

# Martham Academy and Nursery

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

## Inspection dates

18–19 October 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher, working with other leaders and the trust, has improved the school significantly since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher has established a culture of high expectations and a warm and positive ethos in which pupils thrive. By Year 6, they develop into mature, reflective and thoughtful youngsters ready for secondary school.
- Standards of work are rising rapidly. Pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils across the school are articulate and explain their ideas and thinking well using a wide-ranging vocabulary.
- Girls are achieving particularly well in English, where they currently outperform boys. Boys' writing overall is not as good as that of the girls, though many boys do write well.
- The school makes good, and at times innovative, use of its pupil premium funding. Hence, most disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points to achieve expected standards. However, very few attain the greater depth standard, especially by the end of key stage 2.
- Teaching is good and pupils work with purpose in lessons, concentrating well on their work. They work hard and complete a good amount of work. Sometimes, however, work is a bit easy for the most able pupils.
- The provision in the early years is good and teaching in the Reception classes much improved since the school's previous inspection. Hence, children make good progress.
- The good progress in the early years is not built upon enough when children start Year 1, especially in the quality of their written work.
- Pupils behave well around the school. They are very polite and courteous. Pupils feel safe and are safe at school.
- The curriculum is carefully planned and focuses on providing a well-rounded education. It is enriched through visits, visitors, an extensive range of activities after school and themed events, such as the celebration of European Languages Day.
- The academy trust, which the school has formally joined very recently, is providing strong support for the school to drive up standards even further.
- A new governing body is establishing its role quickly and effectively. Members already have a good grasp of the school's key priorities.
- Under the leadership of the headteacher, other leaders are working well together to make the school the best it can be. However, leaders do not always evaluate the impact of their work sharply enough.

## Full report

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

- Improve standards of attainment further, especially for boys, by:
  - helping boys to apply their knowledge of grammar and spelling more effectively in their writing
  - improving the quality of boys' handwriting
  - ensuring that enough disadvantaged pupils reach the greater depth standard, especially by the end of key stage 2
  - improving the transition between Reception and Year 1 so that pupils pick up at the start of Year 1 more effectively from where they left off at the end of Reception, especially in their writing
  - ensuring that the most able pupils are consistently challenged and extended in lessons, including those in Reception.
- Improve leaders' evaluation of the impact of their work by establishing sharper and clearer criteria for success in school improvement plans, including the pupil premium plan.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher provides good leadership and is determined in her pursuit of high standards of education. She and her staff are open to new ideas and willing to be reflective in order to promote improvements. Consequently, there is a 'can-do' culture within which staff and pupils strive to do their very best.
- The academy trust, which has been working with the school since January, has had a very positive impact on its development. It has provided good-quality training and support to staff and leaders, which have helped them to secure improved outcomes at every key stage.
- The trust's infrastructure and expertise in areas such as finance, human resources and premises have freed up the headteacher and other leaders to give more time and energy to their core purpose: the education of pupils at the school.
- Working with other leaders, the headteacher has established effective systems and procedures to support the school's work and ensure a consistent approach across the school. These systems are being further enhanced through sharing ways of working that have been found to be successful in other trust schools and establishing a new marking and feedback policy.
- The school has had some changes in staff since the start of this academic year and a number of senior and middle leaders are new to post. Their leadership roles are being developed well and they are contributing increasingly effectively to the school's work to further improve achievement.
- Teachers receive expert training which is well targeted to their needs to help them become even more effective teachers. The training for support staff, such as learning support assistants and midday supervisors, is developing. It has not been extensive enough in the past but leaders know this and are putting together a comprehensive development programme for these members of staff.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses as a result of their thorough monitoring, especially of teaching and learning. They also check assessment information to see how well different groups of pupils are achieving. They use this information to direct additional support to the right pupils.
- School leaders are focused on the right priorities and this is reflected in improvement plans. However, these plans do not provide sharp or clear enough indicators of success against which leaders, including governors and the trust, can evaluate the impact of their work. Some past plans and initiatives, such as the last pupil premium plan, have not been evaluated rigorously enough.
- The curriculum is carefully constructed and based on themes that appeal to pupils and engage their interests. Focused work is underway to establish stronger provision in science and computing. The curriculum is adjusted as required to meet the learning needs of pupils. The school's own values underpin what it teaches, and pupils also have good opportunities to learn about values such as tolerance and respect, democracy and the rule of law. Consequently, they are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- The sport premium funding is used very effectively to provide a rich range of physical activities in and out of school which encourage all pupils to participate. The funding is having a positive impact on pupils' health and fitness.
- Funds for special educational needs are spent with care to ensure that pupils who need extra support receive this so that they can make good progress in their learning.
- Following the last inspection, the school commissioned an external review of the use of pupil premium funding. This review has helped to inform the way the funding is now used so that it is much more effective in enabling disadvantaged pupils to make good progress.
- The funding is used to provide personal and emotional support, as well as additional help with school work. Some is innovatively used to support disadvantaged pupils to look ahead at their future lives and inspire their ambitions.
- Some pupil premium funding is also now being used to focus specifically on the needs of the most able disadvantaged pupils. However, it is too early to see the impact of this.
- The school has good links with the local community and uses these to enrich the curriculum and provide pupils with interesting visits and visitors.
- The large majority of parents responding to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, are positive about the school. Those spoken to during the inspection were pleased with the quality of education the school provides. Some said that they would like more help to support their children's learning at home, especially in mathematics.

