

John Ruskin School & Language Classes School Handbook

2025-2026

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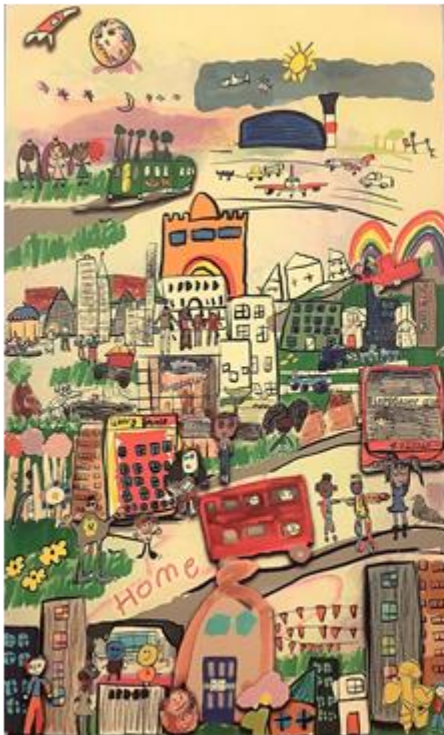
www.johnruskin.southwark.sch.uk

0207 703 5800

Headteacher – Hamilton Nwokolo

Deputy Headteacher – Liz Corbyn

Assistant Headteachers – Sherine Ahmed & Susan Hancock



“Be Responsible, be fair, stay positive and care”

Rated Outstanding by Ofsted since 2009



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Message from the Headteacher

Welcome to the 2025-26 John Ruskin Primary School and Language Classes school handbook.

Inside you will find lots of useful dates and information about the school, so please keep this brochure for reference. You can also find information and school policies on our website: www.johnruskin.southwark.sch.uk

We were very proud to be awarded our second 'Outstanding' grade after a full Ofsted inspection in 2023. The school has now been consistently graded as outstanding by Ofsted and the local authority since 2009.

This is a significant achievement and we would like to thank all staff, governors, parents and children who have made this possible.

We are very proud of John Ruskin pupils' long history of high performance. Pupils at John Ruskin have been achieving well above the national average for the last 20 years! So, you can be sure that your child will achieve their full potential whilst at our school.

We look forward to another successful year in 2025-26

Hamilton

Mr H Nwokolo
Headteacher



Admissions to the School



General help and advice on the admission to school in Southwark is available on:

[Primary School Admissions](#)

The London Borough of Southwark Education Department are responsible for allocating your child a school place. **We do not allocate any school places.**

If you have moved into the area once the academic year has already started, and wish to apply for a Southwark school place, you must complete an '**In Year Admissions**' form. This is available in school and from the Southwark Admissions Team. You can also download this form at: [In Year Admissions Form](#)

Community Primary Schools Admissions Criteria

John Ruskin is a Community Primary School.

The admissions criteria are applied in cases of oversubscription and places will be allocated to applicants in the following priority order:

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order) immediately following having been looked after. It also includes children who appear to the Local Authority (the "LA") to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (see note a)
2. Children with siblings who are already on roll at the school and will still be on roll at their date of entry (see note b)
3. Children with exceptional medical, social or psychological needs, where it is agreed by the Local Authority ("LA") and the headteacher that these can best be addressed at a particular school (see note c)
4. Children of permanent staff employed at the school (see note d)
5. Children living nearest to the school as measured by a straight line from the child's home to the main school gate/entrance (see note e)

You can find more information on admissions criteria via the Southwark website: [School-admissions/coordinated-admission-arrangements](#)

Nursery



There is always a long waiting list for a nursery place but we do give priority to children who have older brothers or sisters in school. To put your child's name onto the waiting list, please complete this form: <https://form.jotform.com/233323860170348>. Your child must be 2+ years before you can put them onto our waiting list. Depending on the availability of places, your child will be 3+ years when they join the nursery. Parents are notified when a place becomes available and invited to attend a meeting to discuss the curriculum and complete all of the relevant paperwork.

The school offers nursery places but does **NOT** offer main school places. **Admission to our nursery does not guarantee a place in our Reception classes as this is administered by Southwark Council's Education Department.**

The nurseries offer both part time and full-time places. Please enquire at the school office for more information and availability or visit [Childcare Choices](#) to view the various options.

Reception



At John Ruskin the preferred pattern of entry to Reception classes is the September immediately following your child's 4th birthday.

The parents of children who are admitted for nursery provision must apply to Southwark Council if they wish their child to transfer to the Reception class at John Ruskin School.

Please make sure that you check the deadlines for this or you may be disappointed, as the school is heavily over-subscribed.

