

Martham Primary and Nursery School

Black Lane, Martham, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR29 4PR

Inspection dates

14–15 October 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Governors and leaders at all levels have not monitored the work of the school well enough to sustain the quality of teaching and prevent a decline in pupils' achievement.
- Teachers have not received the guidance and training they need to improve the quality of their work. The quality of teaching varies widely across year groups and classes.
- At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are at expected levels. Too few pupils make good progress and reach the higher levels of attainment they are capable of achieving.
- Too many pupils in year groups across the school are achieving below the expectations for their age. Neither lower-attaining pupils nor the most able make the progress they should.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is not monitored carefully enough. It is not clear how well the extra support the school provides helps these pupils to improve their progress and attainment.
- Although pupils say there is no 'seriously bad' behaviour, some are made unhappy by the behaviour of others when they chase them or call them names. They do not think that all staff deal with these incidents in the same way when they are told about them.
- Policies that explain how reading and calculation should be taught are not followed well enough. So teaching is variable in these subjects. Not all teachers follow the school's policy for teaching reading.
- Pupils do not use the skills they learn in grammar and punctuation to complete enough extended pieces of writing.
- Teachers do not monitor the learning of children in the Reception classes closely. As a result, the activities they plan do not move children's learning on quickly enough.
- Parents do not feel that communication from school leaders has been good enough. Some feel that their children are not supported to make the progress of which they are capable.

The school has the following strengths

- The interim leaders in charge in the spring and summer terms took effective action to halt the decline in pupils' achievement.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery.
- The new headteacher has galvanised staff, made governors aware of the school's position and implemented rigorous systems to improve the work of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment so that all groups of pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring teachers plan lessons that challenge all ability groups, particularly the lower-attaining and most-able pupils
 - giving all teachers guidance for teaching calculation and problem solving in mathematics so they know what to teach when, and how to deepen pupils' understanding
 - increasing teachers' expectations of pupils' extended writing so they write at length using the relevant grammar and punctuation skills they learn
 - ensuring all teachers teach at least age-appropriate reading skills to all pupils in their class regularly and to the agreed policy.

- Increase the quality and impact of leadership and management by:
 - establishing rigorous procedures through which governors monitor the work of leaders to improve pupils' outcomes and properly evaluate the use and impact of the additional pupil premium funding the school receives
 - using the new approaches for assessing and tracking pupils' progress to set targets for teachers' performance and to identify and address the needs of pupils at risk of falling behind, whatever their ability
 - provide training and guidance for middle leaders so they can fulfil their responsibilities by monitoring and improving the school's work in the areas for which they are accountable
 - ensuring the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader have the time, resources and training they need to monitor provision and bring it up to date with current statutory requirements.

- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by:
 - simplifying the sanctions for poor behaviour and further developing the new system for managing it
 - ensuring that all staff adhere rigorously to the behaviour policy when pupils share their concerns about the behaviour of others
 - making sure all staff implement the expectations of pupils' learning behaviour so that pupils develop resilience, perseverance and accountability in their own learning.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have not monitored the quality of the work of the school well enough to prevent a decline in pupils' achievement from the high standards achieved in 2012. The interim headteacher and deputy headteacher took specific action during the spring and summer terms this year to halt this and to bring outcomes back to be broadly in line with national averages at the levels pupils are expected to achieve.
- Expectations of pupils' achievements in English and mathematics have not been high enough. Teachers have not been given the appropriate training and support they need to ensure that all groups of pupils make the progress they are capable of. As a result, despite being highly committed, some are uncertain about the quality of their practice and have not known what they need to do to improve it.
- Leaders with responsibility for managing key aspects of the school's work have not always received the time, training and guidance they need to monitor the subject or area they manage. As a result, the information needed to sustain high standards has been lacking. For example, the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is not monitored carefully enough, and there is not an up-to-date agreed approach to teaching the steps for calculation in mathematics.
- The way that the subjects pupils are taught are linked together is exciting. Careful thought has been put into how the curriculum is planned so that it interests and engages pupils. Art, music, history and physical education are taught to a high standard and pupils say that they enjoy the range of opportunities they are offered such as choral society, sporting clubs and visits away from school which enhance their learning. However, pupils say they have not learnt a great deal recently about other cultures and countries and are not able to explain how well they understand British values such as democracy.
- The new headteacher worked with leaders and the local authority prior to taking up her appointment at the start of term. She has built quickly on the systems established earlier in the year to track pupils' progress, started to monitor the quality of teaching and identified appropriate actions to drive improvement rapidly. Leaders' evaluation of the position of the school is now accurate and plans are in place to address the required improvements to the curriculum.
- Parents expressed mixed views about the school. They have confidence in the teaching staff but have concerns about the progress their children have made and do not feel that communication has been good enough. A number expressed increasing confidence in the changes that have recently been made and appreciate the improvements being made by the new headteacher this term.
- Leaders and governors have not monitored the use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils well enough to know how effective the different aspects of support have been in improving their progress. They are not clear exactly what impact the pupil premium has had in closing gaps between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school or nationally. Recent analysis indicates disadvantaged pupils are not doing as well as they should.
- The extra funding received by the school to improve physical education is used well. Pupils are challenged to excel, receive a high standard of tuition and achieve exceptionally well in local sports and gymnastics competitions. They speak highly of the 'Golden Mile' challenge (which provides them with regular opportunities to run an increasing distance), which is developing their levels of fitness, as well as their understanding of the impact of this on their ability to concentrate and persevere.
- Pupils attending the breakfast and after-school club say they enjoy the activities provided and appreciate that they can ask for help with their homework and reading. They are well supervised and know what is expected of them.
- The local authority identified that the school was at risk and notified governors of their concerns in the autumn term 2014. Advisers supported interim leaders well to start to address the need to improve outcomes and have assisted the new headteacher in re-establishing links with other local schools and services. In the summer term, in response to complaints received, an adviser scrutinised the work of leaders and reported that safeguarding procedures were being applied appropriately.
- **The governance of the school**
 - has not received accurate information about the quality of the school's work and pupils' achievements until recently, so has not challenged leaders about falling standards. Once aware of the local authority's concerns about the decline, governors took action to remedy this.

