



# Clitheroe Royal Grammar School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 119812  
**Local Authority** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 291551  
**Inspection date** 15 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Beverley Barlow HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	York Street
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Clitheroe, Lancashire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18		BB7 2DJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01200 423118
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1246	<b>Fax number</b>	01200 442177
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	643	<b>Chair</b>	Rev Canon Dearden
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Judith Evans
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–18	15 November 2006	291551

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Clitheroe Royal Grammar school is a selective 11–18 school serving the community of the Ribble Valley and surrounding area. Applications for students to join the school in Year 7 and in the sixth form far exceed the number of places available. The percentage of students entitled to free school meals is low and there are very few students with learning difficulties and disabilities. When students start at the school their attainment is well above the average. Around two thirds of the sixth form students join the school at age 16 and there is a broader ability range in the sixth form. Around a tenth of students are from minority ethnic groups and the majority are studying in the sixth form. Attendance is well above average and instances of unauthorised absence are almost non-existent. The school was awarded specialist language status in September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Staff and students are very proud of the school's consistently excellent record in external examinations and extra-curricular activities such as sport and music. The very high standards and achievements are a reflection of the well-established ethos of care and creativity. Students feel safe, behaviour is exemplary and relationships are very good. High quality, and in many cases innovative teaching, ensures that students' examination results are impressive and they make much better progress than expected. Almost all parents and carers are extremely positive about the work of the school and it has a high local reputation.

Students' personal development is outstanding. A significant strength of the school is its focus on ensuring that all students develop personally and academically. Students are encouraged to take a full and active role in school life and are given many opportunities to take on responsibilities through membership of a range of committees and the school council. They had a strong influence in the recent success of the school in achieving specialist language status. Students understand how to develop healthy lifestyles and have been active in bringing about changes to school meals. Very strong links with employers and the wider community ensures that students are well prepared for their future as adults. The curriculum is good and meets the needs of the vast majority of students. The school is currently reviewing the GCSE options available in Key Stage 4.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and use this very well to plan lessons that are often innovative and build on students' prior understanding. Students enjoy their lessons and are inspired to give of their best by enthusiastic and highly committed staff. Many teachers give up additional time to support students and organise a very wide range of exciting extra curricular activities and trips. Guidance and support is outstanding and students receive excellent advice about their progress and the next stages in their education.

The vision of the headteacher is very well supported throughout the school. Senior managers work very well as a team. They have made significant progress in addressing weaknesses from the last inspection and some aspects, for example, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning, are now a strength of the school. Managers at all levels are fully aware of what and how the school can do even better. The judgements made by inspectors match very closely the school's judgements in its self-evaluation. The new headteacher has strongly focussed the school's energies on ensuring that every child matters. The school has ambitious plans for its newly acquired specialist status and the impetus to drive this forward is strong. The school's continued improvement in many areas clearly demonstrates it has excellent capacity to improve.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The standard of education in the sixth form is outstanding. Learners do very well and make good progress. Standards in external examinations are excellent. Around 10% of students leave the school with a minimum of five grade As at A level. Although learners do well by the time they leave the sixth form, some students do not achieve the high grade expected of them in their AS subjects. Many learners re-sit AS examinations to improve their A-level grade. A new system of monitoring has been developed and early indications are that this will further improve the support for those learners who are struggling with some aspects of their course. Learners enjoy their sixth form experience and so retention and attendance are high.

Learners benefit from outstanding teaching and well written support materials, including information on the school's intranet. The standard of written work and contribution to class discussion is excellent. Teachers pay close attention in carefully developing learners' skills of analysis and evaluation. The curriculum meets the needs of all, including those who enter the sixth form from other schools. Learners speak highly of the excellent support and guidance they get from teachers in achieving academic success and in organising a wide range of events and activities to meet their personal interests. This helps them enormously in developing independent working skills, good initiative and working together in teams. The extensive range of trips broadens learners' experiences and understanding of the world. The school has excellent links with universities; guidance and support on options after school are exemplary and almost all learners progress to their first choice university. The leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding.

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

- Effectively implement the new monitoring procedures to ensure that all sixth form students achieve their predicted grades, particularly in AS subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Standards throughout the school are very high and achievements are outstanding. Students join the school with very high levels of attainment and continue to build on these and make very good progress in their time at the school. All students leave school with at least seven A\* to C grades at GCSE.

Standards achieved in national tests at the end of Year 9 have been consistently above the national average and have improved further in the last two years. Results in mathematics are commendable with a quarter of students achieving two grades higher than the average expected at age 13. In 2005, students' progress during Key Stage 3 was above expectations based on prior attainment.

Standards at Key Stage 4 are exceptional. Almost all students achieve a grade C or above in their GCSEs in all subjects. The proportion of students achieving A\* and A grades is very high. In GCSE English literature, students did not perform as well as they did in other subjects. Overall progress in Key Stage 4 is very good. Students who need extra help or support do very well.

Standards in the sixth form are excellent. Pass rates at AS and A level are very high and almost all students pass their courses. In 2006, around two thirds of A-level grades and half of AS grades are A and B. Students' average point scores are well above national averages. Most students make good progress. However, given students' profile of GCSE grades on entering the sixth form, the school recognises that some students could achieve higher grades. Retention is good.

