

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

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132751
<b>Local Authority</b>	NORFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	316005
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roger Sadler

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	171
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Brian Hullah
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Marika Mears
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Lynn Road Shouldham King's Lynn Norfolk PE33 0BU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01366 347260
<b>Fax number</b>	01366 347260

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is smaller than most other primary schools. It serves the local community of Shouldham and its surrounding area. The vast majority of pupils are of a White British background. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. Children enter the Nursery on a part time basis and move to full-time education at the beginning of the Reception year. More pupils than is typical join or leave the school at times other than the normal point of entry to the school's Nursery. The school provides a daily pre-school breakfast club and after-school care.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Due to good leadership and management and good teaching, the quality of education provided to pupils is good. The school's curriculum and pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. A strong emphasis on ecological awareness contributes to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are proud of their school, enjoy their time there a great deal and levels of attendance are well above average. Pupils particularly appreciate the efforts staff make to ensure learning is interesting and fun. They also appreciate the school's rich and varied curriculum with its strong emphasis on the environment and the wide range of enrichment opportunities available to them. Most parents regard the school highly. One parent captured the views of many when she wrote, 'The staff are friendly and approachable and seem genuinely proud of every child's achievement. You only have to look at all the smiling faces to know how much the children love their school.' A significant number of parents are concerned that there are too many pupils in one class. The school has, however, taken appropriate action to meet statutory requirements.

Pupils enter the school with knowledge and skills that are in line with those expected nationally. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage and by the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress and achieved well. For the last two years, Year 6 pupils have attained above average standards in national tests and the present Year 6 are attaining well above expected standards. Ambitious targets set by the school for 2009 aim towards maintaining these well above average standards in future years. Teachers plan lessons well so that they meet the learning needs of all pupils, including those capable of doing harder work. Academic guidance is good overall. In all classes, staff regularly assess and carefully analyse each pupils' progress and the school directs extra help to those who are not achieving in line with the expectations for their ages. Pupils who find learning difficult make good progress because they frequently receive carefully tailored support from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils in the older two classes show an impressive understanding of where and how to improve their work. However, this is not the case in all classes. When adults ask the pupils to remember too many things or the pupils are not clear about what is expected in their work the rate of progress slows down. Pastoral care and support are excellent. Older pupils show a strong sense of responsibility and readily help and consider others.

The headteacher provides a strong and clear direction for the work of the school. Monitoring and evaluation are effective and the school has a clear understanding of its strengths and where improvements are needed. The school has brought about many important improvements, such as in the way that letter sounds are taught, and it has good capacity to continue improving. However, the school improvement plan has too many priorities and is unclear about ways of judging its success. Consequently, governors and other leaders are unable to evaluate fully the impact of the plan on the standards pupils achieve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage due to good provision. Standards are rising so that more pupils are on track to exceed expected standards by the end of Reception. The curriculum has been redesigned successfully and recently improved assessment systems are beginning to impact on rates of progress. Staff work together well and show a clear understanding of how young children learn. They use the outdoor environment exceptionally

well to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and other areas of learning. Very good links with parents help children settle into Nursery confidently so that they quickly begin to progress. Activities are exciting and frequently challenging, with just the right balance between independent and adult-led learning.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure all teachers regularly specify what a good piece of work should look like so that pupils see how to evaluate and improve particular aspects of their work.
- Improve the school improvement plan by reducing the number of priorities and providing specific criteria to enable the school to judge the effect of the actions taken.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well and make good progress overall. They make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 so that standards are a little above average in reading and average in mathematics and writing by the end of Year 2. Recently introduced daily lessons on letter sounds are helping to improve the rates of progress in reading in the younger classes. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make good progress and in Years 5 and 6 many make outstanding progress. The current Year 6 pupils attained above average standards when they were in Year 2. They have built upon these standards well so that they are now attaining well above average standards in English and mathematics due to the outstanding teaching and guidance for learning they regularly receive.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Older pupils are mature, responsible young people who make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils in all year groups develop exceptional awareness of their responsibility to help sustain the environment now and in the future. Pupils progressively develop an impressive understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society. Pupils are easy to talk to and polite and helpful. Although a few pupils in the younger classes occasionally become restless when the pace of teaching slows or not enough is expected of them, in older classes, behaviour is exemplary and attitudes to learning are outstanding. Pupils show an excellent understanding of the need for a healthy diet and regular exercise. They act with careful regard to their own safety and that of others. Pupils' good progress in their development of basic skills and outstanding progress in their personal development prepare them well for the next stage of education and the world of work beyond.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. They are often outstanding in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan their lessons carefully to meet the wide range of learning needs in the mixed-age classes. All teachers make very effective use of information and communication technology to aid learning. Literacy and numeracy skills are progressively developed and daily phonics teaching in classes for the younger pupils are helping to improve the rate at which reading and spelling skills are developed. Classrooms are stimulating and encourage pupils to want to learn. Skilled