The Southwark admissions portal is via the link: [Applying-for-a-primary-school-place](#)

Attendance at the nursery does not guarantee admission to the school.

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year.

Parents can request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Where entry is deferred, the admission authority (Southwark Council) must hold the place and not offer it to another child. The parent is not able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's 5th birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.

School Staff



School Leadership Team		
Headteacher		Hamilton Nwokolo
Deputy Headteacher		Liz Corbyn
Assistant Headteacher		Sherine Ahmed and Susan Hancock
Main School Teachers		
Year	Class	
Reception	Pink	Susan Hancock
Reception	Blue	Louise Tsergas
Year 1	White	Caroline Duffner
Year 1	Yellow	Lucy Pascale
Year 2	Orange	Huda Nasir
Year 2	Green	Kat Hilliard
Year 3	Scarlet	Shanii Donelly
Year 3	Turquoise	Rasna Khatun
Year 4	Burgundy	Isabel Mattick
Year 4	Vermilion	Hannah Cane
Year 5	Emerald	Julius Metson Scott
Year 5	Azure	Fiona Foreman
Year 6	Indigo	Owen Thompson
Year 6	Violet	Kieran Manera
Language Unit		
Teacher in Charge		Liz Corbyn
Mixed Red Class		Gisella Bernarda
Mixed Purple Class		Sarah Pitkin
Mixed Lime Class		Ericka Driver
SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator)		Sherine Ahmed
Booster cover teachers		Sheila Siebert, Karen Jackson and Mary Honeybone
John Ruskin Nursery		
Nursery Teacher		Leonie May
Nursery Nurse		Emma Allan
Teaching Assistant		Hayley Northcott
Admin & Premises Staff		
School Business Manager		Jon Rhodan
Admin Officer		Jemima Sohn
Admin Assistant		Karen Johnson
Receptionist		Kay Cadby
Admin/Web Assistant		Diane Davies
Premises Assistant		Tony Till
Premises Support		Iqbal Hussain

Main School Teaching Assistants & Meal Supervisors

Lucy Bassett | Glenda Chambers | Belindy Date | Heather Eagle | Jennifer Ellis | Merva Griffiths | Jacqui Howell | Kadam Kadir | Denise Kebell | Halima Kheloufi | Snjezana Metikos | Mihaela Miron | Sharon Nolan | Hayley Northcott | Kimberly Padden | Giovanna Ruocco | Kamila Kassem | Sandra Smith | Marsha Tash | Vera Tawiah | Michelle Zammit | Ghania Boumazona | Kelly Henry | Tinhinane Cheloul | Nicola Farrington | Jayada Haque | Latoya Henriques | Suad Jama | Shahla Kahir | Angela Martin | Endurance Nabu | Edith Njebayi | Berekti Tesfamichael | Latoya Gregory | Katie Helps | Olayemi Ogunfuyi | Khadija Bittar | Joana Alves da Silva | Samantha Russell | Sharon Green | Sonilda Cerriku | Lauren Hill | Robyn Wade |

Language Classes Teaching Assistants

Christine Wright | Olivia Saad | Anastasia Obeng | Edita Torokova | Humaria Qayyum

Speech Therapists

Florence Sheridan | Aimee Gray

Cleaning Staff

Helen Gebreyesus | Carol Gibbons-Walters | Shukri Hussain | Maryan Sharif

IT Support

Haji Obtan – Classroom365 (contractor)

Governing Body



Chair	John Bulwer
Vice-Chair	Emily Wilson
Co-Opted Governors	Rachael Morgan Phoebe Rudgard Elliott Ghent Georgina Lester
Appointed by the LA	William Rowe
Parent Governors	Festus Egbeyemi Taylor Kirwan

Associate Governors	Vera Tawiah Raja El Boti Clare Tayton (Headteacher)
Staff Governor	Belindy Date

Clerk to the Governors	Odunola Ajibola
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Healthy School Meals



Currently the London Borough of Southwark has an initiative which means all children in the school are entitled to a free Healthy School meal. Parents/Carers have to apply on a form which will be provided by the school and you will have help to complete the forms if needed. Those parents/carers who are in receipt of benefits which entitle them to free school meals

should still apply on the same form provided by the school. **The school will receive extra funding for every child that applies for a free school meal so please, please do this to help the school and your child. We will let you know how to apply.**

All school dinners must be booked with our School Cook by 9.45am each day. If your child is going to arrive late for school e.g. medical/dental appointment etc. then you must contact the school office before 9.45 to book your child's lunch. Failure to contact us means there will be no lunch booked and you must then provide a packed lunch.

