

# Inspection of Seymour House Limited

Inspection dates: 8 to 10 July 2025

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Apprenticeships

**Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Not previously inspected

## **Information about this provider**

Seymour House Limited is an employer provider based in Chelmsford. The provider has been training apprentices since February 2023. Apprentices work in 10 nurseries in Essex and one in Hertfordshire. At the time of the inspection, there were 47 apprentices studying the level 3 early years educator standard. All apprentices were over the age of 18. None were studying English and mathematics qualifications.

## **What is it like to be a learner with this provider?**

Apprentices have highly positive attitudes. They take pride in their work. Apprentices' behaviour in teaching sessions is excellent. They are polite and contribute enthusiastically to questions asked. They are keen to share their own experiences with their peers. Rates of attendance to sessions are high.

Apprentices relish the wide-ranging and high-quality enrichment opportunities available to them. They visit specialist catering companies to explore child nutrition. They visit other types of nurseries to consider differing approaches to early years education. They fundraise for local charities. These excellent opportunities challenge apprentices. This contributes to building their confidence as early years practitioners.

Apprentices show exemplary personal and professional behaviours. During visits to forest school settings, apprentices are curious to expand their understanding of how these settings differ to their own workplaces. They ask insightful questions of the practitioners present. They are keen to share best practice. They consider how different approaches can be applied in their settings. They are reflective and self-motivated and consider themselves as educators. They use their initiative when working with children. They quickly become important members of their workplace teams.

Apprentices swiftly develop their confidence in completing complex tasks in the workplace. They become confident when working on sounds with children. They recognise that interacting with children and asking them questions helps them to learn new vocabulary and solve problems.

Apprentices feel safe in their workplaces. They do not experience any bullying or harassment.

## **What does the provider do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders and staff have high expectations and are ambitious for their apprentices. They have ensured that the apprenticeship includes a wide range of enrichment opportunities. The apprenticeship academy is a key part of leaders' workforce development strategy. Leaders ensure that their apprentices are nurtured and receive a high-quality training experience that is designed around the needs of their specific early years settings.

Leaders and managers have developed a strong culture of reflection and continual self-evaluation. This drives continuous improvement in the quality of education. Leaders listen carefully to both apprentices and their line managers. Following feedback from apprentices, leaders now include more practical activities, such as sky writing, into their knowledge days. This helps prepare apprentices to work effectively with older children in the nurseries.

Leaders structure learning in a logical order to ensure that apprentices quickly develop the essential skills and understanding required to be able to work effectively in nursery settings. Apprentices first develop a critical understanding of safeguarding. This includes learning about serious case reviews, signs of abuse and legislation. Apprentices then learn about child development and associated theories. Eventually, apprentices' learning is applied in the workplace through observation, planning and assessment.

Leaders make sure that staff are knowledgeable and experienced in early years education. They draw on this knowledge very well to teach high-quality sessions. Tutors use a wide range of teaching strategies very effectively to make lessons interesting and informative. Leaders and assessors plan valuable practical learning activities. They make sure that apprentices revisit topics in different ways. During knowledge teaching days, apprentices learn songs using Makaton. They learn about talking pens for communicating and reading with children who speak English as an additional language. Apprentices develop valuable knowledge and workplace skills and strategies to help them work inclusively with children and families in their settings.

Assessors ensure that on- and off-the-job training is closely aligned during progress reviews. Following training sessions on the curriculum and characteristics of effective learning, apprentices consider how they will apply their learning in their settings. Apprentices quickly develop the skills so they can fluently make links between theoretical learning and on-site practice.

Assessors diligently revisit apprentices' initial skills scans to identify the skills and knowledge apprentices have learned. Assessors skilfully check apprentices understanding of concepts studied. They challenge apprentices to think about what they need to do to further improve their knowledge and skills. Assessors work closely with apprentices' workplace line managers to set targets that help apprentices to extend their understanding. They set targets for apprentices to work with different age groups, and on different projects, to broaden their experience.

Assessors provide highly effective feedback on apprentices' work so that apprentices know what to do to improve. They use valuable colour coded feedback so that apprentices recognise the strengths in their work and how it could be further developed. As they move through their apprenticeship, apprentices write with greater depth. They make clear links with current early years guidance. Apprentices develop their academic skills, such as academic referencing. Apprentices produce work of a high standard.

Apprentices are extremely well supported by their assessors. If they fall behind, assessors break tasks into smaller chunks and provide more frequent one-to-one sessions to help apprentices catch up. Most apprentices achieve their qualifications and do so in their planned timescales. A high proportion achieve distinction grades.

Assessors support apprentices with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very effectively. Apprentices with SEND feel very much included, and even

prioritised, in the lesson activities. Where adaptations are needed in teaching sessions these are seamlessly provided to apprentices. These apprentices achieve and make progress in line with their peers.

Leaders make sure that apprentices receive a thorough and highly effective careers programme. Apprentices are aware of the wider opportunities available to them in the sector, and what training they may need to access these. Most stay working for the employer on completion of their apprenticeship. Many then become apprenticeship ambassadors mentoring new apprentices.

The strategic board have an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of the provider. They give effective challenge to leaders. They encourage leaders to review their approach when launching the new apprenticeship standard. This ensures that the apprenticeship includes a wider range of assessments to mirror the variety of tasks apprentices complete in the workplace.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## Provider details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	2765327
<b>Address</b>	140 Broomfield Road Chelmsford CM1 1RN
<b>Contact number</b>	01206 258849
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.seymourhouse.co.uk">www.seymourhouse.co.uk</a>
<b>Principal, CEO or equivalent</b>	Jonathan Player
<b>Provider type</b>	Employer
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Main subcontractors</b>	None

## Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of apprenticeships, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising learners' work, seeking the views of learners, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

### Inspection team

Georgina Ager, lead inspector

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Penny Fawcus

His Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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