

Inspection of a good school: John Clare Primary School

West Street, Helpston, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE6 7DX

Inspection date: 29 March 2022

Outcome

John Clare Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending John Clare Primary School. It is a safe and happy place in which to learn. Pupils respond very well to adults' high expectations and positive role models. Staff, pupils, and parents and carers agree that pupils are well behaved at all times.

Pupils care for each other. For example, older pupils act as buddies to younger pupils, including by reading to them. Pupils are articulate and confident. They listen politely to each other's views. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem. They are confident that staff will help them with any worries they may have.

Pupils enjoy their learning. This is because teachers make this interesting. They particularly enjoy the books they study and that teachers read to them.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of opportunities that the school provides. A high number attend after-school clubs. These allow them to pursue interests, including sports, music and crafts. Pupils take on responsibilities, for example as members of the school council, or the eco-council, or as play leaders. They are excited about the trips and residential visits that the school organises for them.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have ensured that curriculum plans for all subjects set out what pupils need to learn and remember from early years through to Year 6. Staff have received appropriate training to enable them to deliver these plans. Staff regularly check how well pupils have remembered what they have learned. This helps them to plan future learning activities based on what pupils know and can do. Any pupil who is falling behind receives the right help to ensure that they catch up quickly. In lessons, teachers check that pupils remember learning from the previous lessons and recap prior learning. This helps pupils to then tackle new work.

In some subjects, teachers' understanding of new approaches is not fully developed. Leaders are aware of this. They have plans in place to support teachers to refine their delivery of the curriculum.

Curriculum leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subjects they lead. They have an accurate view of what is working well and what could be better.

Leaders are determined to ensure that pupils enjoy reading. There is a well-sequenced programme for teaching phonics. This begins early in the Reception class. All adults who teach phonics have received appropriate training. This includes delivering catch-up programmes. Younger pupils read books that allow them to practise the sounds they are learning. Most are fluent readers by the end of key stage 1.

Older pupils have access to a broad range of books. This helps them to develop their comprehension skills. They say that they enjoy reading and enjoy listening to their teachers reading to them. All classrooms have inviting reading areas with a range of age-appropriate books. Pupils who find reading difficult receive extra help from well-trained staff. As a result, they catch up quickly.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils to succeed. They ensure that pupils who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have support to access the same curriculum as their classmates. Leaders are quick to identify any additional needs that pupils may have. They put in the right support and regularly check that this is effective. These pupils achieve well as a result.

Pupils behave very well at all times. This is because of the high expectations that adults have of them. All adults are consistent in their application of the school's behaviour policy. Pupils understand this. They told inspectors that learning is never disrupted. Reception children respond positively to routines and know how to behave.

Leaders have ensured a strong focus on ensuring pupils' well-being on their return following the COVID-19 restrictions. There is a wide range of after-school clubs. Most pupils attend at least one of the many clubs available. The curriculum provides high-quality sporting opportunities. The school is rightly proud of pupils' sporting successes in local and regional competitions.

Many parents made glowing comments about the quality of education and care that the staff provide. One typically said, 'I am very happy with this school. They go the extra mile to make sure that the children feel happy and flourish.'

Governors and the trust know the school well. They make regular checks to understand how well the school is doing. Staff are highly committed. They value the support they receive from leaders and the consideration of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Ensuring pupils' safety and well-being is a top priority for leaders. All staff receive annual safeguarding training. There are regular updates in staff meetings. All adults know what to do if they are worried about pupils' safety and welfare. Staff know pupils very well and are alert to any changes that might indicate a concern. Leaders take swift and appropriate action when staff report concerns.

Leaders have ensured that pupils learn about the risks they may face when online. Pupils told inspectors that they know what to do if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- New approaches to some areas of the curriculum are still evolving. Some teachers are developing their knowledge of how best to teach these subjects. This means that pupils' learning is not always maximised. Leaders should provide teachers with guidance and support, so that they can teach the curriculum effectively in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, John Clare Primary School, to be good in October 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	145270
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10227574
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	139
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Claire Spooner
Headteacher	Sarah Nicolson
Website	www.johnclareschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- John Clare Primary School joined the Soke Education Trust in January 2018.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the multi-academy trust, the chief executive officer, members of the local governing body, the headteacher, senior leaders and the school business manager.
- An inspector spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at less structured times.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils to seek their views of the school. They also spoke to pupils informally in class, around the school and at breaktimes.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and physical education to evaluate the quality of education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, considered curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and scrutinised samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also checked curriculum provision for pupils' learning in other subject areas.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils reading to staff and talked to them about their reading habits.
- An inspector met with the leader in charge SEND provision and scrutinised documentation for SEND. Inspectors observed support for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's information on behaviour, bullying and attendance. They reviewed safeguarding records and spoke with leaders, staff and pupils about safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors considered the 50 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the 46 free-text comments. Inspectors considered the seven responses to Ofsted's staff survey and seven responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Joan Beale, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mark Sim

Ofsted Inspector

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