Our school dinners are organised by Accent Catering Services Ltd. If you have any queries or comments about school dinners, please put in writing and we will forward to the company for you. You can view the current food hygiene rating here: [Ratings](#)

Vegetarian meals are available please let the office know if you would like to book this for your child. Halal meals are also available, if you wish your child to have this every day, please make sure you complete the form available at the school office. We do not serve pork or pork products.

The children are expected to eat a nutritionally balanced meal every day and are not allowed to leave large amounts of food on their plate. Staff will monitor this and ask the children to go back and eat any unfinished meals. If this approach does not suit your child, please switch to packed lunches so that they get a balanced meal.

Packed Lunches

These are eaten in the dining hall alongside school dinners. Please make sure that your child brings his/her lunch in a clearly named container. Please do not send in drinks as all children are provided with water and milk. **No sweets/chocolate** to be sent in the packed lunch, healthy options must be included daily, **please ensure that your child is provided with fruit or vegetables** as this is a school rule. Children can only change from school dinners to packed lunches at the beginning of a school half term.

Home Dinners

You may collect your child and take them home for lunch if you wish. Children who have home dinners may not return to school until 1.30pm (1.00pm for reception children)

School Hours



	Current
John Ruskin Nursery AM Session	8.55am – 11.55am
John Ruskin Nursery PM Session	12.25pm – 3.25pm
Reception Classes – Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4, Y5, Y6	8.55am – 3.30pm
Lunchtime/Play	
Key Stage One Classes (Yr1 and Yr2)	11.45am – 1.00pm
Lunchtime/Play for KS2	9.10 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.
Key Stage Two Classes (Yr3-Yr6)	12.20 p.m. - 1.30 p.m.
Lunchtime/Play for KS1	9.10 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.
Y1, Y2 and Y4	12.40 p.m. - 1.30 p.m.

Attendance and Punctuality



If a child is registered at school, parents have the primary legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly, under section 7 of the Education Act 1996. The Government now class Persistent Absentees as children who miss 10% of lessons and it is our duty to ensure that we aim for 96% attendance from all of the children at John Ruskin School so that your child can receive the best education possible, giving them the best start in their school life. Please read the information below carefully as it will help you to help your child to achieve their very best! **Please make sure your child does not arrive before 8.55am as the playground is not open before this time.**

Helpful Hints

- Call the school before 9.20am on the first day of your child's absence and everyday thereafter by leaving a message on our absence voicemail system. If you know how long your child will be absent, please advise the office staff accordingly with proof from your GP/hospital.
- If you receive a text from the school, please call the school so that we know your child is safe.
- Notify the school well in advance of any medical appointments, providing evidence such as a letter or appointment card from the hospital, GP, dentist etc.
- Respond to school enquiries about unexplained absence as quickly as possible, otherwise the absence will be unauthorised.
- Keep us well informed of any on-going medical conditions your child has that may affect their attendance.
- Make sure you have alternative arrangements for a friend or relative to get your child to school in an emergency.
- If you are not sure whether your child is well enough to attend school, take them to school anyway (unless they've been vomiting or have had diarrhoea in the last 48 hours). They often feel better during the day, but we will contact you if they do not.
- If your child has a well-known childhood illness, contact the school for advice on recovery time. We have all the up-to-date information. e.g. chicken pox, measles etc.

Authorised Absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence. Absences will not be authorised if, for example:

- Another member of the family is ill.
- The family have overslept or had a late night (it is better they arrive late than not attend at all).
- There are problems with uniform/clothing.
- You have forgotten school dates.
- There is an annual family event such as a birthday.
- There is bad weather but the school is still open.

Lateness

It is disruptive to your child and other children in the class if your child arrives to school late, so please arrive in school between 8.55am and 9.05am. If your child arrives in school after 9.15am they will be marked as 'late'. If they arrive after 9.40am, they will be marked as an unauthorised absence. Please contact the school if you know that your child will be late e.g. traffic jams etc. However, they will still be marked as late after the times above.

Lateness may also be referred to the Education Welfare and Attendance Officer and can provide grounds for prosecution.

Attendance Meetings

Attendance is monitored regularly in school.

During each term, the parents/carers of any child whose attendance is 90% or less, or is close to being this low, will be sent a letter informing them of their child's attendance. They may also be asked to attend an attendance meeting with the Deputy Headteacher and possibly the EWO (Education Welfare Officer). This meeting allows us to see if there are any reasons why your child might have poor attendance and what the school can do to help. If attendance doesn't improve, parents/carers will be asked to attend another meeting with an (EWO) Educational Welfare Officer from Southwark's Education, Welfare and Attendance team (EWAS.)

