



# John Ruskin School

**'John Ruskin School is a welcoming school where staff know every pupil. There is a strong sense of community spirit. Relationships between pupils and their teachers are warm'**

Ofsted 2019

John Ruskin School  
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Head teacher: Mr P Blackburn  
Chair of Governors: Mr P Dyson



School years are vital to young people. Our school years give us not just qualifications, but also develop our character so we can go on to achieve our ambitions. At John Ruskin School our detailed knowledge of every student allows our exceptional staff to ensure that every child achieves and makes the very most of their school time with us.

In 2018 we were in the top 10% of schools nationally and the top performing secondary school in Cumbria for the second year running. 2019 saw further improvements in our attainment. We value the importance of academic success and ensure students leaving John Ruskin School are effective 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens.

Ofsted visited the school in October 2019 and recognised that John Ruskin School is a 'good' school – a great accolade to the hard work of students and staff. The many positive messages from parents received by the Ofsted team prove that John Ruskin School is a place where every child is cared for, valued and respected as an individual. The report states that 'there is a culture of academic success.'

Despite all the challenges presented by the past two years, John Ruskin School remains a school where students succeed. Seeing the passion of staff and students makes me incredibly proud to be head teacher of such a wonderful learning community.

Peter Blackburn  
Head teacher

## OUR VISION

Our small size allows us to know each student as an individual yet still provide big school success and a range of opportunities. We aim to provide a caring, but challenging environment that pushes students to achieve the very best academic outcomes. Staff and students agreed on the following vision which runs at the core of everything we do.

Our vision is to create a school community in which you can:

- **Be respected**
- **Be resilient**
- **Be valued**
- **Be ready for your future**
  
- **BE YOU**



**Our last inspection in October 2019 judged us to be a good school in all areas. You can find a link to the full report on our website. Here are a few quotes from the report which recognise the many strengths of the school:**

'Pupils benefit from clear routines and high expectations. They behave well, show interest in their learning and have positive relationships with each other ... Parents and carers praised the support that the school gives'

'Pupils act as school councillors and raise money for charity. They learn about respect and democracy. Leaders place a high priority on pupils' mental health and well-being'

'Teachers encourage pupils to follow John Ruskin School's vision - 'Be Respected, Be Resilient, Be Valued, Be Ready for Your Future, Be You.' Pupils' individuality is celebrated. Pupils are confident and can express themselves well' Ofsted: October 2019'

'The school takes advantage of its surroundings. Pupils take part in an array of extra-curricular activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, outdoor education and the annual fell-racing competition'

'In English, religious education, music and science, content is demanding and teachers make sure that they give pupils the chance to recall prior learning'

'Leaders are keen to foster pupils' appreciation of music, art and literature. For example, all pupils play a musical instrument, take part in performances and read challenging books'

'Teachers say that they love working at the school. They have high expectations of themselves and their pupils. In lessons, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are proud of their work'

## The Curriculum

At John Ruskin School we provide a rich, high quality and varied learning experience for all of our students. The curriculum is taught through exciting and engaging lessons that stimulate the students' interest and enjoyment of learning. The arts are celebrated in displays around the school and regular performance evenings such as Rock Night and The Spring Concert.

The school boasts a large playing field, basketball court and tennis courts as well as a heated outdoor swimming pool. In order to support the curriculum, subject related trips and visits are regularly organised making use of our local environment, historical and geographical places of interest.

### Key Stage 3

In Years 7, 8 and 9 all students have lessons in the following subjects:

Mathematics, English, science, design technology, history, geography, French, art, music, physical education, religious education, computing, catering, textiles, environmental technology, outdoor learning for D of E and personal development.

In some subject areas, students are taught in sets. In most instances, class sizes are smaller than in a typical comprehensive school. This allows teachers or teaching assistants to cater for the individual needs of students at all times.



To promote reading skills and reading for pleasure, Years 7, 8 and 9 follow the Accelerated Reader Programme.



### Key Stage 4

Our KS4 curriculum includes a core offer of English, maths, science, PE and RE that every child must follow. We also provide a range of choices with a degree of flexibility to allow for a variety of personal learning routes. English, science and humanities are particular strengths of the school. High achievement across the school allows many students to progress to the A-level courses of their choice.

