

# St Martin at Shouldham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Lynn Road, Shouldham, King's Lynn, PE33 0BU

## Inspection dates

20–21 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Achievement is outstanding. Pupils leave the school with above average standards in English and mathematics.
- All pupils make outstanding progress, from Nursery through to Year 6.
- Teaching is frequently outstanding, and never less than good.
- The school provides very well for those children with additional or specialist needs.
- Teachers have a detailed understanding of the progress that individual children are making. They respond quickly and appropriately when a pupil starts to find work difficult.
- The range of learning opportunities is excellent. For example, children run an eco-centre on-site, keep animals, and explore a range of exciting topics that are well matched to their needs.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, feel very safe, and have high levels of attendance.
- Behaviour is exceptional. Pupils are pro-active in ensuring that behaviour remains outstanding across the school.
- The headteacher has an exceptional understanding of the circumstances and needs of the pupils.
- Teachers in charge of particular areas of the curriculum have very good specialist subject knowledge.
- The school is very good at helping teachers to improve, and has high expectations of all adults working with children.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The school has a very positive atmosphere. All members of the school community share a common purpose and have high aspirations.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons. Joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' books, listened to pupils read and examined display work.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the governing body, and representatives from the local authority and diocesan body.
- The inspectors took account of the 46 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) and talked to parents during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

## Inspection team

Andrew Read, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

## **Full report**

### **Information about this school**

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A below average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, for children in local authority care and for pupils with a parent in the armed forces).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Further improve the helpfulness of information provided to parents by reviewing the way that the school explains to parents how pupils are grouped for learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Over the last five years, attainment in English and mathematics has been consistently above national averages. In some years, pupils have left the school more than a year ahead of pupils nationally. The school's assessment data suggests that this profile is being maintained, with standards having improved still further in Key Stage 1, over the last six months.
- Most children join the school at, or slightly below, expected levels of development. They make outstanding progress. For example, the proportion of pupils that make better than expected progress in English or mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 is high in comparison with similar schools nationally.
- The progress made by children in Nursery and Reception is mostly outstanding, and never less than good. Children rapidly acquire early reading, writing and number skills, and leave Reception at above the expected levels of development and are thus well prepared for their next stage in learning.
- Pupils' progress in writing accelerates across the school as their confidence grows. Standards of presentation are very good, and work is accurate and of high quality. For example, pupils are keenly aware of the teachers' expectations, and know exactly what their current level of attainment is and how they need to improve their work.
- Pupils of different abilities achieve well. More-able pupils make very good progress, particularly in mathematics. This is due to the fact that the work set for them is always challenging. Pupils who find work harder also achieve very well, due to the targeted support received from additional adults.
- The number of pupils in each year group for whom the school receives the pupil premium is too small to make valid comparisons but, overall, the progress made by these pupils in English and mathematics is similar to other pupils in the school. This is because they receive individualised support which is well matched to their particular needs.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make a very good start in Nursery or Reception, and make above average progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils are taught in small groups or individually, and supporting teachers are well equipped to meet pupils' particular needs.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of individual pupils, and react quickly to provide additional support if learners find something hard.
- Teachers always make it clear to pupils how to improve their work. Marking is undertaken regularly and provides clear guidance on the next steps that pupils need to take to move their learning on. Pupils say that they value this feedback, and evidence in pupils' books shows that they adapt their work in response to written feedback. In lessons, teachers ask challenging questions to check understanding and adapt their planning accordingly. Older pupils use Target Tracking folders, each of which contains a record of the standards they have reached in English and mathematics. These give pupils a clear understanding of how well they are doing.