Requesting Holidays / Fixed Penalty Notices

The Government now advise schools not to authorise absence for holidays in term time. Therefore, at this school, all requests for holidays in term time will be denied. If you choose to still take the holiday, then the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Southwark Council have introduced Fixed Penalty Notices for irregular attendance and term time leave. A fixed penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution and requires a child's parent(s) to pay a fine for their child's non-attendance or unauthorised leave. If the holiday is 10 sessions (5 whole school days) or more, you may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice fine of £60 per parent per child.

If you wish to request leave due to special circumstances, you must complete an Application for Leave during Term Time Form and **provide appropriate evidence.**

Your request will then be considered by the Headteacher.

Contact



It is essential that we always have an up-to-date **phone number and email address** where you can be contacted during the day. If you move, change your job or change your childcare arrangements, please let school know. If you want to receive emergency text messages, we must have an up-to-date mobile phone number. The school's main method of contact is via email and text message.

In an emergency, the school will send a text message to parents/carers' mobile phones. All text messages will have 'John Ruskin' displayed. Examples may be:

- Last minute changes to school meetings or events
- On the day of cancellation of after-school activities
- Emergency school closures of any kind

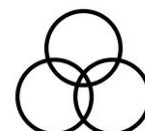
It is very important that you inform the school of any changes to telephone numbers and/or email addresses. Please provide the school with the details of at least 3 other contacts so that we can contact in an emergency if we are unable to reach you.

Assemblies



The children have an assembly every day, which last for 15 minutes. It is an important time when all can gather together for a variety of celebrations covering religious, moral, social and personal concerns, including significant events in the life of the school community. Our assemblies are based on themes. Themes can be 'sharing', 'safety', 'communications', 'pollution', etc. These themes are published each term. Monday assemblies usually include a bible story. Class assemblies are on Wednesday. Friday assemblies are for 'sharing', work or deeds. You are most welcome to come to both Wednesday and Friday assemblies.

Equalities and Anti-Bullying Policies



We at John Ruskin School are committed to our Anti-Bullying Policy and Equalities Scheme and to putting these policies into practice. These policies have been the result of consultation and discussion between teaching staff, support staff and governors and also reflect the views of parents and pupils.

We believe that every individual should be valued as a member of the school society and must be given equal access to all learning activities, including play. To this end, we aim to foster the development of each child, providing for his/her individual needs in all areas: physical, social, emotional, cognitive and language.

We aim to promote equal opportunities through the ethos of the school, planning of curricular and non-curricular areas, resources, environment, attitudes and behaviour. We will not ignore any incident which is sexist or racist. We will always address the issue and inform you if your child is involved in any way. We keep a log of incidents and any racist incidents are reported to the Council.

We also have a clear policy on bullying which is followed whenever we identify such behaviour. Incidents are logged and you will always be informed of any concerns we have. The policy can be found on the school website or requested from the school office.

More Able and Talented Pupils



We have a programme for more able children in school. All of the children on the programme have individual targets. There are special programmes for English, Maths, Science, P.E, Art, Drama and Music. This programme has helped tremendously in further raising levels of achievement. Please speak to the class teacher, or our More Able and Talented Children co-ordinator, Isabel Mattick.

School Council



This meets once every half term. There are representatives from all classes except nursery. The children discuss a variety of issues about the school, i.e. playtimes, quality of lessons, suggestions from their peers, the school building, repairs and the curriculum.

Homework



Early Years and KS1 children take PACT books home every day. Homework is set every week in KS1 and KS2. Children in reception may sometimes be set a challenge to do at home or be asked to gather some information related to their topic. Homework is set on Thursday and must be returned to school by the following Wednesday. Homework **must** be completed every week, please check your child's work. Children who do not return their homework will be given a detention and also the opportunity to complete the work at Friday lunchtime. Homework tasks may also be set on Microsoft Teams.

Across the whole school please ensure your child brings their book and book bag to school every day.

Parental Involvement



Our school is a community. We welcome parental involvement at all times. We feel very strongly that there must be a partnership between parents and teachers, with the education and welfare of the children being of paramount importance.

Parents help us to take the children swimming, go on class visits, maintain and renew old equipment, fund raise, help in classrooms, etc. If you can spare some time, please let your child's teacher know. Your help would be much appreciated.

If you want to discuss any particular problems about your child, please contact your child's teacher or see the Headteacher or Deputy to arrange an appointment to discuss your concerns. Teachers are not able to discuss problems in the playground in the morning, but are usually available after school or you can make an appointment to see the teacher after school by calling the school office or sending a note.

There is a parent evening every term. We **do** expect parents to attend all of these as your contributions are essential to planning an effective curriculum for your child and to assist us with accurate record keeping. You also have the opportunity to meet your child's teachers and discuss learning behaviour and progress. The first meeting of the academic year is a 'meet the teacher' session where the teacher aims to find out everything about your child

from you. We have an active parents' association called 'The Friends of John Ruskin' plus a variety of courses for parents during the year.

