



# The Clere School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116430  
**LEA** Hampshire LEA  
**Inspection number** 279827  
**Inspection dates** 24 May 2006 to 25 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Peter Sanderson

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Burghclere
<b>School category</b>	Community		Newbury
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		RG20 9HP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01635278372
<b>Number on roll</b>	695	<b>Fax number</b>	01635278538
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Pam Burke
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	(Acting) M Rosemary Black

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 24 May 2006 - 25 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279827
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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

The Clere School is a smaller than average comprehensive school. The number of pupils on role has increased since the last inspection and numbers are due to rise again in September 2006. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with only a small number from minority ethnic groups or whose first language is not English. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is similar to the national average. The school is a specialist technology college. There is currently an acting headteacher in post.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good school. The vast majority of parents, pupils and staff at the school feel that it provides a good standard of education. Inspectors agree with them. Processes of self review are effective and this has led to continual improvement since the last inspection. Overall leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher is ably supported by a recently restructured leadership team. The school makes good use of its resources and provides good value for money.

Pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. This is particularly true in English where progress is outstanding. Standards have been rising steadily since the last inspection but this varies across subjects. Teaching is good although there is some variation in quality across the school. Monitoring by senior and middle leaders is not sufficiently rigorous and clearly focussed enough on learning outcomes to ensure consistency of good practice. The school has good central systems for data management, however, not all subjects make effective use of assessment information to improve rates of learning. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They enjoy the opportunities offered to enhance their achievements and are proud of their school. Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school site and attendance is above the national average. The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. Relationships between staff and pupils and amongst pupils are strong. The school provides a good curriculum that meets the range of interests and abilities of its pupils. A large number of pupils also participate in the wide range of trips and clubs offered by the school.

Governors have a clear understanding of the school's work and provide good support and increasingly effective challenge. The school has improved well since its last inspection. This is reflected in its increasing popularity and size. The school has also obtained specialist status in technology and this has facilitated the development of its information communication technology (ICT) resources and helped improve achievement across the school. The school has very good capacity to improve still further.

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

- Make the monitoring of teaching more rigorous and clearly focussed on learning outcomes.
- Ensure all departments make effective use of assessment information to improve the rate of pupils' learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards across the school are above average and the achievement of pupils is good. Standards at the end of Year 9 have been rising since 2001 at a faster rate than that seen nationally while the rate at the end of Year 11 is in line with the national picture.

There was a slight fall in the percentage of pupils awarded GCSE grades A\* - C in 2005 due to the spread of ability within the year group. Inspection evidence confirms the school's prediction that results will rise again in 2006. All pupils in the last two years have achieved at least one GCSE pass grade which reflects the inclusive nature of the school.

Pupils enter the school with standards that are broadly average. The achievement of all pupils as they move through the school has been good for the past two years. There is outstanding progress in English where inspirational teaching engages pupils regularly in exciting and enjoyable learning. Pupils have made less progress in mathematics in recent years but improvements to the leadership of the subject are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. In 2005 the highest GCSE performance was in English, German and music with some underachievement in design and technology, geography and history. The school reports that nearly all subjects are in line to meet their targets in the GCSE examinations in 2006.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are confident and attentive learners. The school's ethos and firm but caring approach to behaviour management is effective. As a result pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are very considerate of each other and their teachers. They enjoy school and attendance is above average.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The personal, social, health and citizenship education programme, religious education and assemblies are effective in helping them to explore spiritual and moral themes such as social harmony and diversity in religious experience. They have a well developed sense of fairness and say, "teachers are so nice to us, we have no reason to let them down." Social development is effectively promoted through collaborative work in lessons and opportunities to take up personal and team challenges in sporting and other activities. Trips abroad and explorations of the other traditions in a range of subjects promote students' cultural development. Pupils feel safe. They are encouraged to adopt healthy life styles through physical education, food technology and sporting clubs. The school council plays an active role in improving healthy options in school meals. They contribute to school through peer counselling, becoming prefects and house captains. Their contribution to the wider community is made by charitable fund raising and helping with sporting activities in local primary schools. They are well prepared for future working life through careers education, work placements and links with local businesses.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The inspection agrees with the school's evaluation that the overall quality of teaching and learning is good. This results in the good achievement of pupils. There are some very strong features of teaching in some lessons particularly in English, mathematics and music. This results in the high standards in previous years in the first two subjects and is clear evidence of improving standards in mathematics. Pupils report that they enjoy their lessons, that teachers are helpful and give willingly of their time. Very good relationships are an outstanding feature of the majority of lessons and pupils have a high regard for their teachers. In the best lessons there is a clear focus on learning outcomes, teaching strategies are engaging and imaginative and the pace of learning is good. However, there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching across the school and a small amount of inadequate teaching was seen. In the less effective lessons assessment information is not being used with sufficient rigour to inform planning and ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are met. These lessons also lack pace and teaching strategies are not well linked to learning outcomes.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad, balanced and flexible in response to pupils' needs. A wide range of academic subjects are offered in Years 10 and 11. A smaller range of vocational courses are offered to those pupils who are likely to benefit from them and the school has plans to develop this provision. There are good opportunities for all to take part in work experience and good use is made of links with local employers and, to a lesser extent, with local colleges. The needs of individual pupils are taken into consideration in a number of ways to extend those with higher potential: for example, through master classes in mathematics and through the opportunity for more able linguists to take the British Airways accreditation.

