

Marsh Baldon Church of England Controlled School

The Green, Marsh Baldon, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX44 9LJ

Inspection dates

11–12 September 2018

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 has inspired staff to raise their expectations. She has led rapid improvements to behaviour and the quality of education. Consequently, pupils' outcomes have quickly improved.
- The highly dedicated team of governors has very effectively supported school improvement. Governors are knowledgeable about the school and understand the strengths and the areas that still need to improve.
- The school has been very ably supported by the local authority and diocese, and has benefited from collaborating with a network of other schools. This has significantly improved subject leadership and enabled better provision in English, mathematics and in the early years.
- Pupils make good progress in all year groups. Outcomes at the end of the early years and key stages 1 and 2 have improved. They are in line with the national averages. However, too few pupils achieve the higher standard in mathematics by the end of key stage 2.
- Teachers' improved planning and questioning skills motivate and engage pupils. Pupils are proud of their work.
- Marsh Baldon's recently improved curriculum now offers a more engaging, richer range of experiences and activities. However, the most able pupils are not consistently challenged in science, or across the wider curriculum.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils are at the heart of all that the school does. All pupils are very well cared for in this happy and friendly village school.
- Staff ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the centre of everything they do. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education and life in modern, diverse Britain.
- Attendance has improved and is above the national average.
- Children in the early years get a good start to their education. Recently improved monitoring has improved the quality of teaching and learning but this is not yet fully embedded.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make strong progress in their learning. This is a result of the carefully tailored support they receive.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the level of challenge in English and mathematics so that a greater proportion of pupils achieve the higher standard by the end of key stage 2.
- Refine the teaching of science and the wider curriculum in line with the best examples in the school, so that there are consistent levels of challenge, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Continue to improve assessment and monitoring in the early years to embed recent improvements to teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since her appointment in September 2017, the headteacher has led rapid improvements across the school. Her determination to improve behaviour and the quality of teaching has been embraced by staff. This has been recognised by parents, carers and the local community. One parent summed up the views of many, saying: 'I feel extremely confident about the future of Marsh Baldon; the staff and leadership are excellent and I'm so happy I made the choice for my child to attend this school.'
- The headteacher and subject leaders understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They apply their expertise and knowledge of the school to create pertinent plans for improvement, involving training and outside support where necessary. This ensures that appropriate actions are prioritised and then evaluated effectively.
- The local authority and diocese have been particularly effective in supporting school improvement since the previous inspection. They worked with the previous headteacher to address areas of underperformance and begin raising standards. They supported improved governance and the recruitment of the current headteacher. Over the past year, they have successfully helped the headteacher to recruit new staff, improve teaching in English and mathematics across the school, and to enrich provision in the early years.
- Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the headteacher. All staff who responded to the Ofsted survey think the school is well led and managed. They believe that leaders and governors take their well-being into account and they feel well supported by the school.
- Staff have improved the way that they monitor pupils' progress. They use regular assessment information to ensure that appropriate extra support and resources are directed to the right places. As a result, pupils' outcomes have improved.
- Leaders have made sure that a wide range of subjects are taught throughout the school and that the curriculum enthuses pupils. A thorough review of provision has ensured that the curriculum now contains a richer range of learning experiences. However, while planning is much improved, standards in science and the wider curriculum are not yet as consistently high as they are in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher ensures that good use is made of the additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Training for staff, and the implementation of a range of interventions, have improved provision. As a result, these pupils make strong progress across the school.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well, so they are increasingly well prepared for life in modern Britain. Assemblies are used well to promote teamwork and reflection, and to celebrate success.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of education. They believe that their children are happy and safe, and make good progress. Several

parents who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, commented on the nurturing, family ethos of the school. One parent wrote, ‘I really feel that the staff put the children at the centre of everything they do.’

Governance of the school

- The governing body is a skilled and dedicated team. Together, governors possess a wealth of relevant skills, honed from their educational, financial and pastoral experiences, which enable them to support and challenge leaders well. Governors share the headteacher’s ambitious aims for Marsh Baldon School and they manage the performance of the headteacher well.
- The governing body has successfully challenged leaders to raise the quality of teaching and learning rapidly. It holds staff to account for further improvements. Governors scrutinise performance information in order to assess the success of the school against its own targets, and the standards achieved by similar schools.
- Regular meetings, visits and high-quality reports from the headteacher enable governors to evaluate aspects of the school, such as safeguarding, curriculum design, provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and the impact of the pupil premium funding. As a result, they have a very clear understanding of the school’s performance and its day-to-day work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a robust system in place to check staff qualifications and their suitability to work with children.
- Staff know how to react if they have any concerns about a child’s welfare. Regular, high-quality training for all staff is provided by the school on safeguarding matters and careful records are maintained of all those who have completed it.
- Clear and comprehensive record-keeping supports work with external agencies where appropriate. Meticulously managed systems and an effective team approach, involving governors, leaders and office staff, ensure that all pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Recent improvements in teaching and learning have led to better outcomes. In English and mathematics lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to motivate pupils and carefully check their understanding. Books and school records clearly show how pupils are building on their previous learning.
- Leaders have put in place effective strategies to improve teaching in mathematics. Staff now have strong subject knowledge. Pupils are able to apply their skills confidently when reasoning and solving problems. This is having a positive impact on pupils’ progress in every year group.
- Pupils enjoy reading both fiction and non-fiction books, and they value the recent improvements to the school library. Staff encourage pupils to develop skills such as

inference and deduction.

