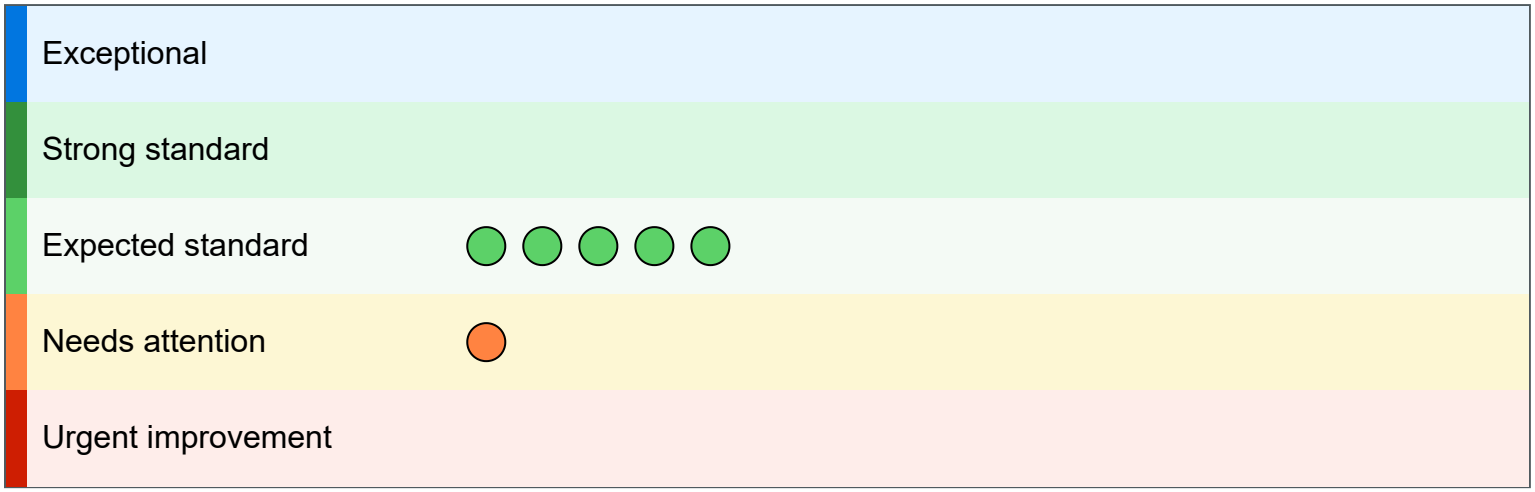
The Clere School

Address: Earlstone Common, Burghclere, Newbury, Berkshire, RG20 9HP

Unique reference number (URN): 116430

Inspection report: 6 October 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

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Leaders have transformed the culture in school. It is now a harmonious and welcoming place. This means that pupils want to come to school more, and an increasing number do so regularly. Since the last inspection, attendance has improved and persistent absence has fallen significantly. Leaders have carefully identified the barriers to attendance and work tirelessly to remove these. All staff now promote the importance of coming to school regularly. While this is not always evident in the overall school data, leaders have dramatically improved the attendance of many individual pupils through thoughtful and tailored support. Leaders are rightly ambitious to keep improving attendance. They have clear plans to achieve this.

As a result of the new behaviour management approach, the school is calm and orderly. Pupils and staff value these improvements greatly. Learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour, and social times are friendly and full of laughter. When pupils do make mistakes, the consequences are clear and effective. Suspensions are used judiciously and have reduced. Pupils are respectful and welcome visitors proudly. They increasingly display high levels of self-motivation in their learning. Leaders have dramatically increased pupils' confidence in how bullying is dealt with. Pupils feel safe to report any unkindness immediately. Bullying is rare and simply not tolerated.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

Leaders have made successful changes to the curriculum. As a result, the curriculum is now inclusive and ambitious. It is well sequenced and allows pupils to develop their knowledge securely over time. The positive impact of this work can be seen in all subject areas.

Leaders have swiftly addressed weaknesses in teaching. They have developed a well-informed and clear approach for every lesson. This is called 'The Clere Way', and it is now embedded across the school. As a result, the curriculum is generally taught well. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding and use this knowledge to make appropriate changes to their teaching. They often model responses clearly, which gives pupils the confidence to then work independently. Pupils are engaged in lessons and benefit from their teachers being subject experts.