teaching assistants make an important contribution towards the good achievement of those who find learning difficult. Homework is managed well and carefully communicated to pupils and parents.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's curriculum is very rich and varied and is carefully modified to meet the learning needs of pupils of all abilities. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities which provide many opportunities for sport, exercise, and developing the arts. The clear emphasis given to ecological sustainability is greatly appreciated by older pupils and has an excellent impact on pupils' personal development and their strong sense of responsibility to others. There are well-planned and extensive links between subjects which inspire pupils to develop key skills across subjects. Older pupils are encouraged to work independently and this helps the more able pupils in particular to enjoy learning and achieve well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Procedures for child protection and safeguarding pupils are thorough and effective. They are used well to help pupils grow in confidence and ensure they are happy and secure. The school works closely with parents, knows its pupils very well and steps in early to deal with any needs. Pupils' academic progress is assessed carefully and additional help is provided for those who are at risk of underachieving. In the oldest two classes, high quality marking and continuous assessment of work is an important factor in pupils' good achievement. However, guidance for learning is not fully effective in all classes. In lessons where pupils are given insufficiently clear guidance on how to move on to the next stage, or when they are asked to remember too many things, their progress slows.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides the key inspiration for the overall success of the school. Her leadership of pupils' personal development is outstanding and this is evident in pupils' polite, confident and pleasant demeanour. Her leadership of teaching and learning is good. The headteacher also effectively helps others develop their leadership roles. Consequently, governors and subject leaders carry out their roles well. Governors' and other leaders' ability to fully and effectively monitor the impact of the school's improvement plan is limited. This is because the procedures are not sufficiently clear for measuring the effect of the plan on pupils' attainment. A significant proportion of parents are concerned about the size of Class 2. The school has taken appropriate action to address this and now meets statutory class size requirements.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<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>	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	3
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

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**Annex B**

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

24 April 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Martin at Shouldham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School,  
King's Lynn, PE33 0BU

Thank you for making Mr Parry and me so welcome when we came to inspect your school. A special thanks to those who met Mr Parry at lunchtime on the first day of the inspection. We are pleased that you enjoy school so much and attend so regularly. We thoroughly enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. We think your school is a good school. It is run well and is giving you a good education. Nursery and Reception children quickly begin to learn to read, write and behave well. Adults provide good teaching so that you make good progress. You are being well prepared for life at your next school. I am pleased yours is such a happy and interesting school and that you and your parents are so pleased with it.

You know how to act safely. You very clearly understand what is right and what is wrong, show consideration for others and are very friendly to each other. Older pupils should be proud of their excellent behaviour and manners but a few of you in the younger classes make a fuss or interrupt sometimes in lessons. Those of you who need extra help with your learning make good progress because the school helps you learn. It was good to see the Year 5 and 6 assembly, which showed your clear understanding of the importance of looking after the environment and avoiding waste.

There are many things that your headteacher, the staff and the governors want to improve because they want your school to get even better! We agree with them that there are three important things that need doing first.

- Make sure that you are all taught in classes that are not too large.
- All teachers should help you see exactly how to make your work better.
- Concentrate on improving fewer things and provide clearer ways of measuring the effect of the work the staff do to make the school even better.

With very best wishes for the future

Mr Sadler

Lead Inspector