

# Marsh Gibbon CofE Infant School

Castle Street, Marsh Gibbon, Bicester, OX27 0HJ

**Inspection dates** 21–22 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the time they leave the school in Year 4, pupils are reaching levels well above those expected for their age.
- Teaching is typically good and a small proportion is outstanding. Teachers are now using consistent strategies throughout the school so that pupils learn well.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and act safely around the school. They take on positions of responsibility with enthusiasm and trust the adults who care for them. They feel safe in school and their attendance is above average.
- Additional support for pupils who find learning difficult or may be at risk of falling behind in their work is effective in helping them to achieve well.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and governors have taken decisive action to improve teaching. They have a clear vision for the school so that it continues to improve.
- School leaders have a very clear understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. They ensure that staff performance management and development result in high standards for pupils.
- Learning for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is often vibrant and exciting.
- The teaching of music is a strength of the school. This makes a positive contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching in the school. In a few lessons, teachers spend too long talking and are not providing a high enough level of challenge.
- Some pupils do not take enough care with their handwriting and presentation.
- Marking of books does not always help pupils know and understand how to improve their work.
- Targets and timescales in improvement plans are not precise enough for leaders to judge how successful they have been.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector saw teaching in all classes and observed 11 lessons, including shorter lessons, across all year groups. Eight lessons were observed with the headteacher. The inspector also observed a school assembly and talked to parents at the start and end of each school day.
- The inspector talked informally to pupils, heard some read, and met with a group to find out their views about the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector took account of 35 responses to the questionnaire on the Parent View website. Eighteen questionnaires, completed by staff, were also analysed.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including senior leaders' plans for improvement, information on pupils' progress, governors' reports and records relating to pupils' attendance, safety and welfare. The inspector looked at the progress of pupils' work in books to see their work from the beginning of the school year.

## Inspection team

Catherine Leahy, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and come from the village of Marsh Gibbon and the surrounding area.
- The proportion of pupils who receive extra help with their learning (school action) is well below average. The proportion who need a greater level of support (school action plus) or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- In this school, there are no pupils eligible for the pupil premium provided to schools by the government.
- There is no alternative or off-site provision.
- The headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Most pupils move on to the local primary school at the end of Year 4.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching so that it is never less than good and more is outstanding by:
  - ensuring the time spent in lessons always stretches and challenges pupils to achieve exceptionally well
  - ensuring that when teachers mark pupils' work, they give clear points about how it can be improved
  - having consistently high expectations for the presentation and quality of pupils' handwriting in books.
- Further improve the impact of leaders and managers by:
  - making targets for improvement sharper so that leaders and managers can monitor and judge the success of the plans more effectively
  - including clear timescales and milestones for success so that governors can check the school's progress throughout the year.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills, knowledge and experience which are expected for their age. Because teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding, they make good progress in all areas of learning as they move through the Reception Year. They achieve well by the time they join Year 1.
- Most pupils begin Year 1 with skills which are above those expected for their age. Teachers plan pupils' learning carefully and pay particular attention to meeting the needs of the large number of boys in the class. The inspector observed great excitement in a lesson when the pupils watched animated clips on the interactive whiteboard to learn their new sounds in phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make). A follow-up game reinforced the learning and captured the pupils' interest and attention. All pupils made very good progress.
- Standards over time at the end of Year 2 have been consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the school has been quick to act following a dip in attainment in 2012. Improvements to the quality of teaching and a strong focus on developing literacy and numeracy skills mean that pupils in Key Stage 1 are now making good progress. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels, particularly in reading and mathematics, continues to be well above the national average, indicating that more able pupils achieve well.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress. By the end of Year 4, standards are well above those expected, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils report that they are looking forward to the next stage of their education as the school has prepared them well. Parents also express positive views about their child's progress at the school.
- Reading is given a high priority. Pupils read widely and they are well supported by parents at home through their individual reading records. Pupils in Year 2 read confidently to the inspector and were keen to discuss their chosen books and their favourite Roald Dahl novel. Reading standards at the end of Year 4 are extremely high, enabling pupils to name a range of authors and read with fluency, expression and understanding.
- Standards in writing, particularly at the higher levels, are not as high as in reading. This is because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Also at times, the presentation of pupils' work is not always of a consistently high standard. Although a new handwriting scheme is in place, this has not had time to improve the way all pupils present their work. Therefore achievement is not yet outstanding.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points. Booster groups, small group work and one-to-one teaching are carefully planned to ensure that the gap between their achievement and that of their peers is closing quickly. The school is rightly proud of the support given to these pupils. Parents who spoke to inspectors greatly appreciate the support given to their child.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The headteacher has been determined to secure better teaching and this is resulting in significant improvements being made. Teaching has improved over the last year due to robust monitoring of teaching standards and clear individual development plans for each member of staff. As a result, rates of progress have accelerated across the school. All classrooms are bright and welcoming and high quality displays support pupils' learning effectively.
- Children get off to a good start in Early Years Foundation Stage. Observations of children's learning are detailed and enable teachers to plan exciting and engaging tasks which precisely meet the needs of all learners. This ensures good progress is made. Children delighted in cooperating together to build houses for the 'Three Little Pigs' out of real straw, sticks and bricks. They quickly learnt which materials were the most suitable for the task.
- Teachers plan lessons carefully based on information about what pupils already know and can