Throughout the curriculum, pupils benefit from opportunities to develop their communication and mathematical skills. In the most successful lessons, pupils are taught to develop their extended writing skills and to focus on written accuracy. However, this practice is not embedded across the whole curriculum. Leaders have plans to address this.

Leaders have an extremely accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching in the school. They have high expectations and provide appropriate challenge and support when standards fall short of these.

Inclusion

Expected standard

This is an inclusive school where pupils feel a sense of belonging. Leaders identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately. They ensure that effective strategies are in place to remove any barriers to learning. This is particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that all staff receive clear information about pupils' needs through the recently introduced 'pupil profile'. Teachers generally put the right support in place so that all pupils can access the full curriculum and progress in their learning.

Leaders ensure that there are high expectations of all pupils. There is clear communication between pastoral staff, safeguarding leaders and the SEND team within the school. This ensures that pupils are well supported and that any barriers to wellbeing are removed. As a result, vulnerable pupils are typically learning and achieving successfully alongside their peers.

Leaders use off-site alternative provision appropriately and always in pupils' best interests. Leaders also work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils, including those who are known to social care, get the support they need. Leaders use additional funding appropriately to make a positive difference to disadvantaged pupils' experience. For example, smaller nurture groups ensure that vulnerable pupils have more focused support in the classroom.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

The new leadership team's clear direction, high expectations and passion have led to significant improvements in all areas. Leaders have a robust understanding of the quality of education in the school. They have prioritised effective actions carefully to bring about positive and sustainable change. As a result, previous weaknesses have been addressed swiftly and successfully, especially in pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching. Leaders make all decisions in the best interests of pupils and the school community. They lead with striking moral purpose.

Leaders have ambitious plans to continue improving the school, with a specific focus on raising pupils' achievement. Despite concerns regarding the school's future, leaders are determined to keep raising standards.

Governance is effective. The board has the expertise and experience to support and challenge school leaders successfully. They consider leaders' wellbeing carefully. Governors work collaboratively with the local authority and other schools.

Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school. They are extremely positive about the changes and appreciate leaders' clarity of vision and high standards. Staff benefit from tailored professional learning. Teachers who are new to the profession are supported well.

Leaders work hard to engage parents and carers. Parents are positive about the school and commend the improvements that have been made. They value the supportive community and clear communication. Parents no longer have concerns about bullying. One parent,

representing the views of many, praised how the school 'has gone from strength to strength and has an individual character and nurturing environment'.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The school's 'wellbeing' curriculum ensures that pupils benefit from an engaging personal, health, social and economic education. The curriculum is well planned and taught effectively. Pupils develop their knowledge securely and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is highly responsive to emerging safeguarding concerns. For example, pupils value recent learning about misogyny and ways to support their mental health.

Pupils receive age-appropriate lessons about healthy relationships. They learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are taught about the fundamental British values and demonstrate these attributes around school. They are proud of the inclusive culture of their school and celebrate differences in their community. Leaders provide regular opportunities for pupils to take part in democratic processes through pupil leadership roles. The Year 11 prefects lead whole-school wellbeing events with pride and enthusiasm.

Leaders work hard to ensure that pupils benefit from a range of wider opportunities. This helps to develop pupils' talents and interests, particularly in music and sport. Travel restrictions limit the number of clubs on offer, but dedicated time in the school day is protected for enrichment activities. Pupils are currently working on a project to run a school fete to raise money for their school. They are approaching this with determination. Leaders have robust plans to improve the participation of vulnerable pupils in enrichment activities.

Careers education is highly effective. Pupils benefit from personalised and individual careers support. Leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive additional help when planning their next steps. As a result, many pupils' aspirations for their future lives are rising.

Pupils value the high-quality pastoral support in the school. Pastoral staff understand the needs of pupils and work carefully with the safeguarding team to ensure that pupils are safe and happy.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Outcomes in national assessments are variable and often below national averages. Some pupils have not achieved as well as they should. However, disadvantaged pupils are increasingly successful. Leaders and staff have improved the quality of the curriculum and teaching. As a result, pupils are making better progress in their learning. Leaders are ambitious that this will result in higher outcomes in GCSE examinations. Most pupils go on to secure destinations in education, employment or training.