We offer GCSE courses in computing, art, music, French, history, geography, resistant materials, catering, textiles and wherever possible will meet each and every student's needs with a bespoke curriculum.





John Ruskin school has been able to evidence how it makes best use of its local environment and its cross-curricular links and as a result was awarded the 'Geography Mark'. We are proud to be a Global Partner School in recognition of its links with other schools and organisations to promote partnership work and its understanding of its place in the wider community.

## Extra-Curricular Opportunities

Outside of the formal curriculum John Ruskin School offers a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities including:

### Clubs, trips and residential activities

- Homework club (run at lunchtime each day)
- Science club
- Fell running club
- Regular sports clubs including football, rugby, netball, baseball and cricket
- Biennial residential trip to France
- Year 7 residential in Autumn term
- Annual ski trip for Years 7 to 10
- Reward trips at the end of Autumn and Summer terms
- Peripatetic music tuition covering woodwind, guitar, brass, percussion, keyboard and strings
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Evening and weekend trips to sporting events
- Dance/drama workshops with professional companies; theatre trips
- Rock Night, Spring Concert and School Ceilidh
- The Big JRS Picnic at the end of the summer term
- Swimming pool on site, with community- led clubs in the Summer term



## Year 11 Words

**At John Ruskin School, we really value the thoughts and feelings of our students. We asked our Year 11 who left us in Summer 2021 about their time at JRS. Their GCSE studies were interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic but they left us with a fantastic set of GCSE results. Here in their own words are their thoughts about life and learning at John Ruskin School. We even asked them why they would recommend JRS to prospectus Year 7 students.**

### **What they will miss about JRS:**

- 'The friendly atmosphere'
- 'The teachers – the atmosphere'
- 'Everything!'
- 'Dawn's melting cakes at lunchtime and seeing my friend's everyday'
- 'The social aspect and the warm atmosphere between teachers and students'
- 'It's been beneficial being in such a small school because we are seen as people rather than numbers on a spreadsheet'
- 'The banter with the teachers and students – having a laugh...'
- 'The memories of friends – just being here...'
- 'The social interaction at all times – the support and the relationships with teachers'

### **We also asked Year 11 to write a message to potential parents of future Year 7 students, explaining to them why they should send their child to JRS – here are a few of their comments:**

- Personally, I think that coming to John Ruskin School was one of the best decisions I have ever made – you know that you will never be judged by anyone; the students and staff are supportive, approachable and kind. If you want your child to have the best

secondary school experience, send them here.

- There is a true personal understanding and relationship with teachers, we can all be helped as individuals and we're not just a large collective
- It's a very welcoming and friendly school where everyone wants the best for you and your future
- I would definitely recommend John Ruskin School. Its small nature creates a safe, understanding environment and the teachers are able to get to know the students very well. The small class sizes and friendly atmosphere really contribute to a positive school environment, unlike any other
- JRS is a very unique school due to its size and location – it offers many exceptional educational opportunities for students. We can engage in family like, whole school experiences with ease, allowing us to mix and converse with students of all ages
- John Ruskin School takes education very seriously and it is a place where people can be themselves

- The size of JRS enables teachers to better help individuals and push them to achieve their potential. There is a very friendly ethos as teachers and students alike get on very well
- JRS is a small school with big opportunities; the teachers are always supportive with every issue – whether it's education, mental health or bullying
- JRS is a friendly and inviting with a welcoming atmosphere and creative and encouraging staff
- The school is inclusive – and offers a close relationship between students and teachers which allows for better understanding
- The school has an understanding environment – everyone feels important and cared for because it's small
- Coming to John Ruskin School was the best decision I ever made after primary school; JRS offers a helpful and caring atmosphere suitable for all students
- Teachers are able to get a deep understanding of students' abilities which leads to more personalised help in lessons
- Kind, caring teachers and personal connections. Being a small school, all the teachers know who everyone is and there is a sense of safety

#### **Comments from Parents:**

'This is a friendly school with approachable teachers. We are very happy with our daughter's progress in all students. Our daughter is very happy at school and it has been a great transition from Primary to Secondary school.'

'This is my last year as a parent at John Ruskin school. What can I say except just reiterate everything I have said for the last 10 years, This school is fantastic, all my children have thrived here thanks to every member of staff and their helpful, caring way with everyone. Thank you.'

