

John Ray Times

Our Core Values: Hope, Perseverance, Trust, Courage, Respect, Responsibility

10th March 2025

Phone: 01376 324107 **Email:** jrcontact@compassps.uk **Website:** www.johnray.compassps.uk



@johnrayjuniors



@facebook.com/johnraycompassps

Online learning links



[Accelerated Reader](#)



[Century Tech](#)



[TTRockstars](#)



[Nessy](#)

For uniform orders visit: www.gooddies.co.uk

For information on Food Bank vouchers email: mkeegan@compassps.uk

For second hand uniform requests email: rcottee@compassps.uk

Breakfast club queries email: hwiltshire@compassps.uk

School dinner menus are on our website:

10.03.2025 [Week 1](#), 17.03.25 [week 2](#), 24.03.25 [Week 3](#)

On Wednesday 2nd April, we have a special Easter Menu. Please click [here](#) to view the menu options

[Zones of Regulation](#)

The ZONES of Regulation

Blue Zone	Green Zone	Yellow Zone	Red Zone
Sad	Happy	Worried	Overjoyed/Elated
Bored	Focused	Frustrated	Excited
Tired	Calm	Silly	Angry
Sick	Proud	Embarrassed	Terrified

[School Attendance Difficulties](#)



[Supporting Anxiety](#)



My Happy Mind Parent App

To access these materials just go to <https://myhappymind.org/parent-resources> and enter your name, email and authentication code emailed to you in the letter sent on 23.09.24.

World Book Day

The children loved dressing up last week for World Book Day and we certainly enjoyed seeing their fabulous outfits. Don't forget to download your vouchers from the World Book Day website: [Digital Tokens - World Book Day](#). Vouchers can be redeemed until 23rd March.

OFSTED Inspection 4th and 5th March 2005

Many thanks if you completed the parent view survey last week. Our report will be shared with parents once we are able to do so.

Mrs Childs

As many of you will be aware, Mrs Childs is currently on secondment as Acting Headteacher at another Essex Primary School. She has now been successful in securing a substantive Headteacher

post and we wish her all the best for the future. We will all miss her and wish to thank her for all she has done to support the children at John Ray Juniors over the last 8 years.

Learning conferences

Learning conferences for children not on the SEN register take place on Tuesday 11th March and Wednesday 12th March. Please contact the office if you haven't booked a time.

Sports for Champions

On Friday, pupils took part in the Sports for Champions Fitness workshops. These were delivered by Andrew Penney, who is currently ranked at number 26 in the world for wheelchair tennis. Thank you for all of your sponsors, we have raised a staggering **£628.50**. 60% of this money comes directly back to school and 40% goes to the Sports for Champions athlete fund.



Comic Relief Friday 21st March



We invite children to come to school in non uniform or sportswear on Friday 21st March in exchange for a donation. Children can hand in donations (suggested £1) during registration.

British Science Week

To celebrate British Science Week, we would like to invite children to take part in a competition to design a poster. Details are shown on a poster towards the end of the newsletter and entries must be given to Mrs Casey in 3D by 1st April.

Tuck Shop

Just a reminder that our tuck shop will only be open on Fridays. Items cost 30p.

SEN Local Offer

Our SEN Local Offer is amended and published at the end of each academic year. It has the information on provision and processes across the school and the SENCo contact details: [John Ray Junior School - SEND Local Offer \(compassps.uk\)](#).

SEND Local Offer Newsletter

There are lots of activities and events for children with SEND on the Essex Local Offer and from the Local Offer website – sign up here to read more: [Stay up to date with the Essex Local Offer newsletter | Essex Local Offer](#).

This includes our New POP Essex website and location: [POP Essex • SEN Stay & Play And Respite In Braintree, Essex \(pop-essex.org\)](#).

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Don't forget we would love to hear about any children who have been awarded badges or certificates for activities they do outside of school. Please email class teachers with your child's achievements.

Well done to;

Football: players of the match: Lucas 3P, Cody 6L, Albie 6O, Jenson 6G, Freddie 5B, Isaac 5B, Zak 5E, William 5K, Captain's armband: Alex 5K, Ayan 6R

Brownie badges: Ellie-Rose 4T

Dancing: Maja 4J 1st place in fast pairs, 6th in street pairs, top of beginners and more, Victoria 4J 1st place in fast pairs, 6th in street pairs and more! Daisy 5W 3rd place Jai Ho, Akasya 4J 2nd place and 2nd in duet, Vinnie 5K bronze in street dance.