- Improved teaching in English and mathematics enables most pupils to make strong progress in these subjects. However, assessment is not always used effectively enough to refine teaching so that the most able pupils are stretched sufficiently to achieve at the higher standard.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. Additional adults are deployed wisely to help pupils who are at risk of falling behind and those who have SEN and/or disabilities to learn well. Staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' individual needs. They ensure that pupils receive just the right balance of support and challenge to develop their learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in English and mathematics is good. Although planning in science and across the wider curriculum has improved recently, teachers are not always sufficiently well equipped to teach pupils the knowledge and skills that they need to understand a subject in depth. As a result, pupils' achievement in subjects such as science, geography and history is inconsistent across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school and they are. They can confidently recall how to keep themselves safe, including when accessing the internet.
- Pupils show tolerance and respect for one another and for adults in the school. They are aware of the need for rules and consequences. The curriculum ensures that pupils have richer opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures, and to reflect on British values.
- The physical education and sport premium funding is used effectively so that pupils have increased access to a range of sporting activities and events, such as archery and a climbing wall on the village green. This is particularly valued, both by parents and by pupils, and supports pupils well in learning how to keep themselves fit and healthy.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying of any kind, and they are confident that adults will always listen and intervene to put a stop to any unkind behaviour.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They conduct themselves well around school, and they are friendly, polite and courteous.
- The headteacher's new behaviour code, introduced last year, has significantly improved behaviour. Pupils are proud to explain what is expected of them and the associated rewards and sanctions. Disruptions to lessons are rare and the consequences of any poor behaviour are well known and fairly applied.
- There is a strong sense of community in the school. Older pupils enthusiastically support younger ones during breaktimes and lunchtimes, to play with the sports and

climbing equipment. Pupils are proud to support the school community by becoming ambassadors or participating in the school council.

- Overall attendance has improved and is above the national average. Leaders took positive steps to tackle absence and promote the value of good attendance. By reorganising systems and working closely with parents and external agencies, leaders have secured improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Across the school, the rate of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has improved and is now good. The small number of pupils in each year group means that each pupil's performance has a marked impact on the school's overall figures.
- The proportion of pupils achieving and exceeding expected levels at the end of key stage 1 is above the national average. Pupils make good progress from key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 and attain in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions of pupils achieving the higher standard has improved in reading and writing and is in line with national figures. However, too few achieve the higher standard in mathematics.
- Pupils' writing in English shows that they are confident writers who can apply the use of creative vocabulary and write appropriately for an audience. Spelling is usually accurate and, where it is not, pupils apply their phonics skills. Pupils are supported to develop a good understanding of grammatical conventions and apply these appropriately for the genre that they are writing in. However, the development of handwriting skills is variable, and some written work is untidy.
- Improved subject leadership has significantly boosted teaching so that the majority of pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 are achieving well in mathematics. They can apply their understanding of number to a range of problems and explain their reasoning both verbally and in writing.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and Year 1 is good. The proportions of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 over the past two years have been in line with the national averages. Pupils of all ages clearly enjoy reading. Older pupils read with confidence, sharing their opinion about the text and expressing preferences for authors or genres.
- The achievement of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is good because of the well-planned provision, quality of teaching and support from teaching assistants.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge which are broadly typical for their age. They quickly adapt to a mixed-age class and are happy, motivated and ready to learn. Children have good relationships with adults, as well as with each other. By the time they leave the Reception Year, a large majority reach a good level of development and are well equipped for key stage 1.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years

provision. Training for staff and support from the local authority have been used to good effect to improve provision. As a result, outcomes for children in the early years have improved.

- The indoor and outdoor areas are now better resourced and more stimulating. Children use equipment to learn to do things independently and cooperatively. Staff are on hand if a more directed approach is necessary when children are playing.
- Adults appropriately use simple instructions, targeted praise and demonstrations to encourage children to enjoy learning and develop resilience. Recent training has supported staff to improve their recording of children's achievements, to assess progression and plan the next steps in learning. This work is ongoing.
- Children's behaviour is good, both in the classroom and in the outside area. Learning from the classroom is taken outside whenever possible. Children listen attentively to adults and to each other. Children collaborate well with their peers and make choices about the activities that they want to do.
- Effective measures are in place to make sure that children are safe in the early years and that their personal development and welfare needs are met.
- Parents particularly value the nurturing ethos of Marsh Baldon. They appreciate the information they regularly receive about their child's progress and are very complimentary about the transition arrangements for starting in the early years. One parent spoke for many by summarising, 'A really lovely family feel school; my child has flourished in his foundation year and is excited to go to school every day.'

School details

Unique reference number	123131
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10053156

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

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	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Moyes
Headteacher	Beccy Harris
Telephone number	01865 343249
Website	www.marshbaldonschool.co.uk
Email address	office.3188@marsh-baldon.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 February 2016

Information about this school

- Marsh Baldon is a small primary school with pupils organised into three mixed-age classes. The school is designated a Church of England school. Its last section 48 inspection took place in January 2016.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium is well below average.
- There has been a period of staffing changes at the school. The headteacher and one of the three teachers joined the school in September 2017. Another teacher and a teaching assistant had only just joined the school at the time of this inspection.
- At the time of the previous inspection, the governing body had been replaced by an interim executive board. Since then, a new governing body has been formed.

- The school has received formal support from the local authority and the Oxfordshire Diocese.

Information about this inspection

- Her Majesty's Inspector visited eight lessons and two assemblies in order to gather evidence to contribute to the evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Many of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector talked to pupils about their learning and looked at the work in their books across a range of subjects. He spoke to pupils on the playground and during lessons and met with a group of pupils to gather their views.
- The inspector talked to pupils about reading and heard some of the pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders, four members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- Conversations were held with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. The inspector also considered the views expressed in the 30 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. He also analysed eight responses to the staff questionnaire provided by Ofsted.
- A wide range of school documentation was scrutinised, including that relating to policies, strategic planning, safety, self-evaluation, pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector reviewed the record of leaders' vetting and checks on the suitability of adults to work with children.

Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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