

Inspection of Little Marlow C of E School

School Lane, Little Marlow, Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 3SA

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish in this highly inclusive school. They view the school as a 'family' where everyone knows each other well. Pupils are happy, and they attend well. The school's values are at the heart of this close community. Pupils reflect these strongly through their considerate conduct around school. They champion friendship and help each other whenever they can.

Across the school, pupils relish learning. In lessons, they willingly share ideas and purposefully complete learning activities. Pupils respond positively to the encouragement and praise given by staff. This helps them develop confidence in tackling learning when it is tricky. Pupils benefit from the warm relationships they share with staff and are comfortable about sharing any worries with them. They are confident these will be addressed.

Pupils contribute widely to the school. Their efforts and successes are rewarded through the eagerly anticipated 'Star of the Week' and 'Values' awards. Through the school council, pupils share and collectively shape ideas for changes to the school. They take pride in seeing their ideas, such as the 'Secret Wood', come to life. This ethos of togetherness and participation supports pupils in feeling valued.

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

The school has a broad and ambitious curriculum. In Reception, this builds from children's starting points, preparing them well for Year 1. Across subjects, curriculum thinking identifies and carefully arranges the important knowledge and skills pupils need to learn. In core subjects, this is organised so that pupils deliberately revisit earlier learning while assessments identify how well they understand essential knowledge. Teachers use these to re-teach aspects where pupils' understanding is less secure. This does not happen in some foundation subjects. Consequently, teaching moves on to new learning without addressing pupils' knowledge gaps and does not support them in remembering important ideas over time.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this to explain new ideas clearly, illustrating them with helpful examples. Learning activities are mostly well resourced and support pupils in applying new knowledge. The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified in 'Individual Educational Plans'. However, there is variation in how well teachers draw on these and adapt their teaching for pupils with SEND. In some lessons where adaptations are not precise enough, these pupils can struggle to start learning activities. This is not the case for pupils with more complex SEND, where staff provide effective support that helps pupils to achieve well.

Reading is a high priority across the school. From Reception onwards, children enjoy listening to carefully chosen stories that capture their imagination. There is a sharp focus on early reading, with children learning phonics from the beginning of Reception. Staff quickly identify any individuals who are struggling and provide

targeted extra sessions that help them catch up rapidly. The wider reading curriculum carefully develops pupils' enthusiasm for reading through diverse texts.

Across the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. This starts in Reception, where children learn routines and develop language, which supports them in learning well. In lessons, pupils show excellent attitudes to learning, contributing enthusiastically to discussions and completing activities to a high standard. They listen attentively to staff and willingly follow instructions. Around school, older pupils act as role models, playing considerately and helping younger children when they can. For individuals with more challenging behaviour needs, highly effective pastoral support helps them learn how to manage their emotions.

There is rich work to develop pupils' character. The school focuses on broadening horizons and developing confidence. Pupils explore the value of diversity through assemblies and visiting speakers from wide-ranging backgrounds. To support the inclusive school community, they learn ways of overcoming differences, such as communicating through Makaton. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of important issues such as local river pollution and consider how they can make a difference in these. They are empowered to play a vital role across the school community through the work of the school council and undertaking a range of leadership roles, including 'play leads' and 'house leaders'. They support others in playing positively and help to run the popular house events and performances.

The school accurately understands its strengths and areas where it needs to further improve. It prioritises these, drawing on resources within the federation to support changes. Governors keep close oversight of this work, providing effective challenge. Staff embrace change and enjoy working in the school. They appreciate the measures taken to promote their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, assessment does not check how well pupils understand or can recall important knowledge. This means pupils progress on to new learning with knowledge gaps. The school needs to further develop approaches to planning and assessment so that it addresses pupils' knowledge gaps and supports them to remember important knowledge over time in all subjects.
- In some lessons, teaching is not precisely adapted for pupils with SEND. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not always start learning activities promptly, which hinders their achievement. The school needs to ensure that teaching adaptations enable all pupils with SEND to learn effectively.

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	110466
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10321780
Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	41
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Catriona Slack
Headteacher	Julie Field (Federation Headteacher)
Website	www.littlemarlowschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a partner school in the Federation of Holy Trinity and Little Marlow Church of England Schools. The schools share the same governing body.
- This is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Oxford. Its last section 48 inspection took place in June 2022.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the federation headteacher, federation assistant headteacher, federation special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, acting assistant head of school, subject leaders and teachers. The lead inspector also met with representatives from the governing body. He also spoke to the local authority school improvement adviser and a representative of the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, 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.
- The lead inspector also looked at the curriculum and met with subject leaders in computing and geography.
- The inspectors observed breaktime and lunchtime activities.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views on the school. They looked at the school improvement plan.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Louise Walker

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024