

# Seymour Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125893
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	293396
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Collard

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	493
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	M Russell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Park
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 November 2001
<b>School address</b>	Seymour Road Broadfield Crawley RH11 9ES
<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 533198
<b>Fax number</b>	01293 538075

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Seymour is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average reflecting the diverse nature of the community. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is high and has increased recently. Since the last inspection there has been a change of headteacher. In the recent past, there has been a high proportion of long term absence due to maternity leave but all except one teacher have now returned. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory but improving quality of education with a number of good features. The strong direction of the headteacher has ensured that the individual strengths of senior staff have been used to best advantage. Consequently, leadership and management at all levels are good and this has helped drive forward the measures that will make the most difference. Pupils are guided and cared for well and the behaviour and the personal development of pupils are good. Some Year 6 pupils who were interviewed noted that, while attitudes to school were not perfect, they had been much better recently. As one parent wrote, 'The learning is getting better every year.'

Children start school with standards well below those expected for their age. While there is satisfactory provision in the Foundation Stage, by the end of the Reception Year, attainment is generally below the age expected levels in aspects of writing and language skills. Achievement through the school is satisfactory. By Year 2, although pupils have made adequate progress across each subject, standards are still below those expected for pupils' ages, particularly in reading and writing. As confirmed in the recent national tests, pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards in line with those expected and there is an increased proportion of pupils achieving at levels above this. For the first year, the school has significantly exceeded its challenging targets in English, mathematics and science. This year group have made good progress during their time at school, but progress in other year groups varies, depending on the expertise of the teacher. Consequently, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Elements of good and outstanding practice are being used well to raise the expectations about what pupils are capable of achieving. Nevertheless, until recently, the variability in teaching along with a high number of long-term staff absences has limited the progress of pupils. Good planning is not always carried through into the delivery of individual lessons, a key reason why there are peaks and troughs in pupils' achievement. More positively, it is beginning to extend the communication skills of pupils with learning difficulties, those who find difficulty expressing their ideas and pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The skilled senior leadership team has helped develop a stringent analysis of the school's provision and evaluation of the changes that they make. The improvements that have come about since the last inspection along with developments aimed at addressing inconsistencies demonstrate that the school is very realistic in its self-evaluation and has a good capacity to improve. For example, the school has correctly been working on improving the quality of different types of writing by providing a more appropriate balance within the good curriculum. As the headteacher remarked, 'The essence of these developments has been to avoid a quick fix but to make the improvements sustainable.' This is aimed at planning for both individual subject skills as well as making the content more relevant, which should then help pupils achieve continuously good levels of progress.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the use of writing across different areas of the curriculum to help raise standards.
- Improve the quality of teaching and ensure pupils' progress through the school is less variable by ensuring that the planning for different abilities is followed through into the delivery of lessons.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an OSTED inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

While pupils achieve satisfactorily, progress and standards through the school are variable. Pupils make a good start although many have difficulties with speech, language and numeracy. By the end of the Reception Year most are reaching standards closer to those expected for their age although they have weaker early reading and writing skills. Standards by Year 2 are still below those expected in writing although much closer to average in mathematics. Significantly, there are fewer pupils than expected reaching standards above this. Pupils' progress through the junior years is also variable. In the most recent national tests, pupils have made good levels of progress since they were in Year 2. While not confirmed, it is likely that the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected level will be the highest the school has recorded. Those with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress against their own targets but few of them reach nationally expected levels. The good support for pupils who have English as an additional language means that they are quickly able to communicate effectively with their friends. Nevertheless, some of these pupils have difficulty in using this language in their writing and so find difficulty expressing their ideas fluently.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons, where almost all of them enjoy their work. As one Year 5 pupil said, 'I really like our school because we don't just learn, we have fun!' This is reflected in the improved attendance, which is now in line with the national average. Pupils from different backgrounds work and play well together. They respect each other's cultures and have good opportunities to learn about different ways of life both in this and other countries. As importantly, they reflect and draw conclusions from what they have learned. They feel safe because they know there is always someone they can go to for help, and that any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. They know about what makes people healthy and have plenty of opportunities for regular exercise. They can also take the initiative in developing these aspects. For instance, the school council introduced stalls selling fresh fruit. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They share their views, which are listened to and acted upon. Their preparation for future learning and for life beyond school is satisfactory but, because the school has good transition procedures, older children are looking forward with confidence to their new secondary schools.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching, although variable, has good features. Teachers' subject knowledge, planning, their relationships with pupils and use of praise are consistently strong. Teaching assistants are deployed well. They provide skilled support for pupils with home languages other than English, Travellers and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Consequently these groups make satisfactory progress. Assessment practice is good, including opportunities for

