

Inspection of a good school: Seal Primary Academy

East Street, Selsey, West Sussex PO20 0BN

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2023

Outcome

Seal Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Melanie Strachan. This school is part of The Kemnal Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Karen Roberts, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gaenor Bagley.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils in this highly ambitious school are taught to 'aspire, believe and achieve'. Through opportunities such as the sports education and leadership squad (SEALS), pupils learn how to contribute positively to the school community. The SEALS organise equipment at lunchtimes and involve other pupils in games to develop their agility, balance and coordination. Pupils play well together, treating each other kindly and saying: 'If someone hasn't got a smile today, give them one of yours.'

Pupils behave exceptionally well. The school has created an ethos where pupils feel safe and supported so they can focus on their learning. They know the staff are alert to their individual circumstances and will help them with any worries. Staff have high expectations for behaviour, and, in turn, pupils focus well on lessons and around school, showing respect and appreciation at all times.

Staff work together highly effectively to achieve their shared vision of all pupils attaining highly and being successful. As one parent put it: 'The enthusiasm of the staff is inspiring, and our children run into school each day with a huge smile on their faces and come home full of excitement about their days and what they've been doing.'

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

The school has worked tirelessly to ensure all curriculum subjects follow a logical and coherent sequence so that pupils' knowledge and skills build securely over time. The school ambitiously tailors the curriculum, so it has local relevance for pupils. For example,

they learn about the rich history of smuggling in the area, the coastal erosion of Selsey beach and the rescue work of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution volunteer crews.

The school puts reading at the heart of the curriculum. Reading and writing are taught side by side. Pupils quickly become confident readers. Staff ensure that pupils have daily opportunities to practise reading using books that are matched to the sounds that they know. Those who fall behind get tailored and rigorous support which helps them to improve quickly. Consequently, these pupils read well and are delighted with their progress. Their sense of achievement motivates them to build reading stamina, and they develop a tangible love of reading. The systematic approach to the reading curriculum continues into key stage 2. Pupils concentrate deeply while reading independently, enjoying analysing the way language is used in different kinds of books.

Across the whole curriculum, teachers present information clearly, breaking learning down into smaller steps. They model new concepts and use resources to help pupils understand unfamiliar ideas. Teachers plan opportunities for rich discussions about the curriculum, modelling the use of language and helping pupils to practise new subject-specific vocabulary. For example, in history, Year 6 pupils use photographic evidence of the blitz in World War Two to discuss the political motivation for wartime propaganda. Staff adapt the way they teach so all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn the same curriculum as their peers. Some curriculum areas are not as well established as others, and here, the activities teachers use do not always help pupils understand and remember what they are learning.

Assessment is used effectively to identify curriculum areas where pupils' understanding is not as strong as it could be. Frequent opportunities to revisit essential learning are included in planning, so gaps are closed and pupils' understanding builds on secure foundations. In the Reception Year, children practise new learning through carefully planned activities. Older pupils also assess their own achievement regularly as they practise key knowledge and skills in daily arithmetic quizzes.

The school offers many wider development and character-building opportunities. For example, all pupils learn the 'wild beach' curriculum. They are taught to gauge how fast the tide is coming in, build shelters and respect water safety. Through this, pupils learn about problem-solving, teamwork and resilience. They are taught how to stay safe on the internet, knowing never to share aspects of their personal identity. Pupils learn how to look after their emotional and physical health. They learn about different religions, families and relationships, building respect and tolerance of others' beliefs. There are many clubs for pupils to attend to develop new interests and friendships.

Trustees hold the school to account effectively. Local governors understand the scope of their roles within the trust. They support the school well in realising their ambitious shared vision of providing the very best education for every pupil.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some less-well-established subjects, activities in lessons do not always help pupils understand and remember the curriculum. As a result, pupils do not attain as well in these subjects as they could. The school should continue to support staff so they consistently provide pupils with work that helps them achieve the ambitious aims of the curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2018.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 138071 |
| Local authority | West Sussex |
| Inspection number | 10288015 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy special sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 302 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Gaenor Bagley |
| CEO of the trust | Dr Karen Roberts |
| Headteacher | Melanie Strachan |
| Website | www.seal-tkat.org |
| Date of previous inspection | 21 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school has been part of The Kemnal Academies Trust since 2012.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and the assistant headteachers.
- Views of pupils and staff were gathered through interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of local governing body and trust board meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. They spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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