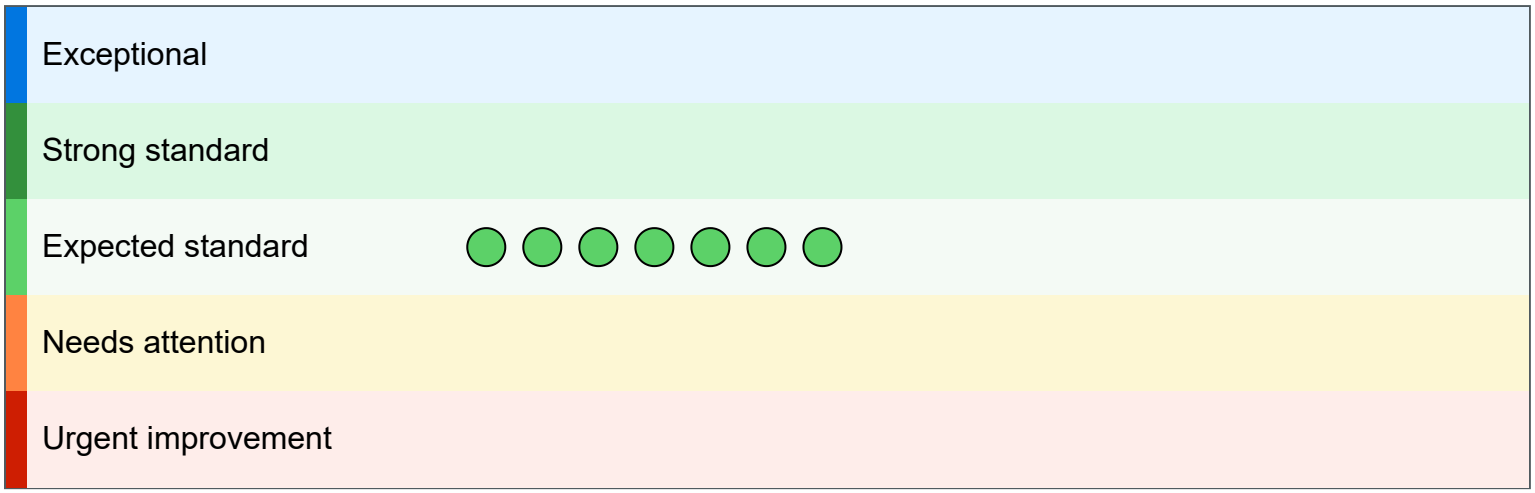
Marden Vale CofE Academy

Address: William Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 9BD

Unique reference number (URN): 141988

Inspection report: 9 September 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, make positive progress from their starting points. As an inclusive school, published outcomes do not consistently reflect the quality of learning and progress pupils make. Pupils' work demonstrates they build knowledge across all subjects securely and particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. They talk confidently about their learning. Typically, pupils recall important knowledge and skills over time. For example, in science, younger pupils recall the conditions plants need to grow.

Typically, staff assess pupils' understanding to ensure that gaps in understanding are rectified and learning is well matched to pupils' needs. However, sometimes, checks on pupils' understanding are not as precise as they could be. Consequently, some pupils progress through the curriculum with ongoing misconceptions. Others, who have secured the curriculum and are ready to move on to more complex concepts, do not have the opportunity to do so.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders prioritise attendance. Despite leaders' sustained efforts, published attendance data remains stubbornly below the national average. Leaders take effective action to help pupils to attend better. Some pupils join the school with previously low levels of attendance. The school provides carefully designed support to help these pupils attend school more regularly. Pupils and parents understand the school's expectations. Leaders analyse pupils' attendance. They have a clear understanding of factors lying behind poor attendance. Leaders put personalised actions swiftly into place for pupils who struggle to attend regularly. They work well with external professionals and parents. Together, they help pupils build established attendance habits.

Leaders have established a well-defined behaviour curriculum. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently and sensitively. They set clear routines and expectations for pupils' behaviour across all aspects of school life. Classrooms have a purposeful atmosphere. This means pupils can concentrate and learn without distraction. Playtime routines and expectations are well established, enabling all pupils to belong. Staff respond swiftly and skilfully when pupils need extra help, using tailored strategies. This helps pupils learn to manage their emotions and make positive choices. Bullying or unkind behaviour is not tolerated. Pupils learn to understand boundaries and show self-discipline.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad, ambitious and well sequenced. It sets out the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Teachers typically present information clearly. Pupils benefit from extensive opportunities to develop their oracy skills across the school. These opportunities help pupils to build their vocabulary and communicate confidently and effectively. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged learn well. This is because staff make

thoughtful adaptations to help them learn the curriculum. As a result, pupils with barriers to learning progress successfully from their starting points.