self-assessment and individual targets for literacy and numeracy. The learning needs of Foundation Stage children are clearly identified. However, children preparing to move into Year 1 do not always have sufficient direct teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy and this affects their confidence in speaking and early writing. Through the rest of the school some inconsistencies in teaching are because the good planning is not always matched well enough to pupils' abilities when it is delivered in the lesson. Another significant factor has been the unforeseen staff changes and how this has affected the general progress of pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The highly practical approach to the curriculum ensures that it is adapted well to the needs of pupils, including Travellers and those with English as an additional language. Termly and weekly planning is good. For instance, when devising geography topics it was noted that in both Years 3 and 6 the pupils' skills were not so strong in mapping. These skills have subsequently been linked to different themes. The rich multicultural curriculum reflects and celebrates the diverse backgrounds of the pupils. This is evident in storytelling in different languages and in the interest shown by pupils in English history, such as the visit to Hampton Court. Regular visits and visitors provide good curricular enrichment as does the innovative nurture and intervention support. This has a positive impact on pupils' social skills, confidence and behaviour.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The good care and welfare is reflected in the calm and orderly atmosphere of the school. While there is the potential for some challenging behaviour by pupils, this is handled well and its effect dissipated before it hampers the learning of others. Strong intervention programmes enable pupils to understand how their actions affect both themselves and others. The highly trained teaching assistants play an active part in this process and the use of outside agencies is called upon as needed. The strong assessment systems in the school are at the heart of developing the curriculum, raising achievement and preparing pupils for their future life. These include good marking, assessing individual subject skills and checking the progress of different classes and year groups. From these, future targets are then agreed with both teachers and pupils. These good procedures have started successfully but they are not yet complete or embedded throughout all classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leaders and managers at all levels are working together well, ensuring they can drive the school forward and in particular raise pupils' standards and achievement. They are very ably led by the headteacher, who has succeeded in sharing her own vision, dynamism and enthusiasm with her colleagues and drawing out the best in others. Consequently, the whole team is well focused on the challenges and has the expertise to deal effectively with them. They have accurately identified several areas for development, and training is being provided to address these. The steps taken have already led to measurable improvements, for example in English, mathematics and science in Year 6. However, the school is not complacent and recognises that this now needs to be sustained and improved throughout the whole school. Governors are aware of their responsibilities, and provide good support and challenge. They bring expertise in their own

fields, for example financial management. Different sections of the community are well represented although the burden of responsibility needs to be more equally shared amongst the members.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

6 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Seymour Primary School, Crawley RH11 9ES

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit. We very much enjoyed meeting and talking to you and joining you in your lessons. As I promised some of you, I have written the main points of our report below:

- Many of you told us how much you enjoyed school. We have said in our main report that you go to a 'satisfactory but improving school'.
- You told us that behaviour is good and we agree. You have good attitudes to school and enjoy the activities you are given. This is because all the staff look after you well.
- You are making satisfactory progress in your lessons. Those of you in Year 6 have done particularly well in your recent SATs. In fact, the number of you who have reached Level 4 is the highest the school has ever achieved.
- Your teachers plan their lessons well and have lots of ideas to make your work exciting. We have asked that they make sure that you are all made to think hard especially when you find the work a little easier or have finished what you have been asked to do.
- One area that we think needs some more work is your writing. To help this, your teachers are planning to help you develop your writing in subjects other than English. We saw some of the plans about how this will be done and we think you will find it interesting in the future.
- You told us about how you are given targets to achieve. We said that we thought these were good because it gives you the chance to think about what will make your work better.
- Your headteacher leads the school well. She has been able to get all the staff to make the right changes that will make your school even better.

Finally, we wish you all the best for your future. You can play your part in the improvements by working hard and making sure you attend school regularly.

Yours sincerely

David Collard Lead inspector