



School Prospectus

2025 - 2026



John Clare Primary School

West Street, Helpston, PE6 7DX

Telephone: 01733 252332

Email: office@johnclareprimary.org

Website: www.johnclareschool.org



Welcome



Dear Parent/Carer,

I would like to officially welcome you and your child to the John Clare Primary School family!

John Clare is a wonderful school, where we place the children at the heart of all we do: we strive to ensure that all children flourish and thoroughly enjoy their time with us.

I hope that you find the information in this prospectus useful. Throughout the year, our staff team will continue to provide further updates and information about what is happening in school to ensure that you are as fully informed as possible.

We greatly value the partnership we have with all parents/carers: by working together, we can promote positive outcomes for each and every child.

I am sure that your child will settle into John Clare Primary School very quickly. Should you have any questions, queries or concerns, please do contact your child's class teacher, in the first instance, who will be pleased to offer support.

I look forward to this being the start of a long-standing and productive partnership with you to support your child throughout their learning journey at John Clare Primary School.

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S Nicolson".

Mrs Sarah Nicolson

Headteacher

Introduction

At John Clare, we take care to:

Inspire a passion for learning

Nurture compassion for each other and

Celebrate excellence and endeavour.

At John Clare Primary School, we aim to provide every child with experiences and learning opportunities that excite and challenge and that help to prepare them for their future. As a small, rural school, we pride ourselves on knowing our children well so that we can focus on the individual needs of each child and help them to develop their interests and skills. Our Ofsted inspection, in March 2022, said the following of our school:

‘John Clare Primary School continues to be a good 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 enjoy their learning. This is because teachers make this interesting.’

‘Pupils enjoy the wide range of opportunities that the school provides.’

‘Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils to succeed. They ensure that pupils who are disadvantaged or those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have support to access the same curriculum as their classmates...These pupils achieve well as a result.’



The school is named after the local village poet, John Clare, who lived from 1793-1864. The school was opened 13th July 1965, in commemoration of the poet's birthday. The school celebrates the birth of John Clare every year through taking part in the Midsummer Cushions event and John Clare Society Festivals.

The school is housed in a pleasant, light airy building with its own playing field. Due to its popularity, the school has grown considerably since it was opened in 1965. In 2019 we increased our numbers and the school now comprises of 5 mixed aged classes: Buttercross (Reception & Year 1), Woodgate (Year 1 & 2), Broadwheel (Year 3 & 4), Swaddywell (Year 4 & 5) and Torpel (Year 6). The main building comprises a large hall equipped for gymnastics, drama and music, which is also used as a dining area with meals prepared and cooked by our school caterer. Helpston Playhouse and Under 5s share part of our site and are housed in their own unit: they offer wrap around care for John Clare Primary School children before and after school. The school field is dual-use and is used by the village after school hours and during weekends and holidays.

Current Organisation – School Year 2025/26

Mrs S Nicolson	Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs H Breslin	Deputy Headteacher
Mrs S Myatt	Curriculum Lead
Mrs A Kefford	SENDCo
Miss C Johnson	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs C Challis	EYFS Phase Lead

The school is currently organised into five mixed-aged classes:

Mrs Challis & Mrs Donaldson	Buttercross Class Teacher (Reception/Year 1)
Mrs A Kefford	Woodgate Class Teacher (Year 1/2)
Mrs S Myatt	Broadwheel Class Teacher (Year 3/4)
Miss C Johnson	Swaddywell Class Teacher (Year 4/5)
Mrs H Breslin	Torpel Class (Year 6)

Support Staff:

Miss J Cole	School Business Officer
Mrs K Thompson	School Administrator
Mrs A Cook	Teaching Assistant
Mrs S Clarkson	Teaching Assistant
Mrs B Dorcheh	Teaching Assistant
Mrs P Morris	Teaching Assistant
Mrs J Shonfeld	Site Officer
Mrs J Sallis	Caterer
Mrs K Thompson	Mid-day Supervisor
Mrs J Shonfeld	Mid-day Supervisor
Mrs A Webb	Mid-day Supervisor

The Curriculum

At John Clare School, we aim to provide a curriculum, which is broad, balanced and relevant, to which all children are entitled and to which they have access via differentiated learning.