- knows the statutory requirements for the publication of information on the school’s website. Governors know these are not currently met. Arrangements are in place for the website to be updated this half-term. Similarly, previously out-of-date policies, which provide important guidance for staff and parents, are being reviewed and updated.
- has not assured itself that the management of teachers’ pay has been appropriate. Teachers have not been set relevant targets for their work so that good performance and fulfilment of responsibilities can be rewarded. This is now being remedied and arrangements are in place to monitor the new round of performance management this term.
- has not monitored the use of the pupil premium funding in sufficient detail to enable governors to make sure that it is used to best effect. There is evidence in the minutes of recent meetings to demonstrate that they are asking more challenging questions and are starting to look more closely at the use of the diverse funding the school receives.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are appropriate; the right checks are made on the suitability of staff to be employed at the school. Child protection procedures are used well and leaders work hard to engage wider services in providing support for the most vulnerable pupils. The new headteacher is making sure that parents are kept properly informed about the actions taken to keep their children safe and that pupils are always appropriately supervised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable. Teachers have not received good feedback or guidance on how effectively they are addressing the needs of different groups of pupils. As a result, in too many lessons, expectations of the lower-attaining pupils or the most able are not high enough. Neither group achieves as well as they could.
- Teachers have not had enough opportunities to work with staff from other schools to ensure their assessments are accurate and their teaching continually develops. Consequently, some do not provide accurate feedback to pupils that moves their learning on quickly. They do not reshape their lessons so that pupils are supported if they do not understand, or move them on rapidly when they do. The good examples of this practice have not been used to support all teachers to improve to the same standards.
- In some mathematics lessons, pupils are not always taught key concepts well enough and misunderstand how to work through a calculation. In these classes too, pupils are not given enough opportunities to solve problems using their new skills. As a result, they do not sufficiently deepen their understanding.
- Pupils are taught key writing skills well; they learn and use grammatical features and punctuation to a good standard in their writing. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils improved their writing effectively as a result of the lively instructions and explanations they were given. Writing tasks are used well to explore and explain pupils’ topic work. There is, however, not enough evidence in pupils’ books of them being expected to persevere and complete longer, more complex pieces of writing.
- The quality of phonics teaching is variable. In some classes, teachers’ lively interaction, high expectations and good modelling of how pupils are expected to use their knowledge enables them to develop their skills quickly and use them well to help them read and write. Where it is less effective, pupils do not have the opportunities to use and develop their skills because the modelling of letter sounds is unclear and their work is not checked and improved by the teacher as the lesson progresses.
- The teaching of reading and spelling is reliant on individual teachers’ skills and enthusiasms rather than a well-structured and step-by-step approach. Older pupils’ work has too many common spelling errors because of this. Pupils’ reading records show that some receive support very regularly while others read less frequently and do not always receive the advice they need to improve their skills.
- Where teaching is very effective, pupils share their ideas with each other and learn well. They have enough time to use the new skills they have learnt to investigate and respond to the work planned for them. In a writing lesson in Years 4 and 5, pupils responded to challenging questions and the teacher’s very clear expectations of their behaviour and learning. As a result, all pupils, including those receiving extra support, made outstanding progress in their understanding.
