

# Martham Foundation Primary School and Nursery

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 134044          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Norfolk         |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 319575          |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 9–10 July 2008  |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Martyn Groucutt |

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>                    | Foundation   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 3–11   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |  |
| School                                    | 527  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr N Craske  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mr J Dye   |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | Not previously inspected   |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Black Street<br>Martham<br>Great Yarmouth<br>Norfolk<br>NR29 4PR |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01493 740071   |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 01493 740158   |

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|--------------------------|----------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Martham Primary School and Nursery is a new school that opened in September 2007, bringing together provision previously provided by separate first and middle schools, and adding new children's centre provision. This is the first inspection of the school. It is currently far larger than the average primary school with 527 pupils, but numbers will fall over time as the school settles into becoming two form entry. Pupils are almost entirely from White British backgrounds. The proportion with learning difficulties is broadly average and there are currently no pupils with learning disabilities. An average proportion of pupils qualify for free school meals.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Martham Primary and Nursery School provides an outstanding education and, while its creation saw the demise of two established and popular schools, it enjoys overwhelming parental support. Typical of comments received is, 'The effort that goes into providing a completely rounded education is immense and the commitment from all staff is huge.'

Since this is a new school measuring progress is only possible by looking at evidence of achievement during this school year. While tracking systems could yet be refined, there is sufficient data to say that progress by pupils has been outstanding. In particular, standards and achievement in Foundation, Year 2 and Year 6 have been scrutinised in detail. Tracking within year groups shows that excellent teaching and commitment to learning are supporting outstanding achievement throughout the school. On entry to the Foundation Stage many pupils were well below the standards normally expected. While they have still not caught up with standards expected of their age, they have made good progress. Pupils in Year 2 receive excellent teaching, not just in the core subjects of English and mathematics, but in a wide range of subjects that stimulates their enjoyment of learning and in coming to school. Consequently overall attainment has reached the national average, while the stress on writing has seen standards rise to above average. The daily time committed to writing is bearing fruit, though speaking skills are not so developed. The pupils in Year 6 show a real commitment to learning. They enjoy their studies, often being motivated by inspirational teaching. It is clear from discussions with teachers and from looking at exercise books, planning and assessment information that these pupils have made excellent progress over the year. They are now producing work well above average in mathematics and science, and broadly average in English.

This means that while standards overall are above average achievement in reaching this position is outstanding. This applies to all pupils, since they are challenged at an appropriate level whatever their academic ability. Pupils are therefore able to fulfil their potential and in so doing gain a real enjoyment and satisfaction from their learning. There is a genuine and mutual respect between everyone in the school, adults and children. Pupils show a concern for each other and influence school life through the effective school council. Attendance is good and behaviour is outstanding. Pupils display self-confidence and talk with conviction about how they are encouraged to be healthy and safe. Although there is virtually no ethnic, cultural or religious diversity in the locality, pupils develop an awareness of the wider world. This is a reflection of the outstanding curriculum, so effective because it places the needs of individual pupils at its heart. Recent developments, such as the teaching of a modern foreign language, have been embraced very effectively and with confidence as a result of having subject specialists on the staff.

The school has outstanding leadership from an experienced headteacher and a governing body that contains a range of expertise. The distributed style of leadership provides opportunities for teachers to develop skills, which they exercise with high levels of commitment. At the end of its first year the school has therefore become an outstanding place of learning, creativity and humanity, exceptionally well placed to build upon its early successes.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

When they arrive in Nursery, children's overall skills and knowledge are well below those typical of this age group. They get off to a good start to their education because induction procedures are good. Parents are happy that their children enter a caring environment where staff quickly get to know them well. Because of the good relationships, children settle happily, exploring and enjoying a wide range of learning activities where they make good progress. There is a smooth transition into Reception classes, where children continue to achieve well. Most children respond well to the expectations of how they should behave, although some still display a reluctance to share. The curriculum, teaching and learning are good. Staff provide interesting and creative activities, both inside and outside the classroom. On occasions, opportunities are missed to promote children's speaking skills. Adults take good care of the children and give much encouragement and praise. However, sometimes progress is restricted when there is insufficient pace to lessons. By the end of Reception, despite their good progress most children this year are not yet reaching the levels typical for their age.

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

- Refine the way in which pupils' speaking skills are developed in order to ensure the exceptional progress made in English is maintained.
- Extend the use of systems to track pupils' progress so that they are fully understood and used effectively at all stages.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

At the end of the first year in the life of the school standards are above average and achievement is outstanding. A significant number of pupils enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are very low compared to those typically found in children of this age across all areas, particularly in speaking and listening. By the end of the Foundation Stage they have made demonstrable progress, although still below expectations. As a result of outstanding teaching this year's pupils in Year 2 have made excellent progress through the year, reaching broadly average standards, though in writing standards are above average. This year's Year 6 pupils have made exceptional progress, resulting in standards that are well above the national average in mathematics and science, and broadly average in English. Exceptional teaching across the school supports this outstanding achievement, not only in the core subjects, but right across the curriculum, such as in modern foreign languages, music and sport.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The school ensures that pupils develop into effective learners and become valuable members of society. Attendance is good and behaviour outstanding. Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes and clearly enjoy school. They are extremely polite and make visitors very welcome. They are delighted to accept high levels of responsibility and independence. Pupils show good awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe. They have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lives, and take part in an outstanding range of physical activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent: pupils have many opportunities to participate in a wide range of artistic and musical activities. Assemblies make a huge contribution to pupils'