We have developed an exciting creative curriculum, which both challenges the children and provides them with a variety of experiences suited to their needs and abilities. We believe the curriculum should promote meaningful cross-curricular links and creative thinking in all lessons. We provide special days and events, such as Science Week, where children can work in teams and develop deeper levels of learning. We also have very good Early Years Foundation Stage provision in school for children aged 4 and 5.

The National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 (5-7 year olds) and 2 (7-11 year olds) is comprised of Core, Foundation and Statutory subjects:

Core Subjects: English, Mathematics, Science and Computing

Foundation Subjects: Art, Design and Technology (DT), Geography, History, Modern Foreign Languages (KS2), Music and Physical Education (PE).

Statutory Subjects: Religious Education (RE) and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE).

The children follow schemes of work based upon the Programmes of Study and are then assessed in relation to objectives within the attainment targets.

There is a formal assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 (7-year-olds) and Key Stage 2 (11 year olds) using Standard Attainment Tests (SATs). When the children enter school, they are assessed using the Reception baseline Assessment. We continually assess and monitor every child's progress to inform our teaching and planning for Individual children.

How will your child progress?

Children are set individual targets for mathematics, reading and writing every term; these are shared with parents/carers during parent/teacher consultations. We aim to keep parents/carers involved and value this close partnership.

Core subjects

English comprises the elements of speaking and listening, reading and writing. Children will have opportunities to develop their communication skills, vocabulary and writing abilities. They will follow a graded and carefully monitored reading scheme which leads to free, independent reading from a wide choice of books in the classroom and school library. Children take their books home to share with their parents/carers. We work hard to develop reading skills and are keen that parents/carers not only read with their child but also engage in shared writing activities linked to reading. Comprehension and grammatical skills are developed through our English sessions but also through other areas of the curriculum. Through school, we follow the Power of Reading scheme, which is proven programme that supports our high-quality literacy curriculum and fosters a whole school love of reading and writing.

Mathematics in the school is taught through the White Rose and the Power Maths schemes along with high-quality reasoning materials. Practical maths work is undertaken together with an understanding of the processes and concepts; however, we continue to emphasise the basic rules of number and the learning of maths facts such as tables. There are specific maths lessons for each year group on a daily basis. Our mathematics delivery follows a 'teaching for mastery' approach to foster our strong belief that **everyone can do maths!**

Science and **Design Technology** are taught both as discrete subjects and also linked to other topics. The skills and techniques of investigation and experimentation are taught but the acquisition of knowledge and vocabulary is also important. We are keen to promote children's curiosity and look for opportunities throughout the year to promote science and technology and their importance in the real world.

The school is well resourced for **Computing** with interactive media screens, laptops and tablets. Information Technology skills are applied across the whole curriculum and the children regularly and effectively use technology throughout the day.

History and **Geography** skills are developed through discrete lessons and as part of cross curricular learning. We explore our locality to develop our enquiry and field skills.

Sport is a great strength of our school and we have achieved the School Games Platinum Award for our outstanding and inclusive provision. Opportunities are presented for the development and extension of physical skills in gymnastic, dance, outdoor ball skills and swimming activities. We employ a specialist coach to enrich this curriculum area.

In the **arts**, children will explore and appreciate a variety of media in art sessions and their musical abilities are developed in the classroom and through peripatetic music teaching and singing groups. We also develop children's performance skills through our Christmas productions and end of year Key Stage 2 musical.

Religious Education

The broad framework for Religious Education is determined nationally. The Education Reform Act, 1988, sets out legal requirements for R.E. and collective worship. The aims and objectives for R.E are determined locally and set out in the City's agreed syllabus.

R.E. is treated as an integral part of the school curriculum. "The educational process aims to develop the whole person, and Religious Education shares common ground with other subjects in the curriculum in contributing to pupils' personal, moral and social development."

Parents may withdraw their children from religious worship or Religious Education, but these requests should be put in writing to the Headteacher. If you have any queries in this matter, please do not hesitate to come and talk things over.

Relationship and Sex Education

This is an integral part of the Health Education programme in school which all children study at an age-appropriate level. Our older children explore these topics in further detail, using video materials, such as 'Living and Growing' and Discovery Education, to support their learning. Whenever possible, your child's class teacher will inform you when such content will be discussed. Should you wish your child to opt out of Sex Education sessions, please inform the Headteacher.

