

# John Ray Times

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

1<sup>st</sup> September 2025

**Phone:** 01376 324107    **Email:** [jrcontact@compassps.uk](mailto:jrcontact@compassps.uk)    **Website:** [www.johnray.compassps.uk](http://www.johnray.compassps.uk)



@johnrayjuniors



@

facebook.com/[johnraycompassps](https://www.facebook.com/johnraycompassps)

## Online learning links



[Accelerated Reader](#)



[Century Tech](#)



[TTRockstars](#)



[Nessy](#)

**For uniform orders visit:** [Absolute Embroidery](#), or visit the shop at 286 Broad Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 5NW

**For information on Food Bank vouchers email:** [mkeegan@compassps.uk](mailto:mkeegan@compassps.uk)

**For second hand uniform requests email:** [rcottee@compassps.uk](mailto:rcottee@compassps.uk)

**Breakfast club queries email:** [hwiltshire@compassps.uk](mailto:hwiltshire@compassps.uk)

**School dinner menus** are on our website:

**01.09.25 week 2, 08.09.25 week 3**

The cost for a school meal is now £2.50 and is payable on your MCAS App. If you think that your child may be entitled to free school meals, please contact Mrs Wiltshire in the school office.

### 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	Excited	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.

### **Welcome back**

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025**

We look forward to welcoming the children back to school on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2025. To allow year 3s time to settle in, we are asking for children in years 4, 5 and 6 to come into school an hour later than usual. The gates for Y4, Y5 and Y6 will be open from 9:40-9:50. If it is difficult for you to support us with this, please contact the school office.

Y3 parents are invited to bring the children on the school playground where the teachers will be waiting. Children are also collected from the playground at the end of the day.

### **Timings of the school day**

Following the consultation at the end of last term, our gates will now open at **8:40am** each morning. Gates will close at 8:50am with registers being taken at 8:55am. Children arriving after 8:50 will need to enter through the office to be signed in.

As a reminder, the end of the day for Y3 and Y4 is 3:20pm and Y5 and Y6 will finish at 3:25pm.

### **Summer works on site**

Over the summer there have been several projects taking place. The data cabling has been renewed to ensure we have a reliable internet connection in all parts of the building. The boys' toilets have also been refurbished. The windows in the older parts of the building are also being replaced. Unfortunately, due to delays in the supply of some of the materials, the work has been extended and is not expected to be completed until October half term. As a result, many of the classrooms have hoarding up across the windows and scaffolding is up around the site. The contractors have established a fenced compound on the playground / field. Staff will be talking to the children about the work that is taking place and keeping them informed.

### **Breakfast club**

Breakfast club will start on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September if you have already booked and paid for a space. Children who have been allocated a funded place will receive confirmation by the school office by 11<sup>th</sup> September with the funded places starting on 15<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Stationery items and pencil cases**

Just a reminder that children should not bring in their own stationery items or pencil cases as these are provided. In addition, fidgets, toys and other items from home are not permitted. As space is limited, children should bring in a small school bag only.

### **Key dates for next academic year**

As a reminder, we have started to put together the dates for next academic year and these can be found at the bottom of the newsletter. New dates will be added throughout the year and highlighted. Due to the ongoing window replacement, we have moved the meet the teacher events to 16.09.25 for Y5 and Y6. Y3 and Y4 parents are invited on 17.09.25. Both sessions will take place from 3:30 to 4:30. Please enter through the white hall doors.

### **Reading diaries**

Reading books and diaries will be distributed to the children by the end of next week.

### **Notley High School**

#### **Notley High School & Sixth Form Open Morning – Saturday 27 September 2025**

- General Open Morning: 9:30am – 12:30pm
- 9.15am start for any family with children with additional needs

We warmly invite you to come and discover what makes Notley High School a welcoming ambitious and supportive school to learn.

Join us for:

- Headteacher's welcome talk, at 10am and again at 11am
  - Student-led tours of our school and facilities
- Hands-on activities across a range of subjects, perfect for curious young visitors
  - A visit to our brand new 4G sports pitch
- Meet the pastoral team and learn about our wellbeing and transition support
  - Drop into our SEND department and see how we support every student
    - Speak to teachers and staff from all areas of the school
    - Take time out to sample our delicious canteen food
- Learn about our Year 7 transition programme and how we can help your child feel settled and confident

Whether you're just starting to think about secondary schools or have questions before applying, we'd love to welcome you and your child to experience our school community.

Please click the link below to book a place at our Headteacher's Talk:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/notley-high-school-open-morning-tickets-1488453768289?aff=oddtatcreator>

## In-school music lessons



### Music lessons

Every Wednesday



**WHERE EVERY CHILD IS VALUED**



**ENROLL NOW**



and become a part of our music club



### John Ray Music

Learn instruments and have fun with friends. We have set fun goals for the development of the children under our care. We aim to work collaboratively with parents to help develop music both at home and in school. Practice is important and pupils can perform at the students concert each year.

