

Inspection of Marcham Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School

Morland Road, Marcham, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX13 6PY

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this welcoming and nurturing school. They describe the school as 'amazing', 'fantastic' and 'friendly'. Staff have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils behave well and enjoy working together. Bullying is rare, but if it does happen, staff are always on hand to deal with it. Adults support pupils who need help with their work or behaviour in a kind and caring manner. One pupil said, 'We are one big family and we know and support each other really well.'

The school's values of respect, friendship, compassion, responsibility, perseverance and courage can be seen in the way that all work together. For example, at playtimes, older pupils are responsible, enthusiastic and kind when helping younger pupils. As one parent said, 'Marcham is a friendly and welcoming school, with strong values. My children have flourished here.'

Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have to play an active part in their community, such as helping at the community café and supporting the local food bank. Pupils are enthusiastic about the clubs they can join, for example football, art club and science club.

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

Leaders provide a curriculum that is ambitious and captures the interests of pupils. They share a commitment to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, do as well as they can. In most subjects, teachers have implemented a well-sequenced curriculum that builds on what pupils know. This is particularly strong in mathematics where teachers are clear about how to teach concepts so that pupils remember them. Here, teachers design activities that build on pupils' prior learning so that they consolidate what they already know. This helps pupils to achieve well.

Some subjects are at an earlier stage of development. In these subjects, the exact sequence of learning is not yet identified precisely enough. In these subjects, leaders have only recently established the order that pupils need to learn key knowledge. From this, they intend that teachers will help pupils to join up and secure their knowledge over time. This implementation is not yet secure. This means that in these few subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

There is a strong culture of reading in the school. From the moment children start Reception, they are surrounded by inviting books. They enjoy listening to stories and learning letters and sounds. Leaders ensure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of early reading. Pupils learn phonics through a well-structured programme and read books that match their phonic knowledge. Well-trained staff foster a love of reading throughout the school. They provide intervention and support for pupils to help them keep up. Teachers read to their classes daily, selecting texts that bring variety, diversity and high levels of engagement.

Pupils, including those with SEND, learn well overall. Leaders work closely with the early years staff to identify children's needs from the outset. There is a sharp focus on ensuring that pupils with SEND access the full curriculum alongside their peers. Teachers adapt activities so that pupils with SEND can take an active part in school life.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They have created a shared sense of purpose and community. Consistent routines for learning begin in the early years. Children are taught the habits and attitudes they need to be successful learners. As a result, learning is purposeful as pupils continue throughout the school.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities within the curriculum. Learning is brought to life through visits to a range of places, such as Youlbury Scout Camp. Pupils are taught the importance of including everyone through regular assemblies based on the school's values. They enjoy learning to play a musical instrument and taking part in poetry competitions. Pupils are proud of the leadership roles they can take on, such as the school council, the worship committee and eco-council. Leaders have developed a personal, social, health and economic curriculum to ensure pupils have a strong understanding of modern Britain and the world. Pupils are appreciative of others and celebrate diversity.

Governors know the school well. They are clear about their roles. Governors share school leaders' high ambition for the community. Staff are happy and proud to work at Marcham Primary. They know that leaders are mindful of their workload. Parents speak highly of the school. As one parent said, 'The staff are all fantastic and really go the extra mile to provide opportunities for all.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding within the school. All staff and governors have been trained to recognise the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. If a member of staff is concerned about a pupil, they know what to do and when. Record-keeping for safeguarding is comprehensive. Leaders work with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support they need.

Pupils feel safe in school. Through lessons and assemblies, pupils learn about being safe online and healthy friendships. Staff and parents are confident that pupils are safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum is at an early stage of implementation. Leaders have only recently identified the important concepts and vocabulary pupils should learn from the early years to Year 6. This means that some pupils are not able to

make the links between prior and current learning that enable them to build knowledge systematically. Subject leaders should ensure that teachers implement the curriculum effectively so that they can ensure pupils know more and remember more over time.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	123155
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10269152
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christopher Frost
Headteacher	Viv Hutchinson
Website	www.marcham.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has increased in size. It is now a one-form-entry primary school.
- There have been leadership changes since the last inspection with the appointment of a deputy headteacher, a new special educational needs coordinator and a new chair of governors.
- An external provider offers a breakfast club and an after-school club on the school site.
- This school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school in the Diocese of Oxford. Its last section 48 inspection took place in June 2017.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19

pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also considered curriculum information and spoke to leaders about other subjects.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspectors held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and a separate telephone conversation with a representative from the Diocese of Oxford.
- The views of parents and staff were considered through Ofsted's online surveys.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors looked at the school's training records, considered other safeguarding documents, spoke with pupils and discussed safeguarding arrangements with staff.

Inspection team

David Harris, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martin Dyer

Ofsted Inspector

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