Homework

The children are encouraged to carry out activities at home which complement or extend work in progress at school. In the early years, it will begin with the sharing of a reading book and practising phonics sounds at home. As the children progress through school, they will be required to complete home learning activities to consolidate their skills and understanding of subjects taught within class. We follow the times recommended by the Department for Education.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

At John Clare Primary School, we are determined to meet the educational needs of all our pupils. We closely follow the SEN Code of Practice.

The school caters for the need of all pupils with special needs, with and without an Education Health Care Plan. All teachers plan, set and mark work which is appropriate and relevant to the individual needs of pupils. The school has adopted the model of special needs assessment and provision recommended by Peterborough Local Authority.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is responsible for overseeing assessment provision. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to become increasingly independent and take responsibility within the school. A copy of the Special Educational Needs Policy is available on our website. This policy along with the Peterborough Local Offer can be viewed on the school website under the heading of School Information, SEND.

Our SENCo is Mrs Abi Kefford. Our named Governor for Special Educational Needs is Mrs Rosey Shackell.

Useful Information

The School Day:

8.40 am	Classrooms open
8:45am	School starts (registers close at 8.50am) - please refer to our Attendance Policy for further information.
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	Start of afternoon session
3:30pm*	End of day for all children

* Finish on Fridays at 2:30pm

School lunches:

WE ARE A HEALTHY SCHOOL and are regularly awarded a Healthy Schools standard.

Delicious, cooked meals are prepared on the premises, with a choice of nutritious main course and dessert. Our menus are designed in consultation with our School Council and are very popular! Provision is made for vegetarian and dietary needs. Please see our school website: <https://www.johnclareschool.org/school-information/meal-menu/> for our current menu and pricing. Please note that under the current Government scheme, all Reception and KS1 children are entitled to Universal Free School Meals.

If you think you may also qualify for free school meals, please speak to the school office or visit our website for more information.

In addition to our school lunches, milk is available to order for all children (free for under 5s) and children in Reception/KS1 are given fruit every day. KS2 children may bring fruit to eat at morning break.

School Payments:

The school uses ParentPay (a web based secure online payments system) to collect all monies in respect of school meals (KS2 only), trips, clubs, swimming etc. Further details will be provided once your child starts school.

School Uniform:

School Uniform enables children to take pride in their appearance and helps to develop a positive attitude to each school day. The school colours are red and grey and the uniform is based on these colours. Please ensure that all items of uniform, including footwear are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Reception to Year 5 uniform:

- White polo-shirt, shirt or blouse
- Red sweatshirt, jumper or cardigan (school logo optional)
- Grey trousers or skirt
- Red summer dress
- Black school shoes – no open-toed sandals please.



Year 6 uniform:

- White shirt or blouse
- Grey v-neck jumper (school logo optional)
- Grey trousers or skirt
- School tie (available from the school office)



Black school shoes are advised. Open toed sandals in the summer are discouraged.

Optional: Sweatshirts, T-shirts, polo shirts and fleeces featuring the school logo are available direct from Brigade (www.brigade.uk.com) at a reasonable cost.

PE/Games Kit:

It is essential that the children have a change of clothes for PE and Games as well as the necessary footwear. Our PE kit is as follows:

- Trainers well fitting (no plimsoles please)
- Black shorts/skort
- White crew-neck t-Shirt
- Black tracksuit bottoms (or leggings) / top (no hoods please)



The wearing of jewellery during PE lessons is dangerous and all jewellery and watches should be removed before these lessons commence. If your child has pierced ears, only small studs should be worn at school and these must be covered up or removed for PE. The class teacher will advise you of the days that your child will have PE and, on these days only, they may come to school in their PE kit.

Labelling Clothing:

PLEASE put your child's name on all clothing worn in school. This includes outdoor clothing and wellington boots. We do attempt to return all lost property but cannot retain, indefinitely, items which are not labelled.

Whole School Behaviour

At John Clare Primary School, we are passionate about having a positive and therapeutic approach to behaviour. We aim to promote behaviour that enables children to achieve their potential and develop academically, socially and emotionally. We have high expectations of all our children in relation to their education as well as their behaviour, and this aspect was positively recognised in our last Ofsted inspection (March 2022).

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. The school behaviour policy (found on our website) is therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the school can live and work together in a supportive way. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure.