Our lessons are every Wednesday during school time. We offer group lessons at £7 per week or one to one at £16 subject to availability. Lessons are paid per term. Don't miss out!

Our music club operates

**30 mins lessons**

**09:00 to 15:00**

Every Wednesday at John Ray Juniors. For more info email [hello@braintreemusiclessons.co.uk](mailto:hello@braintreemusiclessons.co.uk)

**07802 421677**



[www.braintreemusiclessons.co.uk](http://www.braintreemusiclessons.co.uk)



### About Us

Join the schools awesome music club run by Braintree Music Lessons! Learn guitar, piano, drums and singing. It's super fun and for all year groups.

Learn to strum cool guitar chords and play your favourite songs. Tinkle the ivories and create beautiful melodies, it's magical. Bang those drums and make some noise, rhythm is key. Belt your favourite song in a singing group, singing is power and confidence building. Get creative with music today.



### 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 \(compassps.uk\)](mailto: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.

### 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.

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.**

PE lessons for this academic year will start w/c 08.09.25. PE days for each class are:

Monday: Y4  
Tuesday: Y6, 3P, 5C, 5B  
Wednesday: Y5, 6R, 6O, 6L  
Thursday: Y4, 3B, 3W, 3C  
Friday: Y3, 6G, 5E, 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](#) at any time on [0800 1111](tel:08001111)



### National Online Safety: What parents and carers need to know about VPNs

With more young people turning to VPNs to mask their online activity, it's vital that parents and educators understand both the benefits and the risks. While VPNs can improve privacy on public Wi-Fi, they can also be misused by young people to sidestep safety filters and access harmful or age-inappropriate content.

This week's guide explains the dangers of untrustworthy providers, malware threats, and the false sense of security that VPNs may give children. It also shares top tips – from checking devices to having open conversations – so adults can guide safe and responsible online behaviour.

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://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.

<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>
3C: cwaspe1@compassps.uk 3B: dbanks@compassps.uk 3P: sphillips@compassps.uk 3W: zwatson@compassps.uk	4B: kbrighton@compassps.uk 4CB: hcollier-brown@compassps.uk 4J: jbreannan@compassps.uk 4T: tbeeson@compassps.uk, <a href="mailto:kbreen@compassps.uk">kbreen@compassps.uk</a>
<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>
5B: hbreeze@compassps.uk 5E: cellis@compassps.uk 5C: dcasey@compassps.uk 5W: awilson1@compassps.uk, rcottee@compassps.uk	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](mailto:rcottee@compassps.uk)

**Mrs Breen (Assistant Head) if your child is in Y3 or Y4** – [kbreen@compassps.uk](mailto:kbreen@compassps.uk)

### **RECENT LETTERS INCLUDING NEWSLETTERS – MANY OF OUR LETTERS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE**

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 [tojrcontact@compassps.uk](mailto:tojrcontact@compassps.uk)

18.07.25 [School meal cost](#) (all year groups)

**Dates for the academic year 2024-2025 (new dates in red)**

[Please see the website for the term dates](#)

## Academic diary dates for 2025-26

Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
<p><b>03.09.25 Children return to school</b>            12.09.25 Secondary school admissions open (Y6 only)            15.09.25 After school clubs start  <b>16.09.25 Meet the teacher 3:30-4:30 Y5 and Y6</b>  <b>17.09.25 Meet the teacher 3:30-4:30 Y3 and Y4</b>            22.09.25 Y6 meeting 5pm (Mersea and Y6 information)            26.09.25 Individual photos (Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag))            27.09.25 Notley High School open morning            15.10.25 Enhanced one planning for specific children            15.10.25- SEND tea and chat  <b>27.10.25 Half term week</b>            31.10.25 Secondary school admissions close            04.11.25 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:00            05.11.25 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:30            08.11.25 Open morning for new parents 9:30-11:30            14.11.25 Children in need (non – uniform: children can wear spots / stripes in return for a donation)            24.11.25 last week for after school clubs            15.12.25 SEN tea and chat            16.12.25 Y4 and Y6 Christmas dinner day (children in Y4 / 6 are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper and / or accessory)            17.12.25 Y3 and Y5 Christmas dinner day (children in Y3 / 3 are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper and / or accessory)            18.12.25 Y3 and Y4 to walk to St Michael's church for a Christmas service (This takes place in school time and is for staff and children only. Children should wear suitable shoes for walking)  <b>19.12.25 Last day of term</b></p>	<p>05.01.26 Non Pupil day  <b>06.01.26 Children return to school</b>            12.01.26 After school clubs start            03.02.26 SEND tea and chat            04.02.26 Enhanced one planning for specific children            05.02.26 In class individual photos (Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag))            09.02.26-15.02.25 Children's mental health week            10.02.26 Safer internet day  <b>16.02.26 Half term week</b>              05.03.26 World book day (Children are invited to dress as a book character or bring in a prop from a book)            09.03.26 Science week            11.03.26 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:00            12.03.26 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:30              23.03.26 Last week for clubs            24.03.26 Y5 and Y6 to walk to St Michael's church for an Easter service (This takes place in school time and is for staff and children only. Children should wear suitable shoes for walking)            27.03.26- SEND tea and chat  <b>27.03.26 Last day of term</b></p>	<p><b>13.04.26 Children return to school</b>            20.04.26 First week of after school clubs            11.05.26 SATs week            20.05.26 Sports day (Y5 / 6 in the morning, Y3 / Y4 in the afternoon, picnic 12-12:45)  <b>25.05.26 Half term week</b>            01.06.26 Multiplication check for 3 weeks (Y4 only)            02.06.26 Enhanced and focussed one plans            03.06.26 reserve sports day in case of poor weather            08.06.26 - 10.06.26 Mersea residential for Y6            22.06.26 Secondary school transition week (schools will choose their own dates)            29.06.26 Last week of after school clubs            01.07.26 Class photos (Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag))            09.07.26 Annual reports sent out            30.06.26 Children to spend time with new teacher            08.07.26 Open afternoon 3:30-4:30            14.07.26 Y6 production for 6L and 6R 1:30 and 4:30            15.07.26 Y6 production for 6O and 6G 1:30 and 4:30    <b>16.07.26 Last day of term for children</b></p>

