

John Clare Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110699
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	378148
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2012
Lead inspector	Joy Considine

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Spooner
Headteacher	Rachel Simmons
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2009
School address	West Street Helpston Peterborough PE6 7DU
Telephone number	01733 252332
Fax number	01733 253684
Email address	office@johnclare.peterborough.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	9–10 February 2012
Inspection number	378148



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Joy Considine

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited eight lessons or parts of lessons taught by five teachers. She listened to pupils read and examined their work. She held meetings with staff, members of the governing body and pupils, and took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at school development plans, pupils' assessment and tracking information, and other documentation relevant to the inspection including that relating to safeguarding. She also analysed questionnaires received from 69 parents and carers as well as those received from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

John Clare is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has four classes, all of which are mixed age. Most pupils are of White British heritage, with very few who speak English as an additional language and none at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. Children in the Reception Year of the Early Years Foundation Stage share a class with some Year 1 pupils. An above-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at times other than the usual time of entry. The headteacher joined the school in September 2011. The school exceeded the current floor standard, whereby the government sets the minimum expectations for pupils attainment and progress.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. The headteacher has built on the strengths of the previous leadership and established a climate of high expectations for staff and pupils. One parent or carer typically wrote, 'We are delighted with John Clare School in every respect and feel that our children get the best start possible.'
- Pupils achieve well. They consistently reach above average standards in English and mathematics and they acquire good communication skills through the variety of learning experiences teachers provide for them. Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are well developed because they have access to computers for many aspects of their work.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they receive targeted support in lessons, small groups and occasionally on an individual basis.
- Although there was some variation in the quality of teaching seen, most is at least good with an increasing proportion that is better. In the best lessons, learning activities are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their attendance, which is consistently above average. They feel safe and behave exceptionally well in lessons and in and around the school.
- The curriculum is imaginatively planned, with a wide range of exciting experiences that make learning purposeful and relevant. Apart from the good provision for literacy and numeracy, the quality of music makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders and managers have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development and they have established appropriate priorities for further improvement.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by developing the skills of middle leaders so that they can take a more pro-active role in shaping the strategic development of the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is all consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that all teachers provide opportunities for pupils to respond to questions that challenge them and develop their understanding
 - always setting learning intentions that are focused clearly on what pupils are to learn
 - enabling teachers to share the best practice that already exists within the school.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The very large majority of parents and carers rightly believe that their children make good progress and that the school helps their children to develop their basic skills effectively. One wrote, 'Apart from the academic progress our children have made at John Clare, we have been amazed by the way in which their confidence has grown.' In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic and keen to take part and consequently their behaviour is excellent. They work collaboratively and enjoy challenges and activities in which they can show initiative.

Children start school with skills and abilities that are broadly similar to those expected for their age, although their personal and social skills are above those typically found. They make a good start in learning basic skills and they enjoy learning when the context is interesting. For example, a small group of children were happily selecting materials to make models linked to their class topic. On entry into Year 1, most children reach the expected goals.

Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics and by the end of Year 6 their attainment in these subjects is above average. Currently, all groups of pupils are making good progress because teaching is good. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well because work is tailored to meet their needs and they receive good support to help them to meet their individual learning targets.

Pupils enjoy reading and they have learned a wide range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. The systematic way in which letters and sounds (phonics) is taught helps those in Key Stage 1 to make good progress and reach standards that are above average. Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 2 so that, by the end of Year 6, they confidently use their reading skills for research purposes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

as well as to read independently for pleasure.

Pupils make good progress in writing, although this is more rapid in upper Key Stage 2 where their attainment is above average. There are many opportunities for pupils to practise their skills when learning other subjects and this helps them to develop fluency and confidence when committing their ideas to paper. In lessons, pupils select for themselves the way in which they present their work. In one lesson, pupils independently chose to use ICT to research a topic on climate change and to present their work as a newspaper article, a piece of text or as a computer presentation. Pupils' work shows that they write fluently for a variety of purposes using language that engages and sustains the interest of the reader.

Pupils enjoy mathematics and make good and occasionally better progress throughout the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have well developed skills which they apply to solving real-life problems such as calculating the percentage discount available when selling cats and dogs in the pet shop. Pupils' work shows that those in Years 1 and 2 work confidently with higher numbers and that they select the correct operation to solve word problems.

Quality of teaching

Inspection confirmed the views of the large majority of parents who believe that teaching is good. During the inspection most lessons seen were good, with some that were outstanding. Pupils said that what was seen is usual, and the work in their books also confirmed this. Teachers use imaginative methods to capture pupils' interest and inspire them to work hard and to behave exceptionally well throughout the lessons. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teacher ensures that children get a good balance of activities that are led by adults and those that they select for themselves. Adults observe children and use this information to provide new learning experiences to build on their knowledge and skills. Most teachers are skilled at asking questions which deepen pupils' understanding and provide additional challenge. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school. In a very few lessons, pupils spent too much time listening to the teacher and they had little opportunity to explain how they solved mathematical problems.