Carnival Princess: Darcy 4J 2nd Place at Wickford

Swimming: Nathan 3W 50m, Andee 5B Honours award, Sophie stage 6

Rugby: Charlie 6L and Vinnie 6G who took part in a rugby tournament, winning 4 of their 5 games. Connie 3D scoring 5 tries.

Karate: Fabi in 5W took part in his first karate competition and was awarded a bronze medal.

What a great start!



Stars of the Week

Each week, class teachers will choose a member of their class to be star of the week. Children who are chosen will have their name added in this section of the newsletter.

3C: Sophia	4B: Colton	5B: Sophie	6G: The whole
3D: Dunamis	4CB: Adams	5E: Zac	6L: Charlie
3P: Miglena	4J: Freddie	5K: Dylan	6O: The whole
3W: Evelin	4T: Ellie-Rose	5W: Daisy	6R: Amalie

PE Days

Children need to come into school on PE days in their PE kit. Children will need an outdoor PE kit i.e., black tracksuit bottoms (or shorts in warmer weather), white T-shirt and a black fleece / tracksuit top.

We are noticing more children coming to school on PE days in wear that is not PE uniform. Please ensure that children have a plain white T-shirt and black shorts or tracksuit bottoms. We may ask children to change into any spare PE that we have in school if they do not come to school dressed appropriately.

Monday: Y3, Y6
 Tuesday: Y5, 6L, 6G, 6R
 Wednesday: Y4, 5B
 Thursday: Y3, 4B, 5E, 5K, 6O
 Friday: 4J, 4CB, 4T, 5W

Please remember that children must remove earrings to participate in PE lessons. Taping over earrings is not permitted.

PE kit is black joggers / shorts and a black hoodie or sweatshirt with a white T shirt along with trainers.

We expect that children will either wear one of the black John Ray logo hoodies from our supplier or a plain black hoodie/sweatshirt and plain black joggers on the two days a week that your child has PE.

CASHBACK WHEN SHOPPING ONLINE

The Friends of JRI and JRJ have created a cash back account through **Easy Fundraising**. This is a fantastic way to raise much needed extra funds to support both schools.

The link below can be used for you to register:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/invite/47ha4n/>

Once registered, for ease, you can download the app. Every time you shop from the app, across over 4000 online retailers, our schools earn cash back. It's free to join and includes top names like EBay, Argos, Iceland and John Lewis. You can share this link with friends and family members too. A letter with more information can be found on our [website](#).

Safeguarding

Are you worried about a child?

As a school, we consider safeguarding to be a priority. We welcome parents and carers talking openly to us about their concerns for the safeguarding of children and families. **Remember, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.** If you have any concerns about a child, you can contact one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads via the school office. Please ask to speak to Karen Harrison, Rachel Cottee or Meriel Keegan and specify that you have a safeguarding concern. If you are worried about a child or young person, you can call the NSPCC helpline for support and advice for free on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000). If a child is in immediate danger, you should call 999.

Children can call [Childline](tel:08001111) at any time on [0800 1111](tel:08001111)



National Online Safety: Using technology to boost reading skills

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy.

To help struggling readers, many digital platforms offer tools that enhance readability by making text more accessible and engaging. There's also a broad range of accessibility features available, such as screen customisation and text-to-voice technology, which may help children and young people improve their literary confidence. This free guide offers ten top tips on how you can help young readers engage in text and foster a love for reading.

www.nationalonlinesafety.com

CLASS TEACHERS' EMAIL ADDRESSES

We understand that for many people email is a quick and efficient way of communicating and we are therefore happy to provide class teachers' email addresses. Although email is a quick and easy way for parents to communicate with staff, matters that require urgent attention should be communicated via the school office. Staff are not expected to respond to emails after 5pm, during weekends/holidays or when off work due to sickness. [A parental agreement relating to email communication with teachers](#) is available from the school office or on our website under the communication tab. **Please note: Miss O'Sullivan now has a new email address.**

