

Seymour Primary School

Seymour Road, Broadfield, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 9ES

Inspection dates

22–23 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Achievement in early years is variable and remains below the national average for children achieving a good level of development.
- Pupils in key stage 1 do not make good enough progress from their starting points and as a result many do not have the basic skills required in key stage 2.
- Children’s performance in phonics is not improving rapidly enough.
- Teachers do not always adapt activities in class well enough to provide challenge for most-able pupils and to extend their learning.
- Younger pupils’ speaking and communication skills are not as good as they should be.
- Too many pupils are insecure at applying their mathematics skills to solving problems.
- Although most pupils come to school regularly and learn well, others do not follow advice from school and their attendance is irregular.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the pupils’ success and provides them with a wide range of opportunities to support all aspects of their personal development.
- Pupils are polite and behave well. They are kind to each other and show great respect to adults. They feel well supported by teachers and work well in response to their teachers’ expectations.
- Governors are effective and ambitious for all pupils. They actively support and challenge leaders to continue to improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Pupils benefit from the diversity of languages and cultures they share and the cohesive community which has been created.
- Pupils in key stage 2 make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for transition to secondary education.
- Leaders work closely with individual teachers to improve their practice and consistency in classrooms. As a result, pupils’ overall progress is improving.
- Parents and pupils feel the school provides a safe and caring environment. The school nurtures pupils well, giving struggling pupils extra help and support.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress, especially for the most-able pupils by:
 - using information about individual pupils more effectively to plan the next steps for learning
 - challenging all pupils more consistently
 - planning activities which regularly extend their learning.
- Improve the outcomes for early years and key stage 1 by:
 - developing pupils' speaking, listening and communication skills
 - developing phonics skills more rapidly for all pupils
 - reducing the variability in teaching through secure monitoring, higher expectations and more effectively planned activities
 - checking pupils' progress more regularly during their learning activities and adapting them to increase pace and challenge
 - developing early years practice to secure greater consistency so that it provides appropriate support, stretch and challenge and prepares children for key stage 1 learning.
- Seek further ways to work with parents so that persistent absence is further reduced and all groups of pupils improve their attendance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is passionate about improving the pupils' learning and personal development. To meet her ambition, she provides well-planned experiences which will prepare pupils for secondary education and beyond.
- Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement. They have made improvements in key stage 2 which have led to more effective teaching with older pupils learning well. They are determined to learn from weaker outcomes for pupils in key stage 1 and early years, to continue to move the school forward.
- An extensive training programme has strengthened middle leadership so that they can now contribute to driving improvement in their areas of responsibility. Teachers at all points in their careers are positive about the training, coaching and support they have received. They understand how to use this to improve their teaching. The school draws on its academy status to share and improve practice through networks and collaboration.
- Leaders and governors have identified the school's strengths, using a wide range of information, which is gathered routinely. Leaders check that their judgements are accurate through the use of external validation. Leaders and governors have used this information to agree clear systems and raise expectations. There is now greater consistency between classes and better learning for pupils.
- Senior leaders have secure systems for checking how well teachers are doing. They support teachers in their work and hold them to account for the learning of pupils. Where leaders are stronger, they help teachers to use information about learning effectively and have strengthened the quality of teaching.
- The management of teachers' performance and training of staff are beginning to result in more effective teaching, particularly in key stage 2 where older pupils make above-average progress.
- Leaders have adapted the curriculum and assessment procedures to meet the demands of the new national curriculum with some success. They have focused on key stage 2 so that pupils are well prepared for secondary education. This has resulted in these pupils making good progress from a low starting point. They recognise that they must now apply the same strategies to improve performance in key stage 1 and early years.
- The inclusion manager provides strong leadership in support of pupils who are disadvantaged, speak English as an additional language or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils are able to participate fully in lessons and their progress is improving. Parents speak positively about the support they and their children receive.
- The school provides a wide range of experiences which support the pupils' educational and personal development. The wider curriculum is well planned and is responsive to the interests and diverse backgrounds of the pupils. Pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain is promoted effectively. The celebration of diversity and the community cohesion in the school are strengths.