- In Nursery and Reception, teachers ensure that children are able to learn in a way that is well matched to their developmental needs. For example, Nursery children often work in groups, an approach designed to help them to learn to work together. Later, in Reception, a stronger emphasis is placed on the development of those skills that support more independent learning.
- The teaching of early reading and writing is a particular strength. During the inspection, children were observed sounding out words and practising their early writing skills through interesting and well-planned activities. For example, Year 1 pupils were seen using drama as a vehicle for speech and language development, videoing and sharing the end product with their peers.
- Pupils learn to read with great confidence. A very well resourced library provides a wide choice of books. Pupils have a good capacity to comprehend the meaning of different texts, in addition to having well-developed strategies for sounding-out difficult words. Such information is recorded in detailed reading logs, which are used by pupils, parents and teachers.
- The teaching of mathematics is a particular strength of the school, and all teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Pupils are given a range of real-life situations within which to apply their mathematical skills. For example, as part of their investigations into global warming, pupils monitor the weather through an eco-centre and search for seasonal patterns in the numerical data collected.
- Information and communication technology is used well. Teachers use interactive whiteboards for whole-class and group teaching, and pupils make productive use of a well-equipped computer room. The school is evaluating the use of tablet computers, which are proving popular with the pupils.
- Teaching makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the school. For example, the school provides numerous opportunities for spiritual development, and has well-developed links with a community school project in Africa and India. As a consequence, pupils have a good understanding of the similarities and differences of a contrasting culture.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Disruption in lessons is extremely rare, and pupils work hard to support each other in their learning.
- Pupils enjoy going to school. They feel safe, and find their lessons and additional activities exciting. As a result, attendance is well-above average and punctuality is very good. Pupils' attendance is very closely monitored, and any unplanned absences are followed up.
- Pupils have a very well-developed sense of right and wrong. They are, for example, highly aware of different forms of bullying and how to prevent or report it. As a result, there are very few instances of bullying, with any concerns dealt with rapidly by both adults and pupils.
- Pupils feel listened to because they have a wide range of ways to make their views heard. They are confident that adults listen to their ideas and respond helpfully.
- Behaviour is managed consistently well, via calm, firm and caring actions. Teachers encourage the sharing of ideas in lessons, and pupils are good listeners.

- Pupils play very well together, and enjoy a well-resourced outdoor area. They have good awareness of risk, and are able to care for themselves and each other when an adult is not close at hand. For example, from an early age, pupils talk about the different risks associated with using the internet and social media, demonstrating that their e-safety awareness is very good.
- The process by which incidents concerning perceived bullying or racism, or those involving accidental injury, is recorded and investigated, is rigorous.
- The school is very good at identifying pupils at risk, and parents feel that this is a particular strength of the school. Pupils are very well supported through such provision.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The pursuit of excellence in all of the school's activities is demonstrated by an uncompromising drive to strongly improve, and maintain, the highest levels of academic progress. This is apparent at all levels of leadership and management.
- Leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning. They provide focused professional development for all staff, monitoring lessons regularly. Support is particularly good for those that are newly qualified and at an early stage in their careers.
- In the past, decisive action has been taken when members of staff have been unable to respond to support given. This clear-sighted approach underpins robust performance management which encourages, challenges and supports teachers' improvement.
- The school was not able to take advantage of the school network assembled by the local authority to share good practice. This is because the design and make-up of the network did not take enough account of the needs of participating schools. As an alternative, the school is independently coordinating with local schools in order to identify ways to share good practice. This is identified by leaders and managers as a key school development point.
- The school has a policy of teaching pupils in mixed-aged classes, moving learners between groups as their needs change. Whilst such arrangements are successful, leaders do not always explain to parents how such decisions are made, which can cause some confusion.
- The school's curriculum provides highly positive experiences and rich opportunities for high-quality learning. It contributes very well to pupils' academic achievement and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A very wide range of activities and experiences are planned, including numerous educational visits, trips to music shows and cultural events.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority has not felt it necessary to offer specific school improvement support or challenge as it correctly believes that the school has a good capacity for self-sustained improvement. The local authority monitors the school's performance through end-of-key-stage national assessment data.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is highly effective in its leadership of the school. It is well led by a Chair and Vice-Chair, with support from governors who have acquired a good knowledge of the

education sector. Roles and committee responsibilities are now closely linked to priority areas. The governors hold leaders to account for the school's performance, and performance indicators are closely focused on the overall high attainment of pupils. Governors understand how well different groups of pupils are doing and they use this information to evaluate the quality of teaching. For example, governors recognise that they need to ensure that teachers' pay and promotion are systematically linked to their performance in helping pupils to achieve well. Governors know, in detail, how the pupil premium funding is spent, and that it is leading to good levels of attainment for the pupils eligible for this funding. Through highly effective, rigorous planning and controls, governors have ensured financial stability. This leads to the excellent deployment of staff and resources to the benefit of all groups of pupils. In particular, support staff are used well in the school.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	132751
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	403647

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	159
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Suzanna Grimes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marika Mears
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 April 2008
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