## **Governance of the school**

- The trust has established a new local governing body to oversee the work of the school. The roles of trustees and governors are well delineated so that, for example, the trust manages the finances and the performance of the headteacher, but the local governing body oversees the quality of education.
- Governors are already well engaged in the work of the school and visit regularly to find out more about its work and how effectively it is implementing key plans and policies.
- The trust has a comprehensive induction programme and this is being used to enable governors to gain a good understanding of their roles. The induction programme also includes safeguarding training.
- The transition from the previous governing body to the current one has been eased by several members from the old board staying on as governors. They bring important knowledge of the school's development and progress and what it needs to do next.
- The governing body has appropriate committees in place to enable it to carry out its role effectively. Links to the trust are well maintained because a small number of trustees are also members of the local governing body and this ensures good communication between the trust board and the governing body.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- All adults working at the school are vetted properly to ensure that they are safe to work with children. Visitors are also carefully checked.
- Staff receive regular training on safeguarding matters so that they know what to look out for and what to do should they have any concerns about any pupil at the school.
- The school maintains safeguarding records effectively so that it can monitor actions being taken to safeguard any pupil for whom concerns have been raised, particularly once these are raised with external professionals such as the local authority safeguarding team or social services.
- There is a culture of safety in the school, where staff and pupils are vigilant about possible dangers and risks.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teaching is effective in promoting good learning. Classrooms are calm and orderly, with pupils usually engaged in purposeful activities. Often, pupils are completely absorbed in their work.
- Teachers establish strong relationships with pupils and this means that pupils want to do the best for their teachers and readily cooperate with them. Teachers also know their pupils well, including the different needs of individual pupils. This allows them to anticipate these needs and provide effective support.
- Lessons are well planned so that learning objectives are clear and pupils know what they need to do to demonstrate success in learning. Pupils readily explain what they are doing and what they are aiming to learn.
- Teachers question pupils well to probe their understanding and to extend it. They identify pupils they want to respond to their questions, rather than the ones with their hands up. To help all pupils to think about key questions, teachers often give them time to discuss ideas in pairs and pupils respond well to this.
- The activities that teachers provide for pupils are well put together to help pupils develop key skills and deepen their understanding.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are taught how to read well. They and the learning support assistants are skilled in teaching phonics and this helps to develop pupils' early reading skills.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in mathematics and this ensures that pupils develop good basic skills in using numbers and completing calculations. Teachers provide good opportunities for solving problems in mathematics and, increasingly, opportunities for pupils to develop and explain their thinking about how they have tackled problems or why particular methods work.
- Learning support assistants are enthusiastic and positive about their roles. They take time to check lesson plans before the lesson so that they know what the teacher will be covering. They support different groups so that they work with the most able, as well as lower attainers, and generally provide focused and effective help. The school is working with teachers to further develop their use of additional staff.
- Observations of classes and discussions with pupils indicate that the work pupils are given is usually pitched at the right level of difficulty for their needs. However,