Home School Agreement



The Home/School Agreement is given to new parents when they come to the initial parents meeting in the term before the child starts school. Children joining the school during the year are given the Home-School Agreement when they meet with the Headteacher at the Admission meeting. This includes the school rules and must be signed and agreed to by parents.

Parent Information Leaflet



Each term you will receive a Parent's Information Leaflet, which gives you information on what your child is being taught that term and ways in which you can help them.

Health and Safety



Fire Drills

We have a fire drill at least once every term.

First Aid

All of our Teaching Assistants have had first aid training and support staff in the Early Years have a Paediatric First Aid qualification. All children with cuts or head injuries are sent to see a First Aider. Except for minor bumps and injuries, a note will be sent home telling you or you will be verbally informed, about any treatment that is given. If the injury is serious parents are informed by telephone and if needed an ambulance would be called. All serious accidents are recorded and the information is sent to the Health and Safety Department, where appropriate. The school also employs a qualified mental health first aider.

Nits and Head Lice

We recommend that you check your child's hair at least once a fortnight, as children are not examined for head lice in school. Look particularly at the back of the neck and behind the ears for eggs or egg cases. If we become aware of a case of nits/lice in a class, all the children will be given a note, advising parents to check their child's hair. Should you need lotion this can be obtained from your doctor or the chemist. It is advisable to treat all members of the household. **Please ensure that all long hair is tied back at school to help prevent the spread of head lice.**

Medicine

Medicines can be administered in school by staff members that have been suitably trained. Only **prescribed medicines** are allowed. Details are available from the school office. Asthma pumps/inhalers are kept in the medical room or classroom depending on individual needs. If your child is required to take medication during the school day, you must complete a form available from the school office. In addition, your child may be given liquid paracetamol (Calpol) if you have signed the relevant consent form.

Jewellery

No jewellery can be worn in school. The only items permitted are **small stud earrings**. Any child wearing jewellery will be asked to remove it and collect it from the main school office at the end of the day. This is for safety reasons.

Hairstyles

Elaborate hair styles and visibly 'gelled' hair or spiked hair/ style designs **are not allowed**. Long hair should be tied back.

Sweets

Sweets are not allowed in school, especially chewing gum and bubble gum. Please do not allow your child to buy sweets on the way to school. Children are not allowed to eat in the playground before the start of school or at the end of the school day.

Money / Toys / Mobile phones

Money, (except for specific payments), mobile phones, toys and any dangerous articles should not be brought on to the school premises. They will be confiscated and kept in the school office until an adult collects them.

Your Child's Birthday

Pre-cut birthday cakes may be sent into school for the class on your child's birthday. Please ensure cakes are completely nut-free as some children are allergic to these ingredients. Birthday cakes must be pre-cut, as this is very time consuming if done in class. **Please do not send in party bags as we do not distribute these in class.**

Hot Weather

A navy cap or sun hat may be worn at play times. A school cap with neck flap is available online via our uniform supplier (see above) or from the school office.

Dogs and Other Pets

Dogs and other pets are **not permitted** in the school or playgrounds for safety reasons.

Cycling/Scooters/Skateboards

These must be dismantled and pushed into the playground for safety reasons. Children wishing to cycle to school independently must have passed the cycling proficiency test or be accompanied by an adult. Bicycles and scooters must **be locked and are left at the owner's risk.**

Smoking and Alcohol

Parents and visitors are advised that our playground and buildings are strictly no smoking areas. Alcohol and other intoxicating substances are not allowed to be consumed on school premises.

School Uniform



All John Ruskin School uniform can be purchased at [Earth Uniform](#)

Secondhand/Used school uniform items can be purchased at [Uniformerly](#)

Book bags and ties are also available to purchase from the school office.

Reception to Y6 - Compulsory Uniform

- Blue school V-neck jumper or cardigan with school badge
- White long or short sleeved shirt worn tucked in to trousers/skirt **or** white polo shirt worn tucked into trousers/skirt
- Tie (elasticated for infants if required)
- Navy blue long trousers, **knee length** shorts (summer only) or skirts.
- Navy and white checked school dresses in the summer months.
- Plain white, grey or navy tights or socks (**below the knee**)
- Headbands and headscarves worn for religious reasons must be dark blue, black or white.
- Sensible black school shoes (no boots or open toed shoes, no sandals, no heels).
- Hair bands and clips should be dark blue, white or black

Nursery

- Blue logo sweatshirt (not compulsory)

PE

- Navy short sleeved T-shirt with school logo. Navy jogging bottoms or navy shorts, plimsolls or trainers. No sleeveless tops or vests.