do. In the best lessons, teachers ask probing questions to deepen pupils' understanding. Year 1 pupils worked well in pairs to successfully learn to tell the time on a digital clock. The work was well matched to their individual needs and a buzz for learning was created. As a result, all pupils made good progress. Year 3 pupils thoughtfully considered the effect of the illustrations in an Anthony Browne text. They were encouraged to think deeply and explain their thinking. This helped them to develop their vocabulary and ideas to support them in their writing later in the lesson.

- Where teachers' expectations are high, pupils make good progress. In an outstanding French lesson, the teacher's excellent subject knowledge enabled her to challenge all pupils and the standards achieved in this language were impressive. However, occasionally in other lessons, the pace of learning slows when teachers spend too much time talking, with fewer opportunities for pupils to be actively engaged and challenged. In these instances, pupils' interest and concentration begin to be lost and as a result, pupils' learning slows.
- Examples of good marking were seen on this inspection. Where marking is effective, pupils are clear that marking 'helps us learn from our mistakes. The teacher gives her opinion and shows us what to do to improve'. Focused time is effectively used to enable pupils to address their mistakes and think about the next steps to improve their work. However, the policy for marking has not yet been consistently adopted by teachers in all subjects. Consequently, opportunities to help pupils know and understand how to improve their work are lost.
- The school employs a skilled music specialist who makes a very positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are taught well and learn to play African drums, recorders and the ukulele. They use these skills to good effect in their church services and productions to enrich their experiences and develop confidence in performing at a young age.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support, particularly for disabled pupils or those with special educational needs. They sensitively question pupils and ensure they are fully included in lessons. Tasks set are well matched to individual pupils' needs. This work is having a positive impact on accelerating progress for these pupils.
- Homework is set regularly and is used well to support the topics being taught to extend learning and strengthen links with home. The majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire stated their child is taught well in this school.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils are proud of their school and expressed extremely positive views to the inspector, for example 'there is always something fun to do in the classroom. Our behaviour is good'.
- Pupils enjoy school and feel valued and well supported. They speak to visitors with confidence, proudly pointing out and explaining the wide range of opportunities offered at Marsh Gibbon. The positive views they hold about their school is reflected in their above average attendance. Parents spoken to during the inspection appreciate the care and support the school provides for their children. Typical comments were: 'teachers are fantastic', 'all good', 'my child loves school', and 'the school has been brilliant in getting extra help for my child, which we really appreciate'.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils cooperate very well together in lessons and demonstrate good attitudes to learning, particularly when they are motivated by exciting and challenging lessons. However, behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in the few lessons where teachers talk for too long and the level of challenge slips.
- There is a consistent approach to behaviour management which is used by all adults. Pupils speak enthusiastically about achieving stars on their class star chart and know that any unacceptable behaviour will be checked. These boundaries serve to support and encourage the few pupils who find difficulty in meeting the school's high expectations. A small number of parents expressed concerns about behaviour. However, the recent review conducted by the local authority endorses the inspector's view that behaviour is good. School records confirm there

have been no exclusions during the last two years.