sometimes the most able are not extended enough because the work is too easy for them or they are already familiar with it. This is also sometimes the case in Reception.

- Teachers' expectations are usually high as they try to get the best out of pupils. However, pupils in Year 1 are not building enough on the work they did in Reception to extend their writing and get enough writing done, especially the boys.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Staff take good care of pupils and are quick to respond to any concerns that pupils might have. Consequently, pupils feel safe at school and are safe. They are confident about speaking to staff if anything worries them.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and want to do their best. They enjoy all aspects of school life and are not afraid of hard work. Pupils take pride in their work and this is evident in the consistently high quality of presentation in their books.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to expand their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Consequently, they are reflective and thoughtful about life's big questions. Pupils get on well with one another and, in lessons, readily work with others to share ideas and complete group tasks.
- At lunchtime, pupils socialise well with one another. Older pupils who have roles as play leaders help younger ones to find friends if they are lonely and help to organise games.
- The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet, and pupils know what they should and should not do.
- The school and the trust are well focused on expanding provision for pupils' emotional well-being and are working on a project that will provide more extensive support for those pupils who need it.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons, pupils behave impeccably, concentrating on their work and sticking to well-established routines.
- The environment outside has been improved to provide good play spaces and a wide range of activities. Most pupils enjoy their time outside but a few are rather boisterous. Some parents expressed concern about this. The headteacher is taking steps to ensure that pupils are proactively managed when outside and their energies channelled more effectively into games and activities.
- The school has effective systems in place to manage behaviour and teachers are consistent in their expectations of good behaviour, both in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils treat one another with respect and also respect those from backgrounds different to their own. While issues of bullying are reported from time to time, the school takes swift and effective action to deal with these.

- Attendance levels are rising and were above average last year as a result of the school's effective work with parents to ensure regular attendance and good punctuality. Persistent absence is low and dealt with rigorously by the school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Standards of work are rising rapidly and pupils are making good progress in developing key skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Results at the end of key stages 1 and 2 were above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics in 2017. The overall results were a good improvement on those of the previous year. The Year 6 pupils taking tests at the end of key stage 2 made much better progress in mathematics than had been the case the previous year.
- While most disadvantaged pupils also made good progress and achieved well in relation to the expected standard in both key stages, fewer disadvantaged pupils attained the greater depth standard than other pupils.
- The most able pupils make good progress in the main and are increasingly working to develop deeper knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. In 2017, a higher proportion of pupils gained the greater depth standard at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics than was the case nationally.
- Pupils across the school make good progress in reading. They do well in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 and demonstrate good technical skills in reading. Guided reading sessions help them to develop effective understanding of the texts they read.
- Pupils are also successfully developing skills in writing and are producing much good-quality extended writing, especially the girls.
- Boys, while making reasonably good progress from their starting points, lag behind girls in their writing, particularly boys of middle ability. Their weaker handwriting lets them down in some cases. In addition, they are not as good as girls at applying their increasing knowledge of grammar and spelling to their written work.
- In mathematics, pupils are developing good skills in performing routine calculations and have improved their ability to solve more complex problems. They are also getting better in explaining their thinking in mathematical terms because they are getting increasing opportunities to practise this.
- Pupils are making good progress in developing their skills and knowledge in other subjects, such as science, history, geography, music and French. For example, they enjoy producing their own compositions in music and effectively interpret pieces of classical music.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs well met and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Additional support through one-to-one tuition or in small groups helps their learning. In lessons, work is broken down into smaller steps to help pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to move forward effectively in their learning.
- The small number of pupils who are at the early stages of speaking English as an additional language make rapid progress in learning English. They, and others from