Pupils typically recall important knowledge from across the curriculum. For instance, in history, pupils confidently explain the reasons behind the growth of the British Empire. They apply their learning with increasing confidence and accuracy. However, sometimes, learning activities are not well matched to the intended curriculum goals. Consequently, some pupils do not build their knowledge and understanding as securely as they could.

The school ensures that pupils benefit from high-quality reading materials. Pupils learn to read as soon as they start school. Books typically match pupils' phonics knowledge, and pupils develop fluency and comprehension. Those who fall behind are supported to catch up quickly.

Early years

Expected standard

Leaders set a clear and ambitious vision that gives children the best start to their education. Children get off to a positive start in the early years. Leaders work closely with parents through regular communication and support programmes. This helps parents to understand how their children are learning and how they can support them at home. Staff form strong, nurturing relationships with children. These help children to settle quickly and confidently into school life.

Staff provide regular speaking and listening opportunities to develop children's communication and language skills. Leaders build in opportunities to ensure that children develop the physical skills they need for writing. For example, children exercise with scarves to develop their shoulder muscles. Staff present information clearly to children and check their understanding. They identify and tackle gaps in their knowledge. Children have frequent opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning.

Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing, progress well from their starting points. They develop knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. Children quickly learn routines and behaviour expectations. They show many effective characteristics of learning. For example, children take turns and listen to each other. They are supported to develop their independence and self-care skills.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders have an inclusive vision. They are relentless in their ambition to reduce barriers and enable all pupils to thrive. The school works closely with parents and external professionals to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the targeted support they require. Staff adapt learning through effective, proven strategies in the resource base and across the school. They work closely with parents, carers and external professionals to provide pupils with SEND with the targeted support they need. Leaders set appropriate learning and personal development targets for pupils with an education, health and care plan. They measure and review these targets regularly to ensure that pupils make progress.

Leaders make well-informed decisions about how they spend additional funding, including the pupil premium grant. They identify and understand the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face. Leaders direct funding to address these challenges. They evaluate the impact of their spending decisions to ensure that they improve outcomes for pupils. Leaders use alternative provision effectively to provide the most vulnerable pupils with additional opportunities and support. Leaders ensure that all pupils can access and participate fully in enrichment activities, regardless of their needs or circumstances.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have strengthened the school's strategic direction. They work with determination and focus to provide all pupils with a high-quality education. Their high expectations and ambitions continue to improve outcomes for pupils. Leaders identify the right priorities. They take decisive action to secure the best outcomes for pupils.

Leaders are mindful of staff workload and wellbeing. They ensure all staff, including teachers in the early stages of their careers, benefit from high-quality professional learning programmes. These develop staff expertise over time. Staff feel valued and well supported by leaders. They are proud to work at the school and describe it as having a ‘family’ feel. Leaders foster a culture of openness and trust. They have worked relentlessly to develop and maintain previously fractured relationships with parents and the local community. Higher attendance at school open afternoons is testament to this.

The trust and local governors know the school well. They share leaders’ vision and ambition and fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively. Together, they hold leaders to account for the outcomes and experiences of disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are, or have previously been, known to social care. They ensure that provision meets pupils’ needs and enables them to thrive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Pupils benefit from a personal development programme that is carefully tailored to their needs. Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from a suitable personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. This begins in the early years and builds progressively over time. Pupils learn about healthy relationships. They understand how to keep themselves safe, both online and offline. Staff sequence lessons well. This helps pupils to build important knowledge over time. Leaders adapt the curriculum to meet pupils’ needs. Pupils’ learning is enriched through work with external professionals and organisations. For example, visits from local police officers deepen pupils’ understanding of the importance of the rule of law.

Leaders ensure that pupils understand the importance of maintaining their physical and mental health. Pupils cook and try new foods and can explain the importance of eating a balanced diet. The school helps pupils to develop a range of strategies for managing their feelings. This equips them with valuable knowledge and skills to support them in the future.