- Pupils have a clear understanding of all types of bullying and know how to be safe when using the internet. They are adamant that 'there is no bullying at Marsh Gibbon as teachers would not allow it'. Also Year 4 pupils reported there is no name calling or racism in the school: 'We would be shocked if we heard this'. However, pupils clearly feel confident to tell an adult if they feel upset or hurt in any way.
- Relationships are very positive and this leads to a purposeful and safe atmosphere. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults. Christian values are taught effectively and have a positive impact on guiding pupils in behaving well.
- Well-organised supervision by teachers at the start and end of the day ensures all pupils arrive and leave school safely. Pupils arrive on time because they love coming to school.
- Breaktimes and lunchtimes are well supervised and enjoyed by the pupils. Year 4 pupils take on roles of responsibility acting as 'playground pals'. They make sure younger children are happy and are now running a games club to encourage pupils to look after equipment. As a result, pupils enjoy a wide range of activities at these times and enjoy a positive experience with their friends.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher, supported by the governing body, has a clear vision for the continuing development of the school for the benefit of its pupils. She is determined and ambitious for the school and has high aspirations for all her pupils.
- The headteacher identified the need to improve the quality of teaching across the school. Consistent strategies are now in place in all classes. As a result, the variability in teaching, is being rigorously tackled with success. For some teachers, this has been a steep learning curve. However, all are committed to improving their practice and are supported by frequent training opportunities. Regular monitoring of teaching shows this clear focus has made the difference in accelerating pupils' progress.
- The progress of pupils is now tracked rigorously and more frequently. The school's data show that pupils are on track to reach much higher than expected levels by the time they leave Year 4. This demonstrates the school has good capacity to improve further.
- Good systems are in place for managing teachers' performance. Targets set for teachers are now clearly linked to whole-school priorities and hold teachers to account for the progress their pupils make. Meetings to measure pupils' progress are used effectively to make sure teachers know how well their pupils learn. Actions are then swiftly put into place for pupils at risk of falling behind. This ensures all pupils have the same chances in this inclusive school.
- Plans for improvement are appropriate. However, more frequent opportunities for governors to check that actions taken by the school are making a difference are not being clearly evaluated and recorded. Termly checks are lacking.
- The local authority provides outstanding support and challenge. The School Improvement Officer has an in-depth knowledge of the school and is helping the school improve further by bringing in targeted support to strengthen leadership, and check on the quality of teaching.
- The subjects pupils learn are broad and balanced, and interest them. Subject leaders look for opportunities to extend pupils' learning. For example, pupils experienced a wide range of practical activities which broadened their knowledge and understanding of science during a recent focus week.
- Opportunities are also taken to develop key skills through the topics taught, which makes a positive contribution to accelerating progress. For example, pupils in Year 3 wrote detailed historical accounts, which included paragraphs and high-level vocabulary, on the subject of 'Why I want to be a Spartan or Athenian'.
- Many clubs are organised for the pupils, which parents appreciate. Participation is high.
- There is a good range of partnerships with other schools which enables the headteacher and staff to share good practice. All these have proved beneficial in supporting the school on its

journey of improvement. The school's Parent Teacher Association raises a significant amount of money. The local community often attend events, which successfully brings the school and village together.

- Governors and school leaders rightly place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. Administrative checks on the suitability of staff and volunteers meet the minimum statutory requirements. All parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire stated their child feels safe at this school and the majority would recommend this school to another parent.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The school actively seeks opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures. For example, all pupils took part in a recent 'Celebrating Cultures' week. In this way, the school tackles any discrimination and successfully promotes tolerance and respect.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body know the school well because they receive good quality information from the headteacher. Governors also pay regular visits to the school to find out about the progress of development plans for themselves. This enables them to ask questions and to challenge and support effectively. As a result, governors have an accurate view of quality of teaching and know how targets are set for teachers. Clear links are being made between the quality of teachers' performance and their pay. They know how well pupils are doing in each year group. However, they are aware that more measurable targets, set termly, would help them to judge the difference the actions taken by the school are making. Governors are rigorous in ensuring all safeguarding procedures are in place and all training is up to date. They manage the budget well and approve spending to support the priorities for moving the school forward.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110411
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412635

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

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	108
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Matt Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Julie Hickey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1–2 May 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01869 277268
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