Pupils generally take pride in their work and are challenging themselves to do well in lessons. They are more able to recall knowledge over time and use analysis skills. Leaders identify gaps in pupils' skills quickly. They provide additional help for pupils, especially in reading and numeracy. However, pupils' written accuracy is often weak. Leaders are addressing this, but it is too early to see the impact of this work.

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

Pupils confidently display The Clere School values of integrity, community and respect. They are proud to attend the school. Pupils are grateful to new leaders for the clear and high expectations that are now in place. They speak warmly about how the school environment has been positively transformed.

Pupils feel safe and are confident speaking to a trusted adult if they have any concerns. Pupils value a recent focus on bullying. They understand and appreciate the actions that are taken by leaders if anyone is unkind. Many comment that bullying was previously a problem, but this is simply not the case anymore. One pupil, representing the views of many, said, 'This is a very friendly school where everyone is kind. We can all be ourselves, and differences are celebrated.' There are very positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils show respect for each other, the staff and the school environment. They behave very well in lessons and during social times. Vulnerable pupils are supported ably to achieve and thrive alongside their peers.

Pupils benefit from effective teaching. They are increasingly engaged and ambitious in their learning. Pupils who find reading difficult are supported well. However, many are still struggling to write accurately and need further help with this. Pupils aspire to achieve greater success in national assessments. An improved curriculum is helping them to make better progress in their learning. Pupils understand the importance of attending school regularly. Their attendance is improving. Pupils who struggle to come into school receive tailored support from staff.

Pupils receive valuable careers advice which helps prepare them for their next steps. They can participate in a range of enrichment opportunities. Key stage 3 pupils enjoy the new weekly enrichment slot where they lead projects such as fundraising. These opportunities are helping them to develop into confident, mature and articulate individuals.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue their work to ensure that highly effective teaching is fully and securely embedded across all areas of the curriculum, focusing specifically on the teaching of accurate extended writing, so that pupils achieve consistently well at the end of key stage 4.
- Leaders should continue their work to remove the barriers that lead to pupils' absence so that all pupils attend school regularly and persistent absence continues to fall.

- Leaders should further develop opportunities for all pupils, especially the most vulnerable, to develop their talents and interests.

About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Maureen Bax.

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

This inspection took place on 6 and 7 October 2026.

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.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The inspection team spoke with the headteacher and senior leaders. Inspectors met with representatives of the governing board, including the chair of governors, as well as representatives from the local authority. They also spoke to staff and pupils and considered responses from stakeholder surveys.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

At the time of the inspection, there were 242 pupils on roll.

The school uses 3 alternative provisions, all of which are registered.

Headteacher: James Rodgers

Lead inspector:
Louise New, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Mary Davies, Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Doherty, 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 6 October 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

382
Well 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: 1,063

School capacity

725
Well below 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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

29.84%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 30.4%

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

6.54%
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: 3.53%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

13.87%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 14.0%

Location deprivation

Well below 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)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	42.0%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	37.5%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	39.5%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	41.3	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	39.1	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	38.6	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.62	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.73	-0.03	Below
2021/22 (final)	-0.37	-0.03	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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	23.8%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	20.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	12.5%	25.2%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	31.9	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	25.0	34.6	Below
2022/23 (final)	26.9	35.0	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.03	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-1.22	-0.57	Below
2021/22 (final)	-0.75	-0.55	Close to average

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	23.8%	53.1%	-29.3 pp
2023/24 (final)	20.0%	53.1%	-33.1 pp
2022/23 (final)	12.5%	52.4%	-39.9 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	31.9	50.4	-18.5
2023/24 (final)	25.0	50.0	-25.0
2022/23 (final)	26.9	50.3	-23.4

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-1.03	0.16	-1.19
2022/23 (final)	-1.22	0.17	-1.38
2021/22 (final)	-0.75	0.15	-0.91

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	93%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	98%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	94%	94%	Average

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
2025/26 (1 term)	8.6%	7.8%	Close to average
2024/25 (3 term)	10.9%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	11.2%	8.9%	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
2025/26 (1 term)	26.3%	21.5%	Above
2024/25 (3 term)	35.2%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	36.6%	25.6%	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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