- Teaching assistants are committed to supporting the pupils with whom they work. Where plans and expectations of their work show how they are expected to move pupils’ learning on, they enable pupils to make good progress. Too often the work they do helps pupils to complete a task and sustain their behaviour rather than enabling them to make progress in their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Pupils' personal, social and health education is not planned well. As a result, important elements such as ensuring pupils really understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy in a range of situations and understand what the different types and implications of bullying are, are not taught regularly enough.
- Pupils show significant levels of care for their friends and know what troubles them. Some pupils say that others are unkind to them and call them names or chase them in the playground when they don't want them to. They are confident that staff deal with any major incidents of poor behaviour appropriately but feel lower-level issues are not taken seriously enough or managed in the same way by all staff.
- Staff are trained to be vigilant in monitoring pupils' welfare. All those spoken to knew the school's procedures for child protection and knew what actions they would take if they had concerns. The new headteacher is ensuring that parents are fully informed about procedures, and about the actions taken to support their children, so they can engage more confidently with the school's work to protect them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In lessons, pupils are compliant and responsive to their teachers' instructions. They do not work sufficiently independently or develop resilience and perseverance in their learning because expectations of the attitudes and learning skills they need to use to make good progress are not clear or high enough.
- Pupils manage and regulate their own behaviour and conduct themselves well around the school. They are polite and courteous to visitors and show respect for all the staff who work with them. Recently implemented systems for monitoring behaviour are giving leaders information they can use to help understand the triggers for poor behaviour and to evaluate whether approaches to improve it are working.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about the new behaviour policy because they are clearer about the expectations of them and the consequences that will result when they are not met. The new systems for managing their behaviour are displayed and used in all classes. Pupils aspire to reach the 'gold' standard for behaviour but think some of the requirements are too complicated to be easily understood.
- Leaders use the skills of an independent attendance consultant well to tackle pupils' absence when it becomes a concern. Rigorous actions are taken where necessary and families are supported to get their children to school. Attendance is above the national average; through assemblies pupils are encouraged to understand the importance of attending school and are rewarded when attendance is good. The level of analysis of pupils' absence is only just being developed so that leaders understand the factors that influence which pupils are absent and why.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- The most recent reported outcomes show that pupils' attainment at the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have improved to be in line with the national averages. Outcomes at the higher levels in all subjects were below average because too few of the pupils capable of reaching these outcomes made good progress.
- Assessment information for pupils currently in the school in reading, writing and mathematics suggests that several groups have not made expected and better progress from their starting points. Consequently, they are not achieving standards in line with the expectations of the new National Curriculum which the school has implemented. The new headteacher has identified that a significant proportion of pupils are 'coasting' rather than making good progress because disadvantaged pupils and lower- and higher-attaining pupils have not been set sufficiently challenging targets.
- The changes made to the assessment and tracking systems used by the school in the spring and summer terms have started to address the required improvements in achievement. The leadership team is monitoring pupils' progress carefully and already taking action to accelerate it where necessary.
- Outcomes achieved by Year 6 in writing improved in 2015 because the interim leaders took action to improve teaching so pupils made better progress. The proportion of pupils reaching higher levels remained below the national average and fewer pupils than nationally made accelerated progress. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length using their knowledge and understanding of

