

Inspection of Marsh Gibbon CofE Primary School

Castle Street, Marsh Gibbon, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX27 0HJ

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 July 2025

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe, known and celebrated at this joyful and nurturing school. They have a deep understanding of the school's values, which include respect, honesty and friendship. Behaviour is excellent, and relationships between pupils and staff are strong and respectful. Pupils are proud to be recognised for their achievements, especially when awarded one of the school's highly prized 'value bands'.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the many leadership opportunities available, which allow them to play an active role in shaping school life. The Eco Council has recently gained external recognition for its work to improve the school environment. Pupils know they can make a difference beyond school too. For example, members of the Junior Leadership Team regularly visit and build friendships with older local residents at the church.

Pupils cherish the rich experiences that enhance the curriculum. A well-planned programme of trips and visitors helps bring the curriculum to life. A growing number of after-school clubs, introduced following pupil and parent feedback, are also popular.

Since the last inspection, leaders' high expectations have led to clear improvements. Pupils achieve well and are well prepared for secondary school. As they get ready to move on, Year 6 pupils speak with pride and fondness about their time at the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Since the previous inspection, the school has taken effective steps to improve its curriculum. The school has carefully reviewed and refined it to ensure that it is more logically sequenced across all subjects. From the early years onwards, the essential knowledge, vocabulary and skills that pupils need to acquire are clearly identified.

Staff are regularly trained to deliver the curriculum with confidence and accuracy. Staff explain and model new learning effectively. Lessons begin with opportunities for pupils to revisit and consolidate prior knowledge. Staff use questioning skilfully to check understanding and encourage pupils to explain their thinking. Responses are used to address misconceptions and inform future teaching. In the early years, staff use high-quality interactions to extend learning and build independence. Through purposeful play and conversation, they model language and deepen children's knowledge.

Although the curriculum has improved, it is not yet fully embedded in all subjects. In some areas, staff demonstrate strong subject knowledge and use effective teaching strategies, enabling pupils to make clear progress. However, in other subjects, this consistency has not yet been fully achieved. This means pupils' learning is uneven across subjects.

The school has strengthened its systems to support pupils with special educational needs and/ or disabilities (SEND). There are now effective processes to work closely with these pupils' parents and carers. Staff know pupils' needs well and adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet them precisely.

Reading is an important part of the curriculum. Pupils access diverse texts that enrich their learning and deepen their understanding of the world. The school's programme to

teach reading is effective. Pupils practise with books that are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. Staff who deliver and support the teaching of early reading are well trained. They use the effective teaching strategies to support pupils. Pupils who need extra help catch up because of the strong support they receive.

Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. In the early years, children quickly learn routines and interact positively with others. Across the school, pupils manage their emotions well. Behaviour is exemplary in lessons and around school. Pupils stay focused and respond promptly to instructions. Leaders use robust systems to monitor behaviour and attendance. These are used effectively to identify and address concerns. Attendance is above the national average, with very few pupils regularly absent.

The school offers a broad programme to support personal development. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to manage friendships. Learning is enriched through experiences. Pupils' awareness of how to stay safe online and in the community is enhanced by interactive workshops and visits from local police officers. Trips to different places of worship extend pupils' appreciation of diverse faiths and cultures. Pupils learn about fundamental British values in lessons and assemblies, showing respect and tolerance of others. Pupils' frequent opportunities to celebrate difference help them understand the importance of individuality. This leads them to embrace the idea of being 'unique' rather than 'different'.

There has been significant progress in all areas identified for improvement. This has been driven by strong partnerships. Leaders have carefully managed the impact of change on staff, ensuring that workload and well-being are considered. As a result, staff are committed to and supportive of the school's development. Parents value the school's inclusive ethos and the way it celebrates pupils as individuals.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's recent curriculum refinements are still in the process of being fully embedded. As a result, the depth and consistency of teachers' subject knowledge and pedagogical skills vary across different subjects. The school should maintain its emphasis on strengthening teaching across all subjects to ensure that pupils make strong progress through the curriculum.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	110411
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10379738
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alan Clements
Headteacher	Beth Brown
Website	www.marshgibbon.bucks.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	31 January and 1 February 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of the governing body has been appointed.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has a religious character as a Church of England school in the Diocese of Oxford. The most recent section 48 inspection took place on 28 February 2018. The next section 48 inspection will take place within eight years of the date of the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with other school leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspection team also spoke with a representative from the diocese and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum information for a range of other subjects, including pupils' work. They reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness and priorities for improvement. They also looked at information relating to behaviour, attendance and SEND.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff and pupils about their views of the school.
- The views of parents were gathered through the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The lead inspector also spoke to parents during the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Katie Hancock, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Linda Culling

His Majesty's Inspector

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