- Sports premium funding is used well to develop staff expertise and allows pupils to participate in a wide range of additional activities. As a result, pupils develop interests and skills they might otherwise not have experienced.
- Pupil premium funding has been used well to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders and governors examine the impact on pupils' progress and adapt the provision each year so that differences between disadvantaged pupils and others are reduced.
- School leaders, governors and trust representatives have evaluated the work of the school and have clear priorities for improvement. These provide a clear focus on the actions which are required but are not always sufficiently precise in describing the expected impact of the actions.

Governance of the school

- Governors are well informed and have strengthened their skillset through ongoing training. They are now able to provide both support and challenge for school leaders.
- Governors analyse the progress of pupils carefully and visit the school regularly to increase their understanding of current issues. Governors have become more involved in supporting leaders to work towards continuous improvement.
- Governors analysed this year's test results and are working with leaders so that changes to curriculum and planning will support better learning for younger pupils. They question school leaders when pupils do less well. They are aware of the barriers to learning experienced by some pupils due to low starting points or language difficulties and are ambitious for these pupils to progress more rapidly.
- They check the use of finances carefully to ensure that spending supports the learning and progress of all pupils, including pupil premium and sports premium funding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Clear and appropriate systems are in place to ensure the health and well-being of pupils.
- Leaders and governors ensure that people working in the school are appropriately checked and trained.
- Parents are positive about the culture of safety in the school. Pupils say they feel safe and are taught how to stay safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good, particularly in key stage 1, Nursery and Reception. Teachers do not make enough use of information about pupils' current performance when planning lessons.
- During lessons, teachers sometimes do not check sufficiently how their pupils are doing, in order to reshape their teaching. Pupils when working independently do not always understand the tasks, work accurately or make enough progress. Whole class activity often focuses on planned content which does not always take account of differences between pupils. Consequently, pupils, especially those who are most able, do not always learn as well as they should.
- Teachers do not routinely identify when the pace of learning slackens and, as a

result, do not always adjust their teaching to respond to this and refocus pupils' learning. Pupils are given too much time to move between tasks. They become distracted when the pace slows.

- Some pupils, especially younger pupils, are dependent on adults to support their learning and lack the skills to write creatively or extend their learning.
- In mathematics there has been a strong focus on number skills, but pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills are not as strong. Pupils are not always asked to apply their knowledge, particularly in key stage 1 where they make slower progress.
- Although there has been a systematic approach to develop the frequency and accuracy of reading, some pupils are not able to explain what they have read. Most-able pupils who read widely do not always have effective strategies to learn and use new vocabulary.
- The school's focus on improving grammar, punctuation and spelling in key stage 1 has limited other aspects of writing. Key stage 1 pupils do not have enough experience of writing in other subjects or applying skills in independent writing.
- The school has introduced the 'Seymour Sequence for Writing' which has led to more systematic teaching which includes a focus on pupils speaking to develop their 'writer's voice'. Pupils and particularly pupils who speak languages other than English make better progress in response to this strategy. However, practice is not yet consistent and some teachers miss opportunities to improve pupils' learning.
- Staff know the pupils and the context of the class or teaching group well. Teachers have built positive relationships with pupils and use praise effectively to support the pupils' learning and confidence.
- Pupils have structured reading lessons with time for independent and guided reading. Pupils have responded well to these dedicated reading times, with key stage 2 pupils making strong progress. They say that they love reading and speak passionately about it. One pupil said, 'you never know where the next adventure will take you'.
- Key stage 2 pupils are making improved progress in writing because they write more often, at sustained length and across the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively in most areas to enhance learning through intervention, in class teaching and effective support for specific behavioural needs. Consequently, pupils who are falling behind, are disadvantaged, speak a language other than English or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to learn well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The personal development programme is underpinned by the school's core values and prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. The programme is evident in all aspects of teaching, including 'snack time' in early years. This is a strength in the development of the pupils.
- Pupils know and understand the core values. Teachers discuss these values with

pupils, who are reflective in their responses. Teachers know their groups well and support their personal development and welfare using that knowledge. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to school and their learning. They take pride in the school and its diversity.