No hooded jumpers or zip up tops and no hooded fleecy jackets/cardigans are permitted.

Items brought onto the Premises

All articles brought on to school premises are at the owners' risk. The Governors cannot accept responsibility for any items lost or damaged whilst on school premises. **Please label all clothing clearly with your child's name.**



Lost Property

If clothing is clearly named, we will always try to return it. All other items are put in the lost property cupboard, in the Middle Hall. Items can only be stored there for a few weeks.



Special Educational Needs (SEN)



Special educational needs have a high profile at John Ruskin. The SENCO Sade Mosanya is available to meet parents to discuss concerns before and after school. Referrals to outside agencies e.g. speech therapy, psychologist are made by the SENCO.

You will be informed if your child is placed on our special needs register and consulted about your child's Individual Education Plan.

Please see our SEN Policy on our website for more details.

The Curriculum



We have established a whole school plan, to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum and the school teaches the national curriculum. At the beginning of each half term, the curriculum maps are displayed in the ground floor corridor, near Yellow Class. If you require any further information about the National Curriculum, please see your child's teacher, the Deputies or Headteacher. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) have their own curriculum, which has been specifically developed to meet the needs of nursery and reception children.

English

Using language to think and express oneself by speaking and writing is the basis of all learning in school. Our aim is to provide a stimulating environment where children listen, speak, read and write effectively.

At John Ruskin we place a high priority on literacy. We have a superb selection of books both in the library and in the classrooms. Children are actively encouraged to choose a wide range of reading material and to read both in school and at home. We have developed our PACT scheme where children take home a book from our school reading scheme and/or a book of their choice. Books are changed regularly.

The new National Curriculum forms the basis of literacy planning and teaching at John Ruskin School. Every day each class has at least one hour of literacy teaching. Their achievements are reflected in improved SAT's results and excellent reading levels throughout the school. Reading is tested using the Salford or the NFER test. Reading and Writing are also teacher assessed termly. We are committed to enabling children to express themselves effectively in the written form. We encourage the children to write imaginatively and appropriately for a range of purposes.

Mathematics

Our policy is that all children should learn mathematics with enjoyment and understanding. We encourage children to develop the ability to apply mathematics in a variety of ways, both inside and outside the classroom. Maintaining and further improving standards of achievement in mathematics is a high priority on our School Improvement Plan. Each class has an hour of maths teaching each day. Mental arithmetic and learning number facts i.e. tables, are important elements in the mathematics scheme of work. We are delighted with our levels of achievement. Maths is also teacher assessed termly.

Science

Science is an essential part of the curriculum. It is one of the core subjects. We aim to encourage the natural curiosity children have by providing opportunities to develop scientific skills. Children learn to observe, to question, make hypotheses and devise experiments to test their ideas. We achieve excellent levels of achievement in the Year 6 national assessments.

We have developed a wild life garden in the playground so that children have the opportunity to observe plant growth and another garden on the roof. All classes do planting and growing every year.

It is extremely important that children learn to understand their environment and to appreciate current concerns regarding conservation and pollution.

Computing

At John Ruskin all children use computers. We have a superb ICT suite where 30 children can be taught ICT skills each session with our ICT teacher.

In addition, we have sets of iPads, tablets and laptops for all classes to use and some classes have additional computers for children to use within the classroom to support their teaching and learning.

We have an extensive range of software, which is used to teach ICT skills and to support other areas of the curriculum. Children are taught how to safely access the internet.

Design Technology (D.T)

We aim to give children the opportunities for them to apply technological ideas in practical tasks. At John Ruskin children will be able to work both individually and as part of a group. We need to provide the children with a large range of materials to use in technology. We always need more supplies of items such as corks, buttons, clean cartons and plastic bottles, materials, plastics etc.

Music

We are delighted with the improvement in the standard of music in the school. Many children have opportunities to learn recorders, guitar and piano skills. Clare Dove is our music teacher and piano, guitar and ukulele lessons are available from Cedric Fangeat for a charge.

Art

All children are given access to a wide range of materials, which they are encouraged to use for creative expression. The high standard they are able to achieve is reflected in the quality of display throughout the school.

Sex Education

Sex education is usually taught as part of a topic and not as a collection of isolated lessons. There are specific lessons on Sex and Relationships in Year 1 to Year 6. You will be informed when these are and given the opportunity to withdraw your child if you do not want them to attend. Please see the policy on our website.

P.E.

All children will change for P.E. Children need navy shorts and a school t-shirt, available from the school office. All indoor P.E. is done with bare feet.

French

Children from Year 1 will start to learn French. The lessons focus on simple conversational French.