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about VPNs

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

VPN use among UK teens is on the rise – with a noticeable uptick following the introduction of the Online Safety Act's age-verification rules. A VPN – or virtual private network – can boost online privacy by hiding internet activity and masking the user's location. But while this technology has legitimate uses, it can also allow children to bypass safety filters and access inappropriate content. This guide covers what parents and educators need to know about VPNs and how to keep young people safe.

### BYPASSING RESTRICTIONS

VPNs are commonly used by young people to get around blocks on school networks or parental controls. This could include accessing social media, gaming sites or adult content that would otherwise be filtered out.

### ACCESSING INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

When a VPN is active, content filters can no longer see which sites a child is visiting. This means they could access inappropriate content without detection. This also makes it harder to intervene when a child is engaging in risky behaviour, as it may be difficult to detect it's happening.

### REDUCED TRANSPARENCY

VPNs may make parental monitoring software ineffective, stopping parents from monitoring their child's activities, including their ability to identify potentially harmful or inappropriate content or online contact. This in turn may prevent parents from protecting their children from attempted sextortion or other online threats.

### FALSE SENSE OF ANONYMITY

Children believing that VPNs make them 'invisible' online may seek to explore unsuitable internet content, including content which might otherwise be blocked. This may result in them seeking and accessing increasingly inappropriate – or even harmful – content.

### INCREASED EXPOSURE TO MALWARE

Many free VPN apps are poorly regulated and may carry hidden malware. Young people installing unverified software could unknowingly open up their device (and home network) to spying, data theft, computer viruses, or even remote access by criminals.

### RISK OF MALICIOUS VPN PROVIDERS

Although VPNs may increase privacy from network or service provider filtering and monitoring, this results in providing user and usage data to VPN providers. Some VPN providers may track user activity and sell that data to advertisers – or worse, malicious third parties. Not all VPNs are trustworthy.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### EXPLAIN THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF VPNs

Explain how VPNs can help protect user data and therefore may be appropriate when using public or other unsecured Wi-Fi, or while dealing with sensitive corporate or personal data.

### EXPLAIN THE RISKS OF VPNs

Discuss online risks, including harmful, disturbing, and criminal content. Inform children about criminal contact, such as sextortion, and how VPNs may restrict adults from monitoring children's internet use and helping them avoid these risks.

### FREE ISN'T FREE

Discuss the risk of 'free' VPNs and how they may sell or use people's data, which adds privacy risks. Additionally, discuss the potential for added malware in VPN downloads, and how these compromise devices and apps, leading to potential fraud or theft.

### CHECK DEVICES FOR VPNs

VPNs can be installed as both apps and browser extensions, so regularly check these on the devices used by the young people in your care. If they have been using VPNs, discuss it, listen to their reasoning, and inform them of the associated risks. In some cases, it may be appropriate to block VPN use via parental controls and other settings.

### DISCUSS ONLINE BOUNDARIES

Reinforce the importance of keeping safe online and how filtering and monitoring helps keep young people safe – explain this to them rather than just 'being strict'. Encourage an open conversation around what they're accessing and why.

### Meet Our Expert

This guide has been created in collaboration with Gary Henderson, director of IT at a large independent school in the UK, an ambassador for the Association of Network Managers in Education and the Vice Chair of the Independent Schools Council Digital Advisory Group.