- Pupils also study philosophy where they learn how to question and seek answers. They use these skills effectively in their lessons but also when discussing wider issues.
- Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibilities as play leaders, school council members, house captains or interpreters. Pupils appreciate these roles and take the responsibilities seriously. They are confident that they help to make the school a better place.
- Although pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good, they are often too dependent on adults and give up too easily because they do not have the stamina or motivation to complete tasks independently.
- Teachers develop pupils' awareness of keeping safe and of e-safety well. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are well looked after by the adults. They know who to talk to if they have any problems. Parents are happy to say that their children are safe and well cared for.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and interested in talking to visitors. Adults model expectations for positive language and behaviour. Pupils move sensibly around the school, and readily hold doors open for adults and each other. They play well together and enjoy using the equipment provided for them.
- Behaviour is managed well through positive behaviour management approaches. A nurture facility is used effectively to support behaviour for more vulnerable pupils and is adapted to their changing needs.
- Pupils and adults have good relationships and as a result pupils follow instructions and pay attention. In lessons where activities and learning are well planned, pupils are enthusiastic, hardworking and engaged in their learning. However, when the pace is too slow or work is not challenging enough pupils become distracted and require adult help to remain focused.
- The vast majority of pupils, parents and staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaires felt that pupils were well behaved in school.
- Attendance has been below the national average but this is slowly improving as a result of persistent efforts by school leaders to implement effective systems and to challenge absence. Pupils know that attendance is important if they want to learn well and make better progress.
- Historically, there has been some persistent absence. Where this relates to the unique circumstances of particular pupils, the school works effectively with these pupils and their families. There are still some groups of pupils who miss school more regularly than they should.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes at key stage 1 were well below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics for many pupil groups with different starting points.
- Progress in phonics is rising but is still below the national average for the expected standard in the screening check. The school has introduced a more systematic approach to the teaching of phonics and literacy. Teaching now focuses on both accuracy and fluency, and pupils are exposed to sounds more systematically and are accurate in sound blending. The performance of pupils currently in Year 1 suggests that outcomes will continue to improve towards the national average. However, outcomes in the past have been affected by mobility with incoming pupils having little time to develop their phonics before the phonics screening check.
- The number of pupils achieving a good level of development at the end of early years has been variable and below the national average, with boys performing less well than girls. Changes in staffing and planning are focused on increasing the rate of development this year.
- In 2016 the overall progress for Year 6 pupils in all subjects was significantly above the national average. Pupils who were disadvantaged made progress in line with national averages.
- In current cohorts, pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate in some year groups. Progress remains variable, however, and is strongest where teaching meets the needs of pupils most effectively. Key stage 2 pupils now extend their mathematics and writing, so they are working at greater depth more often. Consequently, pupils in key stage 2 are making better progress. Pace and work in books is less secure for younger pupils which results in weaker progress.
- Most-able pupils do not have enough challenging work. The school is not yet secure in measuring the performance of pupils capable of working at depth and as a result they do not achieve as well as they should. Too few pupils have strong enough key stage 1 attainment from which to build a greater depth of knowledge in key stage 2.
- The most able key stage 1 pupils read accurately, fluently and with expression. The most able Year 6 pupils are passionate about reading. They read widely and are encouraged to challenge themselves at home and in school. Additional support for weaker readers is helping to develop their skills and confidence.
- Disadvantaged pupils make at least similar progress to other pupils nationally with similar starting points. This is leading to differences in attainment diminishing by the end of Year 6. They benefit from effective additional support.
- The flexibility of provision, groups and interventions supports progress for all vulnerable groups.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Most children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge well below those typical of their age. Transition meetings have been changed to make children's move into Nursery smooth. About two thirds of the children progress into the Reception class. They make better progress in reading and mathematics than children who did not

attend the Nursery.