Swimming

Our aim is to give every child the opportunity of learning to swim. We use the pools at Camberwell, which is a short walk away. The pool is particularly suitable for younger children. Many parents come to help with swimming; this help is invaluable. If you are available to assist, please do let your child's teacher know. Swimming lessons are compulsory as they are part of the national curriculum and if children are in school, it is expected that they go swimming.

Sport

Children are encouraged to take part in a variety of sporting activities. These include football, cricket, athletics, hockey, netball and tennis. Matches are arranged with local schools and teams from John Ruskin are entered in many of the locally organised events. Our athletics, football and cricket teams have been particularly successful in recent years.

Visits and School Journey



Library Visits

The children in Year 1 and Year 2 visit the Brandon Library regularly. Please make sure your child brings his/her library book to school on the right day.

We are also very fortunate to have an excellent school library which all children use regularly.

Educational Visits

Class visits are a part of the delivery of the National Curriculum and are considered essential as they enhance the children's learning and enjoyment. Parents may be asked for voluntary contributions towards the cost of the visit. Such visits can **only** take place if we have enough adults to accompany the trip and we often require parents to accompany trips. Please let your child's teacher know if you are available to accompany trips.

School Journey

We try, when possible, to take a group of children away each year. The trip lasts from Monday to Friday. They are always well planned and carefully arranged. Parents are invited to a meeting before the journey takes place. At this meeting all the relevant information can be discussed. Supervision on the journey is always with at least three adults, at least two of whom are teachers.

Charging Policy



John Ruskin's policy on charging for trips is that we cannot insist that parents pay. The money is expected to come from the school budget. At John Ruskin we will always tell parents the cost of the trip and ask for a voluntary contribution. If there are insufficient contributions, the trip may have to be cancelled. The Governors have agreed that should a child deliberately damage school property then his/her parents will be asked to pay for the cost of replacement or repair.

Complaints



Complaints will always be dealt with promptly.

Please see your child's class teacher in the first instance. You can also speak to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or the Assistant Headteacher. There is a complaints procedure available from the school office and on our website.

Assessment Data



Please see the Academic Achievement section of our website - [Data](#)

Pupil Premium



All state schools are allocated a special budget called the Pupil Premium. This is money that is earmarked to help schools in disadvantaged areas improve pupil attainment. In 2023-24, John Ruskin received £ 294,110. This money was spent in the following ways:

Early Years

- Extra teaching assistants employed and trained to focus on learning through independent activities whilst the other staff (nursery nurse and teachers) focus on adult lead activities.
- Extra support and early phonics, maths and reading skills for identification.

Key stage 1

- Extra teacher employed part time to focus on phonics catch up programme for children who are off track.
- Plus, extra teaching assistant (part time) trained by + liaising regularly with the teacher so that key children had daily extra phonics.
- Extra teaching assistant trained to work on reading and reading comprehension with small target groups part-time.
- Extra teaching assistant released from class pm to take target maths groups.

Key stage 2

- Targeting key pupils who were falling behind in English or maths in year 3-5 with interventions led by a teacher and/ or a teaching assistant.
- In year 6 Small group tuition focusing on high achievers (greater depth) and borderline expected standard led by teachers.
- Extra ability sets in English and maths in year 6.
- Teacher targeting pupils for their multiplication tables check.
- TA focusing on supporting targeted children in lessons.

For 2024/2025, the amount allocated is £324,120. The successful strategies from last year will be continued.



PACT Information (Parents and Children Together)

We believe, and research supports this view, that when parents spend time reading with their children, demonstrating to them that reading is important and enjoyable, their children improve faster than those who do not receive this kind of support. The first part of this document contains our school PACT policy which explains how the scheme will be organised.

The rest of the document consists of suggestions that may help you when reading at home with your child.

John Ruskin PACT Policy

In each class there will be a good selection of books available for children to choose from. In Nursery and Reception, children choose a book in class that they are interested in to take home to share. We also have a well-resourced school library in school which children visit as they progress through the school.

In Reception children take home 1 Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) reading scheme and 1 class library book each week. In Years 1 and 2, your child will take home at least two books each ~~but~~ and the school reading scheme book, which is linked to our ELS phonics scheme, should be read 4 times to develop fluency. It will be changed weekly if the PACT book *is signed*. In Years 3 and 4, your child will take home two books once a week; a book of your child's choice and a book from the school reading scheme. In Year's 5 and 6, the children will choose their own books to take home, unless ORT or decodable books are still required to ensure reading progression in KS2. This free choice will be guided by the class teacher. Book changing days will be decided by your child's Class Teacher.