Year 3

Year 4

3C: cwaspe1@compassps.uk 3D: dcasey@compassps.uk 3P: sphillips@compassps.uk 3W: zwatson@compassps.uk	4B: aoxley@compassps.uk 4CB: hcollier-brown@compassps.uk 4J: jbrennan@compassps.uk 4T: tbeeson@compassps.uk, kbreen@compassps.uk	
<p style="text-align: center;">Year 5</p> 5B: hbreeze@compassps.uk 5E: cellis@compassps.uk 5K: kbrighton@compassps.uk 5W: awilson1@compassps.uk, rcottee@compassps.uk	<p style="text-align: center;">Year 6</p> 6G: ngibson@compassps.uk 6L: jlarbalestier@compassps.uk 6O: cosullivan1@compassps.uk 6R: rroberts@compassps.uk	
Please contact class teachers in the first instance to resolve any issues. Should you feel you need to escalate the issue, please contact:		
Miss Coffee (Assistant Head) if your child is in Y5 or Y6 – rcottee@compassps.uk		
Mrs Breen (Assistant Head) if your child is in Y3 or Y4 – kbreen@compassps.uk		
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>RECENT LETTERS INCLUDING NEWSLETTERS – MANY OF OUR LETTERS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE</u></p>		
All communication will be sent through Bromcom. Please ensure that you have given us a current email address. Issues with Bromcom communication should be emailed to jrcontact@compassps.uk		
12.11.24 Letter from UKHSA and ECC: Circulation of measles 19.11.24 Adverse weather plan 27.11.24 Alec Hunter Taster Sessions for Year 5 Pupils (Y5 only) 06.01.25 HappyDays School Photography Subscriptions (All) - deadline to sign up 20.01.25 06.01.25 National Child Measurement Programme (Y6 only) 08.01.25 Hemisphere pupil survey (Y5 and Y6 only) 09.01.25 Support Sessions for Families (All) 14.01.25 Teaching arrangements for 4B (4B only) 22.01.25 KEGS Open Day Events (Y5 boys only) 27.01.25 Y5 day trip- letter to express interest 29.01.25 Leavers Hoodies (Y6 only)		
<p style="text-align: center;">Dates for the academic year 2024-2025 (new dates in red) Please see the website for the term dates</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Spring Term 2025</p> 21.03.25 Comic Relief (<i>Children can wear sportswear or non-uniform in exchange for a donation</i>) 24.03.25 Last week for clubs 24.03.25 School council visit to the Houses of Parliament 11.03.25 Learning conferences (3:45-6.30pm) for children not on SEN register 12.03.25 Learning conferences (3:45-5:30pm) for children not on SEN register 3.04.25 Easter service at school 04.04.25 Last day of term <p style="text-align: center;">Summer Term 2025</p> 22.04.25 Start of term for children 28.04.25 After school clubs start 12.05.25 SATS week (Y6 only) 13.05.25 & 14.05.25 One Plan meetings for children on SEN register 20.05.25 Year 6 Mersea residential meeting 5pm 22.05.25 Sports day and parent picnic (<i>parents invited from 11:45</i>) 26.05.25 Half term 02.06.25 <u>Multiplication check</u> starts for 3 weeks (Y4 only) 02.06.25 Children return to school		

05.06.25 Reserve Sports day in case of poor weather

11.06.25-13.06.25 Mersea residential (Y6 only)

25.06.25 Class photos (children who have PE on this day should come into school in school uniform and bring PE kits in a separate bag)

27.06.25 Summer fete (Please note change of date)

07.07.25 Last week for clubs

08.07.25 Children to spend time with their new teacher

10.07.25 Annual reports sent out

15.07.24 Y6 production to parents 1:45 and 4:30pm 6L and 6G

16.07.25 Open afternoon drop in for current parents *from 3:30pm – 4.30pm*

17.07.25 Y6 production to parents 1:45 and 4:30pm 6O and 6R

18.07.25 Last day of term

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.

1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT

Before integrating technology, consider the types of text that a child engages with. If they need help on occasion, digital reading pens can assist by scanning and reciting words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used in exams if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.

2 READING ON SCREEN

Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability. Adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles – such as dyslexia-friendly fonts – are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.

3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS

Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in Settings under Accessibility and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments, who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.

4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES

Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.

5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS

Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogues and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve storytelling, puzzles or problem-solving often include large amounts of text – encouraging children to read these texts aloud or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.

6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS

Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Repeatedly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.

7 USING AUDIOBOOKS

Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to a narrator, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.

9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY

Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most smartphones, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight a passage or sentence and press Play to hear it read aloud. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.

8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING

Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to have their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.

10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13–16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media videos include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educational online environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lawl is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neuroteachers, which offers a library of short, 'how-to' and explanation videos for educators. Catrina also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.



