



# Ranelagh Church of England School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 110082  
**LEA** Bracknell Forest LEA  
**Inspection number** 278365  
**Inspection dates** 1 February 2006 to 2 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Cathie Munt HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Ranelagh Drive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Bracknell
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		RG12 9DA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01344 421233
<b>Number on roll</b>	851	<b>Fax number</b>	01344 301811
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr C Barrows
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs K M Winrow

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 18	<b>Inspection dates</b> 1 February 2006 - 2 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 278365
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Ranelagh serves the Anglican Deaneries of Bracknell and Sonning. The students are predominantly from a white British ethnic background. The school was granted specialist status in Visual Arts and Business Enterprise in 2004. Prior to this it held Beacon School Status for six years. It is an accredited school for the Investor in People Award. A major building and refurbishment programme is about to begin. Overall, the pupils' attainment on entry is above average. Although the number of students entering the school with learning difficulties or disabilities has risen significantly since 2003 and is higher than in other schools in the authority, the proportion overall remains lower than in schools nationally. The school has a unit for 12 students with statements of special educational need for specific learning difficulties. The percentage of students with statements of special educational need is above the national average. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is very small. Almost all students transfer into the sixth form.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

Inspectors agree with all who told us that Ranelagh is an outstanding school. Everyone is valued and pupils and adults show an unusually high level of generosity of spirit. Despite the constraints of the compact site, it offers pupils a first-rate education with a strong emphasis on developing well rounded individuals. Ranelagh provides excellent value for money. Examination and test results are extremely good and academic standards are consistently high. In the majority of the lessons observed, pupils of all abilities made exceptional progress in their learning. A parent wrote, 'Our son is immensely proud of his school and its achievements and so are we!' The school's strong emphasis on spiritual, moral, cultural and social development encourages the pupils to become accomplished, questioning, responsible and caring citizens. They have an avid sense of right and wrong, recognising their responsibility as individuals in promoting equality and fairness. They know that their ideas are taken seriously and they have a powerful voice in the running of the school through their associate membership of the governing body. The school provides a wide range of religious, cultural and sporting opportunities beyond the curriculum. Students are exceptionally well cared for, and feel safe and happy. Teaching is of a very high calibre and the proportion of outstanding teaching seen reflects the school's commitment to placing the pupils' learning and development at the centre of everything that they do. Data is used effectively to group pupils and to identify those who could do better, at whatever level they are working. Outstanding leadership and management are the hallmark of the school at every level. Inspectors agree with their evaluation of the school's effectiveness. The leadership of the headteacher is inspirational. Her clearly articulated vision has resulted in a reflective learning community that judges itself rigorously and accurately and continually seeks to improve the physical and academic provision for its pupils. Managers know their school well and have the capacity to improve it further. Staff share their expertise with local and national partners generously. The dedicated governing body provides an effective level of challenge for the management team.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

A student said, 'I always looked up to the sixth formers when I was younger and couldn't wait to become one myself'. Inspectors understand why this would be so. The school judges the sixth form to be outstanding; inspection evidence fully supports this view. It offers a rich curriculum and works very well in partnership with local colleges to supplement overall provision. The school takes great care to ensure that students choose appropriate options and are well supported both personally and academically. Standards are high and students make excellent academic progress. Teaching is excellent and students have impressive attitudes to learning. Teachers act as admirable role models. They have exemplary subject knowledge and plan lessons that challenge and inspire. Students are self-critical and keen to always do better. They play a very active part in school life by, for example, helping the younger pupils in their tutor

groups. All take part in the very wide range of excellent sports, music and charity activities outside lessons. They provide excellent role models for younger pupils. A substantial number are active in the local community, for example, planning a party for primary school pupils with learning difficulties. Students feel valued and know that their opinions are taken seriously. Leadership and management are excellent, ensuring resources, some of which are only adequate, are used very well to meet learners' needs. The sixth form provides excellent value for money and offers its students a first-class standard of education.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

\* Focus on ensuring that the high standards achieved across the curriculum continue to develop during the imminent major building programme.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Standards at Ranelagh School are high because the school constantly seeks to help the pupils to do as well as they can. The school sets very challenging targets which pupils meet. Nearly all pupils gain five or more GCSE passes with good grades and a very high proportion achieve the highest grades. Pupils also do very well in the national tests for 14 year olds. Almost all reach the expected levels for their age and many attain standards significantly higher than this in English, mathematics and science. Although attainment on entry to the school is above average, pupils make exceptional academic progress. This is because the school places a strong emphasis on developing well-rounded and confident individuals who have a thirst to learn. Students who have learning difficulties and disabilities, including those attached to the unit, make particularly good progress throughout their time at this school. Higher attaining pupils also make outstanding progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Students' personal development is a major strength. Pupils, including those with statements of special educational needs, make impressive gains in developing their confidence, independence and social skills. They clearly enjoy school and have extremely positive attitudes to all it has to offer. A particularly noticeable feature is the students' sense of belonging and loyalty to the school. Attendance is exceptionally high. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Relationships are excellent and pupils are very aware that their opinions count. They say that 'staff listen' and 'take account of our views' and the school council say that they 'have a high level of involvement in decision making'. Pupils develop an excellent understanding about healthy eating and appreciate the importance of being safety conscious. They make an extremely positive contribution to the local community, for example when they work with pupils in local schools to help develop their ideas and understanding in art and design. The school prepares pupils particularly well for adult life and the world of

work, due to its exceptional level of care and its very strong links with the business community. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They respond exceptionally well to the school's strong Christian values and work together for the good of the whole community. Pupils develop a strong sense of what is right and wrong and show a high degree of respect for others. School and class assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to reflect profoundly. Cultural awareness is well developed through a wide range of high quality extra-curricular opportunities, including many visits both within the United Kingdom and beyond.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

