

The Clere School

Earlstone Common, Burghclere, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 9HP

Unique reference number (URN): 116430

Monitoring inspection report:

17 June 2026

At the most recent graded inspection, the following areas were identified as needing to improve:

The school has not acted swiftly enough to rectify the deficiencies in the school or make the necessary improvements to ensure that good standards are maintained. The school's own policies and improvement priorities are not applied rigorously or consistently enough to secure rapid and sustainable improvements. The school must focus its actions on those aspects that are most in need of improvement and rapidly rectify the shortcomings identified by this inspection.

The school has not ensured that pupils have confidence in how the school addresses bullying. As a result, pupils often do not report incidents of bullying for fear that the school will not take effective action. The school must ensure that bullying concerns are taken seriously and dealt with effectively, so that pupils regain confidence in the school's anti-bullying policy.

Many pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are often absent from school. The number of pupils who are persistently absent remains worryingly high, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The rate of suspensions is high and not reducing. Too many pupils, therefore, miss vital learning and are at risk of falling even further behind. The school must ensure that it takes robust action so that attendance improves rapidly, persistent absence decreases and the rate of suspensions reduces.

The teaching of the curriculum is too variable. Furthermore, teachers' checks on pupils' learning do not enable them to know how well pupils learn the curriculum. Often, gaps in knowledge or misconceptions go unaddressed. The school should ensure that teachers accurately identify gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge and then seek to tackle these in their subsequent teaching.

The achievement of disadvantaged pupils, particularly those who receive free school meals, remains low. Staff do not adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils with SEND effectively enough. This means that disadvantaged pupils are not supported to build

knowledge and skills consistently well and do not attain the qualifications that they need to progress to their next stages of education, training or employment. The school should ensure that pupils consistently achieve high standards, and that teachers know how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND effectively.

Leaders and governors are taking effective action to improve the school but continued work is needed to remove the requires significant improvement designation.

During the monitoring inspection, the inspector focused on the following evaluation areas:

- Leadership and governance
- Curriculum and teaching

Leadership and governance

Since the previous inspection, you have continued to strengthen and develop your understanding of the impact of your improvement work. This has given you an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for continued development. Your plan for continued school improvement is coherent and clearly communicated to staff. This means that staff understand their part in further developing the school and the imperative to raise expectations, ambition and outcomes for pupils.

You have continued to consolidate your previous work on behaviour and attendance. This has resulted in calm classrooms and pupils who are now attending more regularly. Additionally, your focus on the curriculum and teaching has resulted in pupils experiencing increasingly consistent teaching, which they recognise and appreciate.

You know that there is still too much variability in the quality of teaching. This remains a core focus of your improvement work. The steps that you have put in place to eradicate this difference are appropriate and are having a positive impact, although there is more to do.

You are also strengthening aspects that support quality teaching, such as the curriculum and provision for vulnerable pupils. This is necessary to support pupils to achieve as well as they are able.

Safeguarding

At the previous graded inspection/monitoring inspection, safeguarding was evaluated as being effective.

Curriculum and teaching

You and your senior leadership team have a detailed understanding of the curriculum and teaching grading area and have used this to guide your evaluations. As a result, the improvement plans you have in place are appropriate.

Both staff and pupils appreciate the clarity of your new systems, such as 'The Clere Way' teaching methodology. Pupils value the way that it is giving an increasingly consistent structure to lessons because it helps them to know what to do and what to expect. They also recognise the positive changes that you are making to how well they are taught. For example, they like the new start of lesson routines because this is where they most often see a direct validation of their knowledge and have an immediate chance to challenge any misconceptions.

Your universal teaching approach across the school is designed to lead to the required improvement in the curriculum and teaching and, therefore, achievement. You have carefully considered the pace of change. Staff consider this to be just right to allow them to embed their new practice as fast as possible without overloading them.

You have supported middle leaders to help coach and develop their teaching teams, and some leaders are involved in helping to coach others in wider professional development, where appropriate and necessary. This is helping to empower and upskill middle leaders, who, in your long-term plans, will be the staff with much of the responsibility for the day-to-day management of teaching standards.

Where staff have found adapting to your renewed and heightened expectations more difficult, you have taken appropriate action to help them to meet the required standard. Similarly, where you have needed to recruit new staff, you have been diligent in ensuring they have the necessary skills and aptitudes to help in the school's continued improvement journey.

Revised practices for pupils with SEND have meant that staff now know pupils better and, consequently, pupils' needs are often being met more effectively in lessons. You have made adaptive practice a focus of staff training. This means that inclusion has developed alongside pupils' improving achievement. Similarly, the appointment of a new special educational needs and disabilities coordinator has improved the school's relationship with the most vulnerable pupils and their families.

Despite the positive work that you have completed, you know that there remains significant variability within teaching. However, you have ensured that the school as a whole is actively creating the necessary conditions to deliver teaching of a consistently high standard. It is clear that, in many places, the consistency and quality of teaching are improving and this is increasingly supporting pupils to achieve as well as they are able.

You also know that, in places, staff expectations of how much they can ask of pupils in lessons are not yet high enough. For example, some pupils do not have regular opportunities to practise and rehearse the application of knowledge in writing. At times, some pupils' vocabulary is not precisely developed in lessons and, consequently, this limits their ability to describe their thinking and articulate their ideas. You have plans in place to continue to improve the way that pupils develop and strengthen their foundational knowledge across all lessons and subjects.

Leaders and governors should continue to work to address the priorities for improvement identified in the last graded inspection report.

About this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005, and it was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require significant improvement following the graded inspection that took place in January 2025.

The school's previous inspection and the first monitoring inspection were carried out under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) at that time. The renewed EIF took effect from 10 November 2025. The areas for improvement identified at the school's graded inspection and subsequent monitoring inspections have been cross-referenced to the relevant evaluation areas in the inspection toolkit for consideration on this monitoring inspection.

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.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was not to determine grades for any of the evaluation areas set out in the school inspection toolkit. The purpose was to identify and report on the school's progress in addressing priorities for improvement since the school's previous inspection.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, other staff, governors and the local authority to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection.

Lead inspector

Ed Mather

His Majesty's Inspector

About this school

School capacity	725
Number of pupils on roll	388

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
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