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Competition: Create a British Science Week poster



Children aged 3-11 can get creative and enter the British Science Week annual, UK-wide poster competition! To enter, they simply need to create a poster which fits in with the theme of 'Change and adapt'.

Schools then select the five best creations and submit them for a chance of winning an array of prizes. The activities found in this pack marked with a paintbrush symbol could all be used as a source of inspiration to get children started!

Kit list

Paper (A4 or A3)

Creative materials such as:
pens, pencils, scissors, glue, watercolours, paint, crayons, pipe cleaners, felt, thread, wool, foil, clay, string, beads, stamps, foam, pompoms

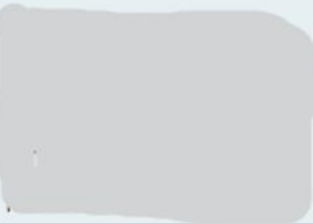
Instructions

Encourage children to think about change and adaptation – what it means to them and how it relates to science they've learnt about – to come up with ideas to include in their poster. Here are some points and questions to get you going:

- Get children to think about ways that they might have changed or adapted to new experiences and places as they've grown.
- What about change and adaptation in the world, and beyond? How do plants and animals adapt to a changing environment? Do the stars and planets in space change?
- Technology changes all the time, how is it changing our lives? Is it always for the better?

Make your poster

Once they've done their thinking, it's time for children to get creative! Posters must be A4 or A3 in size and you'll need to be able to take a photograph of each one so it can be sent to us online for judging. Children can use pop-up pictures, pull out tabs or use materials such as pencils, paints, crayons and paper to create their posters.



Next steps

Celebrate! For more details, along with the full set of poster competition rules and tips, check out our website: britishscienceweek.org/plan-your-activities/poster-competition%3F.

Entries to be sent to Mrs. Casey by 1st April.

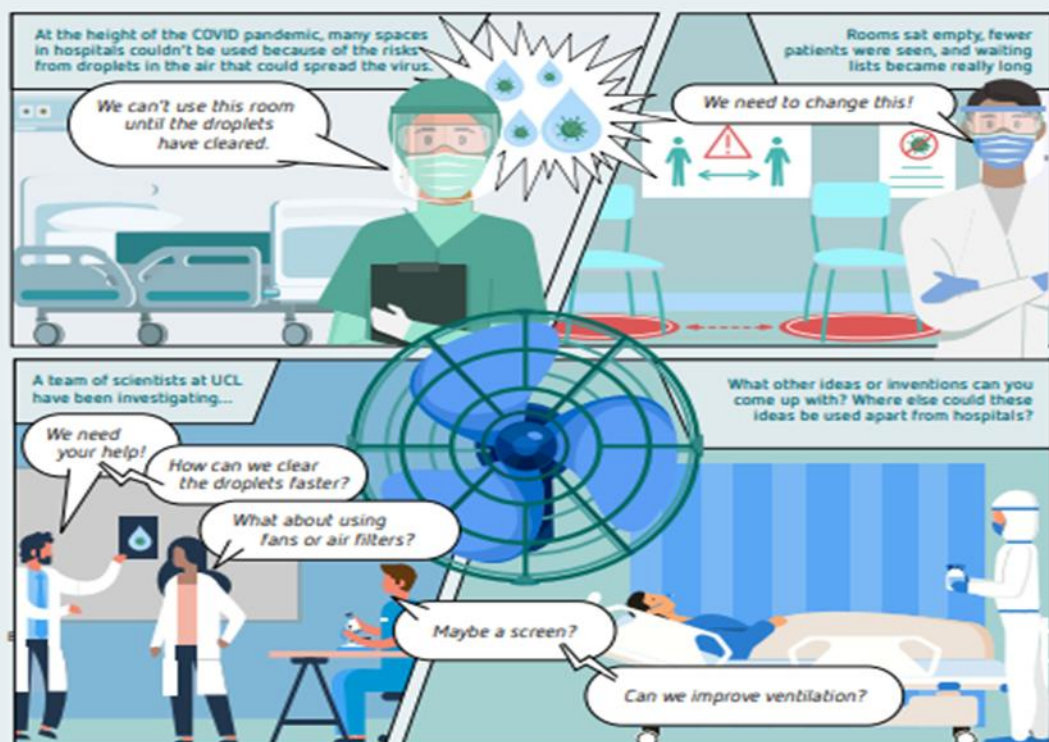


Older primary children (aged 8-11) may like to enter our special **competition** category this year - see **page 32** for more details.