The school has a small number of school rules, but the primary aim of the behaviour policy is not a system to enforce rules; it is a means of promoting good relationships, so that people can work together with the common purpose of helping everyone to learn. This policy supports the school community in aiming to allow everyone to work together in an effective and considerate way. The school expects every member of the school community to behave in a considerate way towards others. Our overarching school rule is: 'At John Clare...we take care.'

Safeguarding and Child Protection

At John Clare Primary School, safeguarding the children in our care is a priority. All staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. Should a member of staff have concerns about a child, they report this to the Designated Safeguarding Leads in school: Mrs Nicolson and Miss Johnson, who carry out their duties in accordance with the law and acting in the best interests of all children. Our Safeguarding Policy can be found on our school website.

'It may be helpful to parents to know that the Authority requires schools to report any obvious or suspected case of child abuse -which includes non-accidental injury, severe physical neglect, emotional abuse and/or sexual abuse. This procedure is intended to protect children and schools are encouraged to take the attitude that where there are grounds for suspicion it is better to be safe than sorry. This does mean that the Safeguarding Leads and/or Headteacher may risk upsetting some parents by reporting a case which, on investigation, proves unfounded.

In some circumstances, it is hoped that parents, appreciating how difficult it is for schools to carry out this delicate responsibility, would accept that staff were acting in what were believed to be the child's best interests.'

From: Peterborough City Council Advice on Child Protection.

Absences:

If, for any reason, a child is absent from school, the school should be informed of the reason for absence immediately by telephone, email, or in person.

If your child needs to leave school during school hours a responsible adult must meet the child at school. There is a signing in and out book in the school office which must be completed by school staff. Please let us know in writing, or by telephone, of such arrangements, as we are responsible for the children in our care and cannot allow them out of school without this authority.

The school positively discourages the taking of holidays during term time. Please see the school attendance policy for further details.

Sickness:

If your child becomes ill whilst at school, we will inform you immediately; therefore, we request details of emergency contacts. Following any gastro-intestinal illness (sickness/diarrhoea), we ask that your child remains off school for 48 hours after they are symptom free.

Medicines:

If your child has been prescribed medicine by a doctor, dentist or nurse to be taken four times a day and they need to take it at school, the medicine should be sent to the school in the original bottle it was dispensed in with the child's name on the label. Parents are asked to complete a medication consent form (available at the school office) before the school will agree to administer the prescribed medicine. We can oversee children who take regular medication and are able to administer the drugs themselves (we ask for a signed consent form outlining the medication to be taken e.g. inhalers etc.). Staff receive regular first-aid training. Our Medication Policy can be found on the school website.

The role of Parents/Carers in School

Parents are most welcome in school and we are always available to see those with queries or problems. Your child's class teacher is your first point of contact and they are willing to see parents, either at the end of the school day or by special arrangement. We promote an open-door policy. Should you require any further assistance, please do contact Mrs Nicolson, Headteacher, through the School Office.

Parent consultation evenings are held twice a year in the Autumn and Spring terms. This gives an opportunity for an update to be given upon the child's progress and discuss targets. A final written report is presented at the end of the Summer Term and there is an optional parent consultation time available.

We encourage parents to help in school on a regular basis. If you would like to help or are interested in visiting the school, please contact the School Office.

Since September 2001 the school has operated a Home/ School Agreement. The agreement is endorsed by our Local Governing Body and each Parent/Carer is requested to sign the document along with the child and the school.

The Friends of John Clare School

The purpose of the “Friends of the School” is to provide a common link between the school, the parents and the community through meetings, social events and fundraising activities.

We believe the progress and development of a child is enhanced when parents take an active interest in school activities. The ‘Friends’ are always keen to recruit new members for their committee and for volunteers to help at events. Please keep a watch on our weekly newsletter for details of ‘Friends’ events!



Pastoral Care

The pastoral care of the children is shared equally among all staff. General day to day care is a collective responsibility of teachers, teaching assistants, midday supervisors and office staff. All accidents and treatments given within the school are logged.

Clubs

In addition to a very full curriculum, there are various extra-curricular activities organised by the teachers or coaches. Apart from the instructive and enjoyment aspects of such activities, clubs provide another opportunity for the children and their coaches to enjoy participating in shared interests. Our Sports Clubs are very well attended and we have had a number of children who have reached county and regional standards. Clubs offered in the past year include: Art, Football, Choir, Dodgeball, Netball, Cricket, Athletics, Gymnastics, Cooking, Hockey, Rounders, Lego.