Extra curricular activities are good, with sports and recreational activities being popular and well attended.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Staff show a high level of commitment to meeting individual needs. The school encourages pupils to develop their talents and interests, for example through the hobbies day and activity weeks. The school provides a safe and supportive environment for learning. Pupils say, "If someone is mean, teachers tell them to stop it." Child protection procedures are in place. Health and safety procedures and risk assessments are carefully attended to.

Support for pupils with learning difficulties and those in the care of the local authority is very good. The learning support department works well with a range of external agencies to meet pupil needs. It makes very good provision for developing pupils' literacy, mathematics and social skills. This results in good progress in learning. Heads of year play an important role in monitoring the personal development of pupils. The support and intervention are effective in helping pupils to develop as learners and to grow in confidence.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management of the school are good. The acting headteacher, with the strong support of the newly formed senior team, is leading the school well. They have been effective in establishing a common sense of purpose and in creating an ethos in which all students are valued. The focus on raising standards has led to good improvement in recent years. Weaknesses identified by the previous inspection have been tackled effectively.

The school has good systems of self-evaluation and it has accurately identified its strengths and weaknesses. The process involves a wide range of staff and governors, and is also informed by views sought from parents and pupils. The school development plan is good, comprehensive and well focussed on the improvements the school needs to make. Senior and middle leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning. There is much good teaching, but the monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous, and there is too little evaluation of pupils' learning to ensure consistency in practice across the school. The school has good central systems for data management and target setting. However, not all departments make good use of this assessment information to effectively track and improve pupil progress.

The acting headteacher and other staff work well with the governing body. Governance is good. Governors have a secure grasp of the school's expenditure and standards achieved and play an effective role in the school's strategic planning. Resources are used efficiently and effectively. The school has been successful in obtaining specialist status in technology and this has brought with it extra resources that have aided whole school improvement. However, the impact on standards in design and technology has been limited. Although the school has gone through changes at senior leadership level in recent months the continued improvements in achievement and whole school planning indicate it has retained a very good capacity for future improvement.

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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>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<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>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<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

### Pupils

During the recent inspection, we met and talked with many of you, sat in some of your lessons and looked at work you had done. We would like to thank you for the help you gave us. Now that we have finished the inspection I am writing to tell you of our findings. We thought your school provides you with a good education and the following points are its key strengths.

- Your acting headteacher has led your school well over the last few months. She wants the very best for all of you and she is well supported by other senior teachers in the school.
- You are taught well and are making good progress, particularly in English.
- We were impressed with your very good behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Your teachers take outstanding care of you. You told us you feel safe and secure while in school.
- Relationships within the school are very good. You all get on well with each other and with your teachers.
- You enjoy being at school. We could tell this from your good attendance, active participation in lessons and the eagerness with which you wanted to tell us the good things about your school.
- The school provides you with opportunities to be more responsible and develop leadership skills through the school council, peer counselling, becoming prefects, and house captains.
- The school offers a broad range of courses that meets your range of interests and different abilities well.
- Many of you attend the range of lunchtime and after school clubs.
- Your school's award of technology college status has helped improve ICT facilities and this is benefiting all of you. You can see that we think your school has many strengths but to become even better we have asked it to do the following:
- Many of your lessons are pitched at the right level for you, are enjoyable and you clearly understand what you are expected to learn. This is not always the case and so we have asked the school to ensure that all your lessons are as good as the best.
- In many subjects your progress is tracked well and you are given the right support when you need it. We have asked the school to ensure that this is true in all subjects.

Thank you again and I wish you all good luck for the future.

Peter Sanderson

Her Majesty's Inspector