minority ethnic backgrounds who are more fluent English speakers, achieve consistently well.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years provides a good start to children's education. The provision in Nursery remains strong and, in Reception, teaching and learning have improved considerably since the previous inspection and are now effective.
- Children begin in Reception with skills and knowledge that are typical for their ages. They make good progress so that the large majority achieve a good level of development by the end of the early years. Girls tend to outperform boys in literacy, however.
- By the end of the early years, children, both boys and girls, are ready for the challenges of Year 1. They have developed good social and personal skills to enable them to adapt to working in different ways and with their new teachers.
- Teachers in the early years provide children with a wide range of interesting practical activities which engage their interests and help them to develop their learning. The work provided covers all areas of learning well.
- Children have some very good opportunities for developing their writing, especially in Nursery. Consequently, they produce interesting work, which develops from making increasingly intricate marks to forming letters and beginning to write in short sentences by the end of Reception.
- Overall, children settle in quickly and learn to work to the routines and high expectations of staff. They enjoy their time in the early years and are keen to explore and develop their learning. Children develop good early learning skills and the social skills to work and play effectively with others.
- Adults provide good support for children as they work and engage them well in discussion. Adults question children effectively to help them develop and deepen their thinking and understanding.
- While most children are encouraged to try activities, especially those that will stretch them, the most able could be extended more in the Reception classes.
- Children are looked after and nurtured very well across both Nursery and Reception. Hence, safeguarding and welfare requirements are met.
- Early years staff develop strong relationships with parents and this was reflected in the high attendance of parents to the parent consultation meetings during the inspection.
- Staff assess children with care and use the assessment information they gather to help inform the next steps in learning. Children's development and learning are helpfully shared with parents through annotated photographs in 'learning journeys' and electronically.
- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively and this ensures that they make good progress. Additional resources, including more visual and tactile resources, help the learning of these children.
- Pupil premium funds are spent well and as needed in the early years.



- The outdoor area is used effectively to promote learning across all areas of learning and to broaden the experiences of children.
- The early years provision is led well and high expectations are effectively established. Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths within the early years and where improvements are needed.

## School details

Unique reference number	136356
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10036260

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	389
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Terry Cook
Headteacher	Sarah Mules
Telephone number	01493 740 071
Website	<a href="http://www.marthamacademy.co.uk">www.marthamacademy.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@marthamprimary.norfolk.sch.uk">office@marthamprimary.norfolk.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	14 October 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school became part of the Rightforsuccess Academy Trust on 1 October 2017, just two weeks before this inspection.
- The school is larger than other primary schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. About 7.5% are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. A below-average proportion have a statement of special

educational needs or an education, health and care plan.

- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in all classes. A number of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher or another member of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team and middle leaders. They also met with a group of six governors, including the chair of governors, who is also a trustee. The lead inspector held discussions with the chief executive of the trust and the performance director from the trust responsible for assessment information.
- Members of the inspection team spoke informally to pupils in lessons and around the school, as well as holding discussions with representative groups of pupils.
- Inspectors listened to a number of pupils reading to check how well they were developing their reading skills.
- In carrying out the inspection, the inspection team took account of 73 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. Members of the team also spoke with parents as they arrived or left the parent consultations being held during both days of the inspection.
- Members of the team observed the work of the school. They looked at the school's improvement plan, a range of policies and procedures, documents relating to the work of the governing body and the arrangements for ensuring that pupils are safeguarded. Documentation reviewed included records of assessment information relating to pupils' attainment and progress, behaviour and attendance. The school's website was also checked.

## Inspection team

Gulshan Kayembe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Henry Weir	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Cloke	Ofsted Inspector

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