Before and After School Club

The Helpston Playhouse offer working parents the opportunity of using this wonderful facility for all school age children. Many of our children attend this super club, where a range of fun and stimulating activities are on offer daily, 7:30-8:45am and 3:30-5:30pm.

New Children Admissions Policy

Our ‘catchment’ area includes the villages of Helpston, Eton and Woodcroft. However, parents may opt to send their children to the school from other areas and we do have children attending our school from all over Peterborough and surrounding areas.

Our agreed overall capacity for the school is 140 children. We follow the accepted Peterborough City Council ‘Admissions Criteria for Admissions and Appeals Procedures.’ Legally, children must start to receive full-time

education from the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday. In practice, most children enter school in September, but this decision rests with parents and the Headteacher.

All new children are invited to visit the school during the half-term before they start. You will receive information about these visits.

A meeting for prospective parents for our Reception class is held with the Headteacher and the Reception teachers prior to the visits so that any queries can be answered. New children begin school on a part-time basis at the beginning of the autumn term. Following an agreed period, the children attend full-time and all children will be in school for the whole day by half-term.

Pre-School Links

Helpston Playhouse and Under 5s was formed in 1972 and in September 2010 moved into a new eco-friendly building on the school site.

The Under 5's provide pre-school learning experiences for children aged 2½-4 years during term time. Excellent relationships exist between the Group and John Clare School and Under 5 children benefit from visits to the Reception Class and school events. The playgroup leader liaises with school to make the transition to school as smooth as possible. Further information can be obtained by requesting a copy of their brochure.

Secondary Education

Parents have the right to express their preferences as to the secondary school that their child will attend after John Clare School. Most children transfer to Arthur Mellows Village College, Glington. We liaise on curriculum and policy matters and over the years we have built up a good relationship between the two schools which is of benefit to the children when they transfer. All the parents of Year 6 children will receive full details about all the options available at 11+ and full particulars of how to express their preferences.

Admissions arrangements are set by the Secondary schools who will provide you with details of their criteria.

Remissions and Charges

The Charges and Remissions Policy requires that where charging needs to be levied, a voluntary contribution is requested from the pupils. If this contribution does not cover the cost of the activity the school reserves the right to cancel the activity. Where a pupil elects to have music tuition from an outside agency and a charge is made, the cost will be paid by the parents direct to the provider.

Links with the Community

The school aims to work with and within the village community to the mutual benefit of both.

John Clare Society

We have an annual poetry competition to celebrate the famous poet the school was named after. We celebrate John Clare's birthday by taking Midsummer Cushions to the church and laying them around his grave.



Dual Use Field

The school field is used by the village community after school hours. It is a popular meeting place for parents, children and young people. The large open space and play equipment offer a safe environment where children can play.

Complaints Procedure

We understand that parents/carers may, from time to time, have cause to express concerns and we endeavour to resolve these as fully and quickly as possible. Any concerns expressed by parents will usually be discussed, and as far as possible, dealt with on an informal basis, with their child's class teacher and, if needed, the Headteacher. It is only when concerns cannot be resolved that a formal complaints procedure comes into effect - please refer to our Complaint Policy found on the school website.

Governors

The Local Governing Committee, working with Soke Education Trust, play a key role in leading and managing the provision for children at John Clare School.

Chair of Governors	Mrs E Stephens-Dunn
Vice Chair of Governors	Mrs L Bunn
Headteacher	Mrs S Nicolson
Co-opted Governor	Mrs B Anderson
Co-opted Governor	Mr R Bennett
Co-opted Governor	Mr A Bradley
Co-opted Governor	Mrs R Shackell
Co-opted Governor	Mrs E Stephens-Dunn
Parent Governor	Mrs L Bunn
Parent Governor	Mrs N Barber
Parent Governor	Ms A Turner
Staff Governor	Mrs A Cook

The governors hold a local governance meeting twice yearly and Strategic and Resources committee meetings once a term.

Governors work closely with staff at school and regularly monitor the school's development.

Telephone: 01733 252332

Email: office@johnclareprimary.org