A high calibre of teaching enables pupils to make exceptionally good progress in their studies. The high proportion of outstanding teaching seen reflected the school's commitment to learning and is a testimony to the teachers' skills, expertise and interest in the development of their charges. The wide range of teaching styles and the adroit use of traditional and modern electronic resources enthused, engaged and extended all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. A high level of evaluative written and oral feed back from staff, together with the pupils' ability to critically evaluate their own and others' efforts, explains why pupils are so certain of how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

A broad and dynamic curriculum, responsive to students' needs, is one of the reasons for consistent progression and for the excellent standards achieved. Throughout the school there are outstanding opportunities for students to develop enterprise skills, financial understanding and to work collaboratively. The school's specialist status is reflected appropriately in the provision of courses such as 'Applied Art andamp; Design' and 'French for Business'. Short courses and GCSE courses provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 4. The school has successful links with other institutions to accommodate pupils seeking less academic routes. An excellent choice of post-16 courses is available to sixth formers. Large numbers subscribe to courses such as psychology, philosophy, and religious education. Links with other schools allow students to access some subjects not offered by the school itself. The curriculum is enriched by extensive extra-curricular activities in the arts, sciences, sport and other areas, for all of which there is a high level of participation, reflecting the good quality of that provision.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. The impressive rapport noted between pupils and staff, and the respect shown to each pupil, form the cornerstone of the school's success. Pupils and many parents commented positively on this aspect of the school's work. Pupils said that they felt 'valued, happy, safe and secure'. They appreciated the exceptional range of support they are able to access, for example through the peer and staff mentoring systems. Bullying is said to be rare and pupils reported that there would be a rapid response should any occur. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and reviewed on a regular basis. Pupils' personal and academic progress is monitored most systematically. Clear targets play a crucial part in helping pupils to achieve of their very best. The school provides a raft of opportunities to enable parents to be partners in supporting their children's learning. The school's total commitment to pupils' welfare is epitomised by its excellent links with a wide range of external agencies. These are used extremely well to enhance the provision. Pupils say 'there is always some-one to turn to' and they are very well informed about their future options. They talk knowledgeably about the subject choices they need to make so that they best use their skills in their career decisions.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The school has evaluated leadership and management, capacity to improve further and improvement since the last inspection, as outstanding. The evidence from the inspection supports that evaluation. The headteacher's inspirational leadership provides a clear and purposeful direction for the school. High levels of achievement are maintained through the provision of challenging and stimulating opportunities for learning. A dedicated and knowledgeable management team support the headteacher well and share her vision. Communications between senior and middle managers are thorough and systematic, ensuring high-quality integrated education and care. The school considers the views of pupils and those with whom it works in partnership through working parties and other reviews. Data on pupils' performance is gathered systematically and used effectively to track the progress of each learner at regular intervals. This enables the school to take action at an early stage to improve the achievements of learners. The students' confident, responsible manner is a testament to the excellent leadership at all levels. An exceptionally effective school council contributes significantly to the quality of life in the school, including associate membership of the governing body. Teachers' professional development is efficiently organised and systematically linked to staff monitoring. Teachers value the 'learning environment' and the regular programme of voluntary training, much of which is led by the headteacher. Staff and resources are well deployed. Interactive whiteboards, introduced through the school's specialist status funding, have enhanced the quality of teaching and learning in many areas, for example in mathematics and languages. The governors are pro-active in promoting the school's philosophy. Their in-depth

knowledge of the school's work and direction enables them to provide a highly effective level of challenge to the headteacher and senior managers.



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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for the warm and polite welcome you extended to us when we visited your school recently. We found it a pleasure to be in your company and we were most impressed by your behaviour, your attitudes, your values, your pride in your school and your relationships. Your academic standards are high and you make exceptional progress in all of your work. We agree with those of you who told us that Ranalagh is an outstanding school.

Mrs Winrow, the senior team and the governing body work most effectively to ensure that you get an excellent all round education. We have asked them to make sure that standards remain high while the building and refurbishment work take place. The school seeks your views sincerely and responds appropriately. Your school council provides you with a genuine opportunity to effect change. You are taught exceedingly well. You appreciate the interesting lessons that are always well suited to your learning needs. In conversations, many of you expressed your gratitude to your teachers who are helping you to get such an excellent start in life. We judged the wide range of opportunities that are offered to you by your school to be outstanding. Many of you are involved in music, drama and sport outside of lessons and an impressive number of you contribute both to the school and to the wider community in important ways such as raising funds for charities during Lent. Some of you are lucky enough to have the opportunity to travel to other countries to take part in concerts. We believe that you will prove excellent ambassadors for your school.

With my best wishes for your future,