In many lessons teachers set clear learning objectives for lessons so that pupils understand what they are expected to learn but this good practice is not consistently used in all lessons. Most teachers are skilled at using assessment information to plan lessons that are very well matched to the learning needs of all pupils. There are systematic procedures to track pupils' progress. These enable teachers to identify those pupils who are at risk of falling behind and to provide good quality interventions. Teachers' marking shows pupils what they have done well and what their next steps in learning are so pupils are clear about what they need to do to succeed. Pupils say that their targets help them to improve their work because they are aware of their next steps.

The well-planned curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral,

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

social and cultural development. In a Year 1/2 lesson, pupils adopted the role of a wicked character from a fairy tale and had to justify their actions. One pupil acting as the wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood* explained, 'I didn't mean to eat granny, it was just that I was hungry and wanted some meat.' This provided pupils with the opportunity to reflect on a different point of view and that not everything is always as straightforward as it seems. Scrutiny of work showed that pupils are challenged in most lessons and are expected to work hard and this helps them to make good progress. In most lessons pupils use their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills when learning about other subjects. For example, in literacy, pupils used ICT to write, and then edit and improve their writing using tracked changes.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

There is a calm and welcoming atmosphere in school and pupils say that they feel safe and secure. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their excellent behaviour and their attendance which is consistently above average. Pupils say that there is no bullying and that they have an excellent understanding of the different types of bullying such as cyber-bullying that exists. On the rare occasions when disagreements do occur, adults are always on hand to help. In the playground and in lessons pupils are considerate, respectful and courteous to staff and each other. Older pupils enjoy helping younger ones at break times and they are sensitive to the needs of others. Parents, carers, staff and pupils are highly positive about behaviour and safety. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the survey believe that behaviour throughout the school is good and that lessons are not disrupted. The inspector found that behaviour was outstanding and that the absence of racist or behaviour incidents suggests that this is indicative of that which is usually found. Exclusions are rare and pupils say that being part of John Clare is like being part of a large family.

Pupils in all key stages have highly positive attitudes to their lessons. They are very keen to participate, collaborate and to engage in their learning enabling lessons to proceed smoothly. Although there are systems to encourage good behaviour, pupils' behaviour is excellent because they enjoy their lessons and do not want to miss anything. They are polite and friendly and show respect towards each other and adults. One parent or carer reflected the views of many in the comment, 'All children we come into contact with are polite and there seems to be a strong ethos of looking after each other.' Parents and carers find the staff approachable when they want to discuss concerns and feel that staff deal with issues quickly and sensitively.

Pupils are taught through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum how to manage risks both in school and outside school. They understand that they might be exposed to difficult situations but feel that they are well prepared to resist peer pressure associated with risks such as tobacco or drugs abuse.

Leadership and management

School leaders and the governing body are ambitious and they have high

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

expectations for staff and pupils. Teamwork is strong and staff morale is high. The headteacher is reviewing the roles and responsibilities of middle leaders who do not currently take a pro-active role in school developments. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teachers' work are systematic and are used well to improve the quality of teaching. However, until recently staff have not had enough opportunities to observe each other and to learn from the examples of outstanding practice that exists within the teaching team. Performance management is linked to professional development. This has resulted in teaching which is good and improving rapidly. School leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and they have successfully brought about improvements since the last inspection. This demonstrates that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

The governing body has recently reviewed its responsibilities and this is enabling it to focus more specifically on particular aspects of the school's work and to be better informed about the school's progress and the curriculum. Along with senior leaders, the governing body ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding and protecting pupils meet regulatory requirements. The school ensures that pupils have equal opportunities in the activities they provide and there is no evidence of discrimination.

The curriculum has been developed to ensure a strong focus on pupils' learning. It is well organised and provides a range of stimulating experiences which make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During the inspection, pupils visited a mobile planetarium to support their topic on space. This inspired a sense of awe and wonder as the lights went off and the stars came out.

Music is a strength of the school. Pupils demonstrated their skills in playing a musical instrument during an assembly which was thoroughly enjoyed by parents and carers. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of life in a global society. They recently created a business plan to raise funds to support a charity in Africa to provide water to villagers.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



13 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of John Clare Primary School, Peterborough, PE6 7DU

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed meeting you all and listening to what you had to say about your school. You told me that you enjoy lessons and that you learn a lot. You also said that most pupils are friendly and helpful and that you all get on well together. You said that teachers make lessons fun and that you do not like missing school.

I found that your school has improved since the last inspection and is a good school. Your teachers make learning fun and, consequently, you make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and reach standards that are above average at the end of Year 6. Your behaviour and attitudes are exemplary. You get on well together and show respect to each other and to adults. Your school leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they have good plans for further improvement. There are two things that I have asked your school leaders to do to make your school even better.

- Make sure that all teaching is consistently good or better by providing opportunities for teachers to visit each other's lessons so that they can see what works well.
- Make sure that all leaders are able to take a key role in planning further improvements to the school.

You can all play your part in making John Clare an even better school by telling your school leaders what would make your lessons even better and by giving them some ideas about what you would like to see improved. I'm sure you will all do everything you can to help your school leaders and I would like to wish you all every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**