- Over recent years the number of children achieving a good level of development has been variable and below the national average. Boys and disadvantaged children have not achieved as much as other children. Last year the outcomes had improved with little difference for disadvantaged children.
- Leadership of early years changed a year ago. The new leader understands the strengths of the provision and is making some effective changes. Planning now includes more challenge, better planning to develop language skills and a greater focus on mathematical activities. The outside learning space for Reception children is still to be developed.
- Teaching does not yet make enough use of what children already know and what they should do to take the next steps in their learning. Adults do not readily adapt teaching and activities in response to their observations of learning. As a result, children do not yet make enough progress and are not well prepared for learning at key stage 1. The leader is a knowledgeable and confident teacher who has the potential to act as a role model for others working in early years.
- Many children have not yet acquired secure language skills. Where teaching is stronger, adults work well with children to improve their communication. They question them closely and get them to talk about their learning. However, this practice is not yet consistent.
- Where teaching is stronger in the Reception class, the strengths include effective interaction with children, questioning and pace which all contribute to children making the most of learning time and applying previous knowledge. This is not consistent in all learning spaces, with some adults not using vocabulary which is understood by the children.
- Action has begun to raise the attainment of boys which has lagged behind girls, although it is too early in the term to assess its impact.
- Daily contact is made with parents with additional blogs, newsletters and workshops, but not all parents engage well with the school.
- In the Nursery class children have a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities to help them to develop well. However, not all children were seen to join in with activities. Some had not yet developed the ability to concentrate on any given activity and roamed around.
- Children have a carousel of activities in the Reception class which give them opportunities to work towards the full range of early learning goals. Children were seen to be well supported in some of these activities, but the support and their progress was variable. Children did not always understand what was required and as a result did not make the best use of resources. This was observed in both mathematical and writing tasks.
- Reception children were able to become absorbed and persevere with tasks which they had selected. Children were observed playing together with a farmyard and others recreating nursery rhymes. They are willing to take turns, share and work together. They were seen to play together in a shop where they were counting money and cookies successfully.
- Children behave well. Successful induction activities mean that almost all have quickly

settled into school routines. Most children are confident to speak to adults and are starting to form friendships.

- Additional funding has been used effectively to support children who are disadvantaged and as a result there is little difference between their development and the development of others.

School details

Unique reference number	138645
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10012336

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	559
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Richardson
Headteacher	Sarah Park
Telephone number	01293 533198
Website	www.seymour-tkat.org
Email address	head@seymour-tkat.org
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2014

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- This is a well-above-average-sized primary school with almost two thirds of the pupils from ethnic backgrounds. Over half the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and require support is above that found nationally but below for those with a statement or education, health and care plan.
- The school has its own nursery provision from age 3 with places for up to 52 children.
- The school meets the current government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including information on pupils' current attainment and progress, governors' minutes, records of professional visits, self-evaluation, improvement planning, the use of pupil premium and sports funding, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited 32 lessons or part lessons, many of which were observed jointly with school leaders. They also undertook learning walks and observed intervention sessions.
- They looked at pupils' work and listened to them read.
- Inspectors observed assembly, break times, lunch times and the start of the school day.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to talk about their work, their experience in school and the opportunities they have been given.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, leaders, governors and a representative from the trust.
- The team analysed the 61 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke briefly with parents and carers as they brought their children to school at the start of the day.
- Inspectors analysed 55 questionnaires completed by staff and 56 questionnaires from pupils.

Inspection team

Ann McCarthy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rosemary Addison	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Taylor	Ofsted Inspector

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