Pastoral support is a strength. Leaders’ work is effective in helping to reduce barriers to pupils' social and emotional development. The impact of this work is evident in improvements to pupils’ wellbeing, individual attendance and confidence. Pupils understand

the importance of British values. They are respectful when discussing equality, fairness and the differences between people.

Pupils are supported to develop a strong moral compass. They show resilience and demonstrate kindness and consideration in daily routines. Pupils develop their social skills through structured play and collaborative learning environments. Leaders provide experiences that set pupils up for their lives beyond the school. Pupils benefit from visits to outdoor learning environments. They learn new skills, develop teamwork and gain confidence through shared experiences. Leaders ensure that all pupils can benefit from the school's wider offer.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Everyone is welcome at this school. Many pupils join at different points of the school year. Whenever they join, each new pupil gets the help they need to settle in swiftly. New pupils adjust well to this. Most pupils attend well. They are proud of their school. Warm and respectful relationships between staff and pupils are the cornerstone of the school. Consequently, pupils develop a deep sense of belonging.

Pupils are to follow the 'Marden Vale Way'. The school's distinctive values, which include respect, courage and perseverance, underpin the school's caring atmosphere. Pupils behave well. They benefit from calm, focused learning environments. They have positive learning habits and show enjoyment and curiosity in lessons. Staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' individual needs. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those known, or previously known, to children's social care and those who face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing. Although some published outcomes remain below national averages, pupils make positive progress from their starting points. Pupils appreciate the rewards they receive for their positive conduct and learning.

Pupils are safe. Bullying is not tolerated, and pupils socialise happily together at playtimes. Older pupils take pride in their responsibilities as positive role models to younger children. Children in the Reception Year learn routines and expectations quickly. They settle well and quickly develop confidence. Pupils appreciate opportunities to develop their interests. For example, pupils enjoy clubs such as cricket and craft. Pupils benefit from a range of educational visits. For example, pupils visit London to deepen their understanding of the world beyond their locality. Leaders ensure that there is equity of opportunity. The school supports pupils to become active citizens in their community. For example, they participate in the local carnival. Opportunities such as these help ensure pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that assessment practices allow staff to address misconceptions promptly and identify those who have secured learning early so they can move on to more complex concepts.

- Leaders should ensure that pupils complete activities that support them to secure and deepen their learning.
- Leaders should continue to work effectively to establish positive attendance habits and improve attendance for all pupils.

About this inspection

This school is part of the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark Lacey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Siân Thornton.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and the wider senior leadership team during the inspection. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the chair of trustees, the CEO, the deputy CEO, the regional director, the chair of the academy standards and ethos committee and other committee members.

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Salisbury. Its last section 48 inspection was in November 2023.

The school includes provision for a specially resourced provision for 16 pupils with a specific learning difficulty, speech, language and communication needs, autism spectrum disorder and moderate learning difficulty.

The school currently makes use of 2 alternative provisions, both of which are unregistered.

Headteacher: Louise Scrivens

Lead inspector:
Liz Geller, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:
Carl Thornton, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from different sources. More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 9 September 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

146
Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 268

School capacity

266
Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

56.85%
Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.5%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

16.44%
Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 4.1%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

33.56%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	41%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	48%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	42%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	34%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	60%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	52%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	71%	74%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	59%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	65%	72%	Below
2024/25 (final)	64%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	63%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	69%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	56%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	72%	74%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	54%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	44%	73%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	31%	46%	Below
2024/25 (final)	47%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	14%	44%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	55%	62%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	53%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	62%	62%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	50%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	67%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	54%	58%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	64%	58%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	45%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	73%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	46%	59%	Below
2022/23 (final)	14%	59%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference

between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	31%	68%	-37 pp
2024/25 (final)	47%	69%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	31%	67%	-37 pp
2022/23 (final)	14%	66%	-52 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	55%	80%	-25 pp
2024/25 (final)	53%	81%	-27 pp
2023/24 (final)	62%	80%	-18 pp
2022/23 (final)	50%	78%	-28 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	62%	78%	-16 pp
2024/25 (final)	67%	78%	-12 pp
2023/24 (final)	54%	78%	-24 pp
2022/23 (final)	64%	77%	-13 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	45%	80%	-34 pp
2024/25 (final)	73%	81%	-7 pp
2023/24 (final)	46%	79%	-33 pp
2022/23 (final)	14%	79%	-65 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	7.0%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.7%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	21.7%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	16.9%	14.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	21.5%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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