



Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sitting and writing this letter to you, in my office, after just attending our Carol Service at the Church of the Ascension in Burghclere. It was a beautiful service where we were able to celebrate many of our talented young people and really begin to get into the Christmas spirit. It was brilliant to see our community coming together and a massive thank you goes out to our newly formed Clere Friends (PTA) who supplied mince pies, mulled wine and hot chocolate. During the service I was able to have some time to reflect on the meaning of Christmas and how it dovetails with our own *Clere Way* values of **integrity, community and respect**.

I have been able to see that shown by our many students, staff and families who have contributed to the reverse advent calendar in donating food and gifts to those who are less fortunate at this time of year.



It has been a packed term since September where many fantastic things have happened. As you know we have welcomed many new staff to our school community this year and it has been wonderful to hear both students and parents talk about the impact they have seen from all the committed and hard-working staff we have here at The Clere. One of the privileges of being Headteacher is the opportunity to visit lessons on a daily basis and to see the learning and progress that is happening. As part of this I walk the school with many visitors, over the last couple of weeks we have been visited by several other headteachers and the common theme has been how fantastic our students are and that they are a credit to our school. I couldn't agree with them more.

As a small school we have continued to punch well above our weight in the many sporting activities that our **PE Department** provide. Special mentions need to go out to our footballers and netballers who have taken notable victories across the term. We have also celebrated the success of students in their endeavours outside of school and we would love to share more of these with our wider

community. Please continue to share those success stories with us so we can highlight the great things our students do.



Other extra-curricular activities also continue to grow in the school and more and more students are participating. Right from Inclusivity Club through Games Club, Drama Club, our School Choir and Cheerleading Squad we are constantly looking to expand the opportunities available. I am also very thankful to the staff who go above and beyond to support these.



On the academic front we have seen our Year 11 students take their first set of Year 11 mocks. It was great to note how the students took these seriously and really focused on preparing. These are an important milestone in their journey to the final exams in the summer. Teachers are now identifying what gaps have been highlighted through the exams to plan lessons and interventions to ensure that the students have the best possible chance of success.

It has been a pleasure to see so many parents coming into school this year as you are such a vital part of our **community**. Moving the parents' evenings back to face to face has received very positive feedback. Ultimately, education is a personal and human thing and the chance for those conversations to take place lies at the heart of forming strong and productive relationships. It is important in also identifying where things need to improve and I would like to thank those parents who positively support and challenge when the need arises. I will continue to offer the opportunity to meet with me on Wednesdays after school at the **Headteacher Surgeries**. I personally have found them immensely useful in hearing from parents where we are doing things well and where we need to think about how we develop. As I mentioned earlier in my letter we have the newly formed Clere Friends (PTA) and I would like to ask you to think about supporting this group moving forward. Keep an eye out for upcoming events and help grow this fantastic group. As a parent body you are very much appreciated an example of this is when we contacted you to ensure that we all worked together to ensure that the high standards of uniform were kept up. Your support and open communication with us, where there were issues, meant that this was not the issue that I have experienced in other

schools. This is a testament to the strong foundations we are building together to ensure the success of our children.

As with every end of term we say goodbye to some of our staff. Mrs Rasey is leaving our Administration Team to move on to new opportunity. She has been an integral part of our brilliant behind the scenes team who work tirelessly to keep the school running. I would like to thank her for all her hard work. Miss Ryan is also leaving us and has been leading our SEND Department for the last year. I would like to thank her for all the work that has done in support our students in this area and the valuable experience she brought with her to this vital role we wish her well in her next chapter. From January Mrs Griffiths will take up the position of full-time SENDCo. She currently works in a large and successful school in Hampshire and she is bringing a wealth of experience to us here at The Clere and we look forward to welcoming her to the school in this essential area of provision for our students.

To close I return to my first thoughts about considering the meaning of Christmas. It is truly a time for friends, family and loved ones whilst also give us pause to consider those less fortunate. I am immensely proud to play a part in The Clere School Community and I am excited about what 2024 will bring.

Have a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year and we look forward to welcoming students back to school on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr R Milner', written in a cursive style.

Mr R Milner  
Headteacher