work. They are still developing their ability to help pupils identify specific areas for improvement through their marking and oral feedback.

Good relationships are key and pupils feel exceptionally well cared for. They know that they can always find an adult to talk to if they have a problem. The school makes good use of partnerships and external agencies to support those who have special needs. They also work well with parents and carers, keeping them up to date. Leaders, rightly, have plans to continue to develop their communication with every single family in the school.

*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	3
<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>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are justly proud of the improvement made by the school over the last three years. The headteacher keeps very detailed monitoring notes and her clear vision ensures that staff are developed according to need. Consequently, teaching has improved. Subject leaders are increasingly involved in school improvement and are now playing a useful part in monitoring and evaluation. The school recognises that there is still opportunity for further development in this area.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate in most areas, but the audit of its promotion of community cohesion is not of the same high standard as the rest of the school's analysis.

The governing body has been effective in supporting the school and acting as a critical friend. It is well informed and knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It is successful in ensuring that pupils are safeguarded. Governors work well with school leaders to ensure equal opportunities for all and to make sure that there is no discrimination of any kind. The school's good analysis of assessment information is instrumental in checking the progress made by all groups of pupils.

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*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The Nursery and Reception classes provide very positive learning experiences. Children settle in quickly because the school has a strong induction programme and runs helpful workshops for parents and carers. As a result, they make good progress in all areas of the curriculum and some children make very good progress. Many are working at above average expectations by the time they enter Year 1. The only exception is calculating, where attainment is not quite as high.

Children thoroughly enjoy a range of interesting activities, both indoors and outside. For example, one class was seen learning letter sounds in a very lively session. Here, singing and real-life objects helped to keep children interested and making good progress. Children do very well when working with an adult utilising good questioning and language development. Their progress when working independently is sometimes less good, as they are not always clear what they might do, especially outdoors. This is more notable with boys. Although there is a wide range of activities on offer, some of the resources are more appealing to girls than to boys.

Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Teaching has improved in line with the rest of the school and robust assessment systems ensure that children's progress is tracked effectively. There is a strong focus on safety and well-being, so children feel safe and valued.



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*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

The views of parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive. There were very few written responses which contained any criticism of the school. One or two comments related to communication and the school has already recognised the need to develop communication with parents and carers still further, even though most are already very happy. Inspectors agree with the very small number of parents and carers who remarked on the need to give harder work to more-able pupils at times.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Victor Seymour Infants' 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 101 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 320 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	75	25	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	85	84	15	15	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	63	62	36	36	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	65	64	32	32	4	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	73	72	26	26	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	70	29	29	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	71	70	30	30	0	0	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)	49	49	41	41	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	55	54	40	40	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	50	42	42	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	54	53	37	37	0	0	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	82	81	17	17	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	79	78	22	22	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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 pupils' 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.**



11 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Victor Seymour Primary School, Carshalton, SM5 2JE**

I am writing to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school to carry out our inspection. Thank you also to those of you who filled in questionnaires and special thanks to those of you who gave up time to talk to us. We really enjoyed talking to you. You were very polite and well behaved. It was lovely to see how much you like your school and to see how hard you try in your lessons.

It was great to hear that you feel so safe at school. We were pleased that you know so much about keeping healthy and look after each other so nicely. We were also really pleased to hear that you think teachers are good at teaching. This is why you do well when your teachers test you. You get good results in reading and mathematics and do nearly as well in writing, though sometimes girls do better in writing than boys.

We agree with you that yours is a good school and you all make good progress in your lessons. We too think that your teachers and support staff do a good job. However, we are asking them to try to improve the standard of your work even more. We want them to:

- make sure that none of your work is too easy
- make sure that marking tells you exactly how to improve
- give you more chances to work with or talk to children from other countries and other parts of this country.

Yours sincerely

Sue Rogers  
Lead inspector

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