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

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Students' behaviour is excellent. They understand the school has high expectations of them and very few fail to live up to these; they work very hard in lessons. Students enjoy coming to school and relationships are very good. Those students who spoke with inspectors say they feel safe in school, and are confident that any issues that concern them will be tackled swiftly. The school fulfils its responsibilities for safeguarding all children well. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and is strongly supported by well-planned citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE) programmes. There are extensive opportunities to develop their appreciation of different cultures through both the curriculum and the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, for example, a trip to China. Students are increasingly adopting healthy lifestyles; the school meals committee have influenced the good range of healthy options in the canteen and the school is seeking the Healthy Schools award. Students are very proud of their school, and feel their opinions are valued. Their social skills are developed well and, as a result, students are very well prepared for their adult working life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Teaching and learning are excellent. The lessons observed during the inspection confirmed the school's view and demonstrated that the areas for improvement from the last inspection had been acted upon. Students appreciate the quality of the teaching they receive and are enthusiastic about their learning. They work hard in and out of lessons and enjoy the challenge of achieving very high standards. Teachers are very

knowledgeable, plan lessons thoroughly, and make it clear what they want students to learn. Lessons include a good range of activities to meet the different learning styles of students and provide appropriate challenge. Teachers use questions effectively to help consolidate what students know, understand and can do. Homework is used well, and marking is regular and generally helpful. Students are increasingly involved in the assessment of their own work. Systems for checking students' progress are good. In Years 10 and 11 students are given clear targets based on their predicted GCSE grade. In Years 7 to 9 links to National Curriculum levels and students predicted targets are in the early stages of development.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Overall the quality of the curriculum is good, and is under review by the school. The curriculum for pupils aged 11 to 13 and the students in the sixth form is very good in meeting their needs. All pupils in Year 7, 8 and 9 are taught biology, chemistry and physics and in Year 9 they all study Latin. Opportunities to study modern foreign languages are extensive and increasing with the school's specialist language college status. The range of GCSE options in Years 10 and 11 ensures a breadth of experience; all students are required to choose at least one science, one technology, and one language subject. The school is seeking to provide further flexibility and choice to better meet the needs and aspirations of all its pupils in Key Stage 4. The curriculum is enriched by an excellent range of additional qualifications and extra-curricular opportunities; participation rates are high. Experience in careers, enterprise, and work experience are very well planned, and ensure that students are well informed about options when they leave school. These extensions to the curriculum ensure that students' attitudes to their learning are very positive.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

The school correctly judged the quality of its care, guidance and support to be outstanding. Staff demonstrate a high level of concern for, and commitment to, students' welfare and this contributes significantly to students' excellent progress, enjoyment and well being. Students told inspectors that they have a trusted adult to whom they can turn to if they have a problem. They said that issues or problems are very rare but when they do happen they are dealt with very quickly. Students receive excellent guidance through the pastoral system, and this ensures that they feel safe, secure, and valued as individuals. They benefit from regular progress reviews with their personal tutors, who check on students' personal targets and help them make well informed choices when deciding their options. Effective links with parents are maintained through regular reports and well attended progress evenings. A range of after school and lunch time subject support clubs improve high academic achievements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

The headteacher and senior leadership team know their school particularly well and provide outstanding leadership. All staff are involved in evaluating the schools performance and planning for improvement. The processes of monitoring, evaluating and managing the quality of teaching and learning has been strengthened over the last two years and has led to the sharing of good practice. New systems have been developed to closely monitor students' progress and these have been effective in further raising high standards. Governors are clear about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They effectively use a broad range of expertise to provide very good support and challenge to the school and are actively involved in celebrating the schools success. Finances are well managed and the school has made good improvements to resources. Some accommodation, particularly in the sixth form centre, is too small for the numbers of students using the rooms. The school provides outstanding value for money.



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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 effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1
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	2
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	2
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>	2	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 to below 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	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

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

Clitheroe Royal Grammar School

York Street

Clitheroe

Lancashire

BB7 2DJ

15 November 2006

Dear Students

Thank you for welcoming me and my colleague into your school last week. We thoroughly enjoyed our day. We were able to visit lessons, look at your work and talk to a number of you and the staff. We also looked at the questionnaires sent in by your parents who are very supportive of the school.

Our view is that the school is outstanding. We were very impressed by your enthusiasm for learning and how you enjoy all what the school has to offer. The headteacher and her staff work very hard to ensure that all of you achieve your very best. The excellent examination results reflect your commitment to work hard and the exciting teaching you receive from well qualified and enthusiastic staff. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Those of you we spoke to told us that the school is a safe and friendly place to be.

Your school is extremely caring and supportive. It offers you excellent opportunities both personally and academically. Many of you achieve additional qualifications and participate in activities at lunch and after school. You feel that the school values your opinions through the school council and involvement on various committees. We were very impressed with your support and involvement in the school's recent bid for specialist language status. The school does its best to ensure that you develop as confident young people with a good understanding of the world in which you live and prepares you very well for your future.

In the sixth form, your performance in external examinations is very good, you develop as confident and articulate young people and the vast majority of you are successful in progressing to your first choice university. Some of you do not do as well as you should in your AS subjects. The school introduced a new monitoring system in September to ensure that you all achieve the very best grades based on your GCSE results. Early indications are that with your mature attitude, commitment to learning and working on the advice of your teachers, this will be effective. The leadership of the headteacher, supported by governors and all staff is outstanding. They continue to look at ways in which they can make the school even better.

You are quite right to be very proud of your school and we wish you all the best for the future.

Bev Barlow HMI