At John Ruskin, we celebrate books and reading and as such, it is essential that books are respected and well looked after. All books must be returned to class before any further books can be borrowed and, in the case of damaged or lost books, the full cost of the book must be paid for in order that it can be replaced.

Every child needs a waterproof book bag to carry books to and from school (school book bags are available from the office or uniform supplier). Book bags will be kept together in a specified place in the classroom.

Each child will have a Reading Record PACT Book. The Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant (TA) will write the titles of the books taken home and the dates that they were issued. In Year KS2 classes this can be done by the children themselves or a class TA. There is a space for parents to write a comment on their child's reading progress and record any questions or queries that they may have. EYFS and KS1 must be signed to show the book has been read before it can be changed.

Teachers or Teaching Assistants will check the Reading Record Books each week and comment or advise parents as necessary. Teachers will be happy to discuss any questions briefly either immediately before or after school or in greater depth by appointment.

The Literacy Co-ordinator, Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers are also available for advice or to answer questions about PACT. The aim of the PACT scheme is to support and extend the reading that the children are doing in school.

The PACT scheme applies to children of all ages and reading abilities and the emphasis should always be on enjoyment, building confidence, praise, encouragement and the sharing of books.

Reading Together at Home

Remember that there is no right or wrong way to read with your child, as long as you are relaxed and positive about it. Try to establish a regular routine.

- Make yourselves comfortable and cosy during reading times, try to become completely involved and give your undivided attention.
- Choose a time for reading when there is nothing else you would much rather be doing e.g. watching a favourite television programme.
- Keep your reading sessions short (10 – 15 minutes) and stop if either of you is too tired.
- Use lots of positive praise and encouragement, try not to be critical, angry or make a fuss about mistakes as the shared reading experience is most important.
- Discourage any feelings of competition with other children at home or school.
- If the book seems too hard, read it through and talk about the parts that seemed interesting to your child. If the book seems too easy remember that everyone likes to relax sometimes with an easy read and this builds up confidence.
- Sometimes children want to re-read a book (maybe several times over) and this should be encouraged and is expected within EYFS and KS1 to build fluency with decoding. Children will learn from anyone who shows an interest in their development. So, encourage brothers, sisters, cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles to join in.

Helping Your Child to Read the Text

- Sit so that you can both see the words and pictures the right way round regardless of who is reading at the time.
- Look at the pictures and briefly discuss the book before reading the words. Use the pictures to help your child predict the story.
- Encourage your child to guess at unknown words and be pleased if they make a sensible guess, even if it is not exactly right.
- Help your child to break words down into sounds and work at 'sounding them out'. The first sound in an unknown word is a particularly useful clue to guessing the word.
- Don't correct every word they read incorrectly, particularly if their mistakes don't affect the overall meaning or story. If, however they are really struggling, offer to take over the reading and praise them for their efforts.
- Importantly, once you have finished reading the book, encourage your child to make comments about the book or to ask questions by doing so yourself e.g. *what do you think will happen next? What do you like about this book?*
- Try to read regularly with your child (rather than every day one week and then not at all the next). Try to read at least two or three times a week if every day is difficult for you. Don't forget that the opportunity for your child to read is all around you as well as in books. Food packaging, shopping lists, road signs, birthday cards, catalogues etc. all offer a chance for you and your child to read together.

Writing a Comment in the PACT Reading Record Book

Please try and make a short-written comment every time you read with your child. This can be a brief comment about your child's progress and your name or initials.

Here are some examples:

- Read well today with Mum
- Needed some help with the words but read well once we had looked at the pictures together. SG.
- We discussed what might have happened to the giant if Jack hadn't cut down the beanstalk. Dad.

- Read both books on his own for the first time. Hooray! Gran

Other points to note:

- If you feel that any book is particularly successful or unsuccessful, please note it in the Reading Record Book.
- If at any time you are worried about your child's reading or there is something that you don't understand, please come and see us.
- Teachers are interested in your comments and opinions about the books and about your child's progress with reading at home.

Please feel free to come into school and ask for help or advice or to make a suggestion regarding any aspect of reading at home with your child.



Term dates for next academic year – 2025/26

Autumn Term

Wednesday 3 September - Friday 24 October

Half Term - Monday 27 October - Friday 31 October

Monday 3 November - Friday 19 December (school closes at 2pm)

Spring Term

Tuesday 6 January - Friday 13 February

Half Term - Monday 16 February - Friday 20 February

Monday 23 February - Friday 27 March (school closes at 2pm)

Summer Term

Tuesday 14 April - Friday 22 May

(May Day Bank Holiday will be taken on 4 May)

Half Term Monday 25 May - Friday 29 May

Monday 1 June - Friday 17 July (school closes at 2pm)

Term dates are also published on our website - [Term Dates](#)