grammatical structures and punctuation.

- Although the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check improved significantly at the end of Year 1, the extent to which pupils use these skills in their reading and writing in Year 2 varies. This is because, although pupils have learnt the sounds that letters and combinations of letters make, they have not been given the same opportunities to use their knowledge and some teachers monitor pupils' achievement and address their learning needs more carefully than others.
- Pupils' reading and spelling skills are broadly in line with the levels expected. Because the most-able pupils are not well challenged, their work does not reflect the depth of understanding that more advanced skills teaching would enable them to develop, such as the use of strategies to spell more complex unfamiliar words.
- Not enough pupils make good progress or reach higher levels of attainment in mathematics because in some lessons teachers' explanations of new concepts and methods are unclear. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to think, reason and solve problems for themselves in these lessons.
- Pupils achieve good standards in sports, gymnastics and music because the specialised teaching they receive encourages excellence. Pupils achieve good standards in their art, music, history and other topic work. This reflects how the way different subjects are linked helps pupils to understand them. In a music lesson Year 6 pupils worked together exceptionally well to create pieces of music inspired by having imagined they were in a castle.
- Leaders have not monitored the progress of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs in sufficient detail for them to know how effective the extra support they receive is. As a result it is difficult to understand how much progress individuals make from their starting points. Overall the gap between these pupils and their peers has widened. Arrangements have, however, been put in place this term to analyse how well pupils are doing and to ensure the targets set for their learning and progress are both realistic and measurable.
- Similarly, the analysis of how effectively the pupil premium is used to enable disadvantaged pupils to make good progress is weak. Current analysis shows that these pupils are not achieving as well as their peers. The impact of the extra support they receive has not been measured accurately and expectations have been too low. Again, recent improvements are allowing governors and leaders to make informed decisions about which strategies are the most effective in accelerating learning.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Systems are not used as robustly in the Reception classes as they are in the Nursery. New procedures for assessing and monitoring children's learning are in place but these, and the learning journals which also record progress, are not used well to review what children achieve and then plan activities that move learning on quickly. This is largely because children's actions, such as 'built a Duplo tower', are recorded, rather than their learning. There is little evidence to show that parents contribute information about their children's development to support their learning in school.
- Evaluations of children's skills and abilities on entry to Reception are imprecise, and no clear analysis was available for this year or last year. Observations of children's work, learning and behaviour show that the majority are working within the expectations that are typical for their age. At the end of last year, just over half the cohort had reached a good level of development so a significant proportion were not fully prepared to quickly start making progress in Year 1. Targets this year are more aspirational but as yet there is not enough evidence to show that children are making the accelerated progress necessary to reach them.
- Leaders and teachers in the early years have not been given the necessary challenge, guidance or time to develop their practice. They work with commitment and care to ensure that children's safety is secure, have the relevant first-aid qualifications and provide interesting activities for children to engage in. The support children receive so that they can engage socially and develop confidence as learners is a strength. Children are happy and cheerful; they engage enthusiastically in the new routines that have been set and most develop positive attitudes to their learning and to each other.

- Children make a good start to their education in the Nursery. Their learning is carefully assessed and this information is used to plan interesting activities in the indoor and outdoor learning areas which enable them to quickly acquire new skills and knowledge. Staff adapt activities to meet children's learning needs and question children carefully to develop their thinking. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the understanding staff have of their children's learning. Evidence shows that children make good progress and are well prepared to start the Reception Year.

School details

Unique reference number	136356
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10007873

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary and Nursery
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	377
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nigel Craske
Headteacher	Sarah Mules
Telephone number	01493 740071
Website	www.marthamprimary.norfolk.sch.uk
Email address	office@martham.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 May 2013

Information about this school

- Martham Primary and Nursery School is larger than the average-sized primary school. It converted to become an academy in December 2010. When it was last inspected it was judged to be outstanding.
- There have been a number of leadership changes since the last inspection. The headteacher left the school in December 2014 and the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher led the school in the spring and summer terms 2015. A new headteacher took up her post at the start of the autumn term 2015. The school is currently seeking to appoint a new deputy headteacher and a new Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the use of the pupil premium is slightly below the national average. In this school, this additional government funding is to support pupils eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club that is managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Martham Primary and Nursery School is the lead partner for Trinity Children's Centre. The centre is inspected and reported on separately.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes; some observations were undertaken with the new headteacher. During the classroom visits, inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning and scrutinised their work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders including the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, five governors, teachers and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised leaders' analysis of pupils' achievements, behaviour and attendance, records of the monitoring of teaching undertaken this term, development planning, assessments of children's attainment on entry and governors' meeting minutes.
- Inspectors looked at the information and policies available for parents on the school's website and met with parents as they brought their children to school. There were insufficient responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents, for them to be taken into account.
- Records of staff recruitment, and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection procedures were examined. Records of a local authority visit to analyse the school's response to safeguarding incidents and their monitoring of the school's work since January were considered.
- The lead inspector met with two groups of pupils to discuss their learning and their understanding of how behaviour and safety is managed at the school. The inspectors observed pupils as they moved around the school and at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors were aware during the inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Inspection team

Prue Rayner, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Cox	Ofsted Inspector
Joseph Figg	Ofsted Inspector
Olive Millington	Ofsted Inspector

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