'Since attending John Ruskin School our son is fast becoming a mature young man, whose attitude to learning is growing and he is starting to approach his learning with the respect he should so. Thank you for giving him this fantastic opportunity to give him a good grounding for his adult life.'

'My wife and I wanted to pass on our thanks to you and all the staff at JRS for all that you've done for our daughter over the last five years. The ethos and vision of the school has had a very positive influence on her and will continue to serve her well in the future. We are very proud of the results she has achieved which are

## **Student Roles**

Our students play an active and important role in the life of the school. They willingly volunteer to take on responsibilities to support staff and their peers. As a result of this our students leave us with the self-awareness, leadership qualities and employability skills that allow them to go on to be successful at A-level and apprenticeships.

### **Prefects**

Year 11 students apply to become prefects and then receive training so that they gain a full understanding of their role and their responsibilities. On a daily basis, they oversee the smooth-running of the dining room, monitor behaviour around school at lunchtime and on buses, escort visitors around school and support other students when the need arises.

Some prefects apply to become head boys and girls, and their deputies. They make speeches to the whole school and are then voted for by their peers and staff. In these roles they oversee the prefect teams and work with senior staff as the need arises.

### **School Council**

The school council is run by our head boys and girls. Each tutor group votes for a representative from each key stage. The outcomes of these meetings are then discussed with the head teacher on a regular basis. This is their opportunity to have any concerns and opinions heard.

### **Dining Room Assistants**

Young people in Key Stage 4 help the dining room staff by operating the tills at lunchtime. Although we run a cashless system, students who are on duty have to register the information about the meals that other students purchase

## Staff at John Ruskin School

### The Senior Team

<b>Head Teacher</b>	Mr P Blackburn
<b>Deputy Head Teacher</b>	Mr I Walker
<b>Leader of Student Development</b>	Ms J Flanagan
<b>Lead on Data Analysis</b>	Miss C Metcalfe

<b>English Department</b>	Mr I Walker	Mrs D Wright	Mrs E Ribchester
<b>Mathematics Department</b>	Miss C Metcalfe	Ms K Kirkby	Mrs H Tyson
<b>Science Department</b>	Mrs R Gaskell	Mrs R Mallett	Mrs E Rawlinson
<b>ICT Department</b>	Mr R Palin		
<b>P.E. Department</b>	Mr I Rose	Mrs S Walker	
<b>R.E. Department</b>	Ms J Flanagan	Ms A Richards	
<b>Languages Department</b>	Mrs J Topping	Mrs C Pursell	
<b>Geography Department</b>	Mrs S Hodgson	Ms A Richards	
<b>History Department</b>	Ms J Flanagan	Ms A Richards	Mr Rawcliffe
<b>Art Department</b>	Mrs P Hunt		
<b>PSHE/Citizenship co-ordinator</b>	Mr D Rawcliffe		
<b>Technology Department</b>	Mrs R Phillips	Mr M Reeves	Mrs H Wilson
	Mr M Arrowsmith		
<b>Music Department</b>	Mrs B Cutts		
<b>SENCo</b>	Mrs C Pursell		
<b>Learning Support</b>	Mrs D Colagiovanni	Mrs S Stergiaki	Mr O Ronfell
	Mrs H Woodhead	Mrs J Hutchinson	Mrs G Duckering
	Mrs E Debreceny	Mr R Phinn	
<b>Key Stage 3 Progress Assistant</b>	Mrs S Stergiaki		
<b>Cover Supervisor</b>	Mrs S Walker		
<b>Business and Office Manager</b>	Mrs L Askew		
<b>Exams Officer/Administrator</b>	Mrs M Hull		
<b>Adminstrators</b>	Mrs K Dawson	Mrs J Blaney	
<b>Senior Technician</b>	Mr M Laxton		
<b>Site Supervisor</b>	Mrs E Hill		
<b>Cleaner</b>	Mrs P Airey		
<b>Kitchen Staff</b>	Mrs D Leather-Barrow		
<b>School Nurse</b>	Karen Hirst		
<b>Police Community Support Officer</b>	Debbie Ross		

### School Governors

<b>Chair and SEN representative</b>	Mr P Dyson
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Mrs J Hallam
<b>Head Teacher</b>	Mr P Blackburn
<b>Staff Governor</b>	Mr I Walker

For further details please see our website.

The clerk may be contacted at the school address

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