spiritual development. The school council contributes positively to school improvement, expressing views confidently and listening carefully to one another. Pupils' high level of concern for others extends to the support and kindness they show for more vulnerable members of their own community and, through charitable collections, to the wider community. Their excellent progress in literacy and mathematics prepares them well for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teachers plan lessons that focus very effectively on meeting the needs of the full range of abilities in each class. This includes providing work that challenges even the most able exceptionally well. Expectations are consistently high and pupils work very hard in lessons because relationships with adults are outstanding. Pupils know their efforts and progress will be celebrated. Lessons are interesting and enjoyable, and consistently capture pupils' considerable enthusiasm for learning. Teachers use questioning superbly well to extend pupils' thinking, and pupils often respond at length with thoughtfully structured answers. Even so, occasionally there are lessons in which opportunities to make pupils' speaking and listening even better are missed, such as in checking new vocabulary.

Teachers assess pupils' progress very carefully and accurately. Marking provides pupils with clear information about how to improve their work. They are also well informed through a range of effective strategies about the targets for their progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Meeting the learning needs of each pupil is the paramount consideration of the school. Ability groups and work are tailored very accurately to meet pupils' needs. The specialist teaching of subjects such as French and music helps pupils to achieve extremely well. Other subjects are linked through a topic based approach, making learning more meaningful and providing opportunities for pupils to apply the skills they acquire successfully across a range of subjects. Pupils' personal and social development is promoted extremely effectively.

The range of additional activities that enhance the pupils' learning is outstanding. Music has a high profile and the choral society experiences significant success at local festivals. The range of visits and activities during the annual 'education plus' month is exceptional. It includes 'active base' to promote physical skills, 'crafty chefs' for culinary skills, 'theatre base' for performing arts and residential visits, of which camping is a part. The school also provides pupils with access to an excellent range of sporting activities, in which they participate enthusiastically.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Staff know pupils very well and are most perceptive of their needs. Procedures for safeguarding and child protection are rigorous. Incidents of bullying and racism are very rare and dealt with swiftly. Early identification of pupils who find learning difficult ensures they are supported very well by effective teaching assistants. This is done unobtrusively so that pupils can integrate and learn more easily. Academic guidance is excellent: pupils are very active in self-assessment against criteria; they learn from teachers' clear marking and discuss how well they are doing

and how to improve. Higher attaining pupils receive very high levels of support, as in the 'Challenge knockouts' in mental mathematics sessions. The recently introduced tracking systems are beginning to influence pupils' progress positively but can be still further refined. Excellent links have been established with the on site Children's Centre to promote community cohesion.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher sets the standard for others through his excellent leadership and quality of teaching. The school has clear and focussed direction and as a consequence pupils are excellently supported in reaching their full potential. The distributed style of leadership provides opportunities to accept responsibilities which teachers respond to very positively. This results in a highly effective team approach to leadership and supports excellent opportunities for professional development. Resources are very effectively used, such as in the targeting of more teacher assistant support in the younger years, where they contribute significantly to pupils' exceptional progress. The considerable expertise of the governing body is used to excellent effect in its role as the critical friend to the school's leadership. It has work to complete, such as in the completion in revising policies following the bringing together of the former First and Middle schools, but they have done all that is reasonable in the timescale available.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|   |    |
|---|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1  |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection  | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?   | 1  |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage   | 2  |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 1  |

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?                                  | 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   | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

### The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?          | 1 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 1 |

<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>                                       | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 1   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 1   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 1   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 1   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 1   |
| 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  |

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Martham Primary and Nursery School, Martham, Norfolk, NR29 4PR

I am writing to thank you all for the help you gave Mrs Yates, Mr Bancroft and myself when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our time with you and we were made to feel very welcome. We were impressed by your outstanding behaviour and politeness. You obviously enjoy school a great deal and get on very well with your teachers. We would like to congratulate those of you who took part in the Midsummer Concert and those Year 4 girls who won the football competition while we were in the school.

We think your school is outstanding and your teachers work really hard to help you achieve the very best of which you are capable. You rise exceptionally well to the challenges that they give you and so you are making excellent progress. You all seem to know your targets and what you have to do in order to meet them and because you work so hard we could see that you have achieved a lot over the course of the year. It was nice to be able to talk to some of you directly and to attend a meeting of the school council so that we could hear exactly what it is that you enjoy about school.

There are a couple of things we have asked teachers to do to make the quality of the school even better. Firstly we have asked them to do even more to help you to develop your speaking skills, so you can produce even better results in English. We have also asked them to make the best possible use of the way in which your progress through the school is tracked, so teachers know exactly what you have achieved. This will help them to ensure that you are able to continue producing the very best work of which you are capable.

You have a really effective headteacher and teachers who are very committed to making you successful learners. They are very well supported by school governors who are also very committed to helping you to be successful. Everyone in the school makes a great team together and this is helping you to achieve the success you were able to show us. It is important that you all play your full part in school and continue to do your very best – I'm sure you will.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Groucutt Lead inspector