Competition: The scientists from UCL need your help!

Older primary pupils (aged 8-11) might like to enter our special competition category this year and share their ideas with a team of top scientists at University College London (UCL)! Can they help by coming up with a new invention to improve the health of the air in our buildings?

Schools then select five of the best entries across the competition categories and submit them for a chance of winning an array of prizes! See the next page for instructions.





**BRITISH
SCIENCE
WEEK
2025**

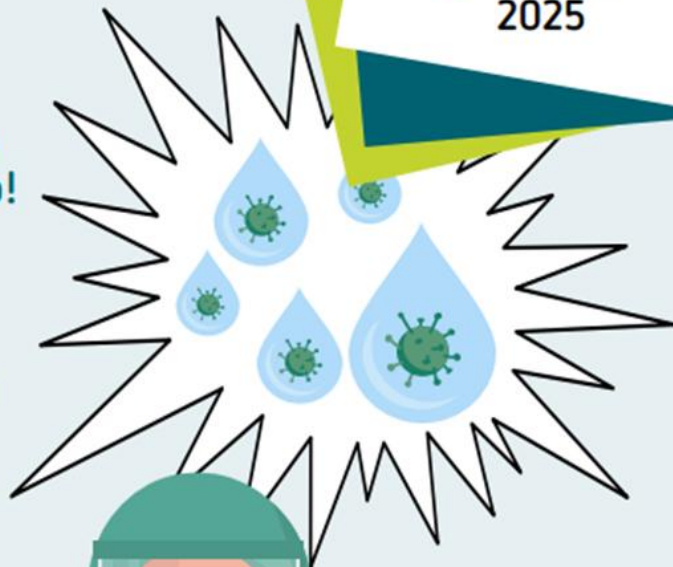
Competition: The scientists from UCL need your help!

i Instructions

Choose an indoor public space where you often spend time – this could be an area where you learn, or a place you visit regularly like a library, café or cinema. Do you think the air in this space is healthy and clean? Why? Come up with an idea or invention to change the air in your chosen space, making it healthier to breathe. How will it work? Could it be used in other public places too?

You might come up with a brand-new idea, or you might like to think about a new way of using something that already exists. The researchers at UCL have considered lots of different ideas for improving air quality and preventing the spread of viruses in hospitals. For example, you could think about face masks, curtains and screens, ventilation, fans or air filters.

You may like to do some research into how viruses spread to give you some ideas. Have a think about the science behind your idea. How will it work? How will it be made and used?



Make your poster

Think about how you present your idea to make sure it is clear and easy to understand. You could create a diagram or set of instructions, or you might like to develop an eye-catching poster! Will you include pictures, graphs or other illustrations?

Entries must be A4 or A3 in size and you'll need to be able to take a photograph of your work so it can be sent to us online for judging.

Entries sent to Mrs Casey by 1st April to be submitted to the competition.

Code Club

Braintree Library
Wednesdays, 3.30-4.30pm

- Do you have a favourite computer game?
- Would you like to learn how to make your own computer games?
- Learn how to make cool games, animations and websites!



Suitable for ages 9-13

For further information contact
Essex Libraries on 0345 603 7628
or visit libraries.essex.gov.uk/events



Essex County Council

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**FAMILY SUPPORT
SESSIONS FOR PARENT
& CARERS**

ONLINE



An opportunity for parents/carers, to come along and connect with a community dedicated to positive growth and development.
All sessions are online

Sibling Rivalry

11/03/2025 1900 - 2100 Search 'Sibling' via our website

Sleep For Wellbeing

13/03/2025 0930 - 1130 Search 'Bitesize Sleep' via our website

Managing Big Emotions

25/03/2025 1900 - 2100 or 28/03/2025 1230 - 1430
Search 'Big Emotions' via our website

Family Wellbeing

27/03/2025 0930 - 1130 Search 'Family Wellbeing' via our website

Visit our website [aclessex.com](https://www.aclessex.com) and type the key words above in to the 'Find a course...' box

**COMMUNITY & FAMILY
LEARNING**




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**COMMUNITY & FAMILY
LEARNING**



Essex County Council

Spring Pickers



10 March - 19 March

Clean up the county before spring.

Pick up 5
pieces of litter
every day for
10 days.

Sign up here



www.essexwt.org.uk/spring-pickers