

# John Ray Times

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

8th December 2025

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

 @ facebook.com/johnraycompassps

## Online learning links

 <a href="#">Accelerated Reader</a>	 <a href="#">Century Tech</a>	 <a href="#">TTRockstars</a>	 <a href="#">Nessy</a>
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Links for permission for children in Y5 and Y6 to bring in a mobile phone: [Request to bring in a mobile phone](#)

Links for permission for children in Y5 and Y6 to walk home alone: [Permission to walk home alone](#)

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:

**New Autumn/Winter Menus:** You can view the updated menus below, and they're also available on our school website.

05.01.26, 15.12.25 [Week 1](#), 12.01.26 [Week 2](#), 08.12.25 [Week 3](#)

Christmas dinner days:

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)

### A Message from our catering provider, Chartwells:

At Chartwells, we're passionate about fuelling every child's learning with meals that are tasty, nutritious, and sustainable. Our menus are designed to make smart nutritional choices, meeting – and exceeding – the UK Government's School Food Standards.

To view the Chartwells Parent Information Leaflet, please [click here](#).

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.

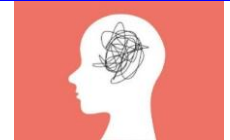
### [Zones of Regulation](#)



### [School Attendance Difficulties](#)



### [Supporting Anxiety](#)



### My Happy Mind Parent App

To access these materials just go to <https://myhappymind.org/parent-resources> We will send out a separate letter with the access code to enable you to access these at home.

**End of Y6 data July 2025**

The end of Y6 data for last academic year has now been validated and is shown below. As you will see, our combined data (children who achieved at least the expected standard for reading, writing and maths) is on in in line with the national average. At 62% this is a 6% increase from our 2024 results and continues our trend of improving results.

Year Six SATs Assessment Data		
	EXS	GDS
Reading	76% (75%*)	26% (33%*)
Writing	72% (73%*)	8% (13%*)
Maths	72% (74%*)	19% (26%*)
Combined	62% (62%*)	6% (8%*)
Scaled Scores		
	Reading	Maths
Average Scaled Score	105 (106*)	103 (105*)

\*National attainment 2025

### Year 6 SATs question of the week

Here is a question worth 1 mark from the Reasoning paper.

Here are three symbols.

< > =

Write one symbol in each box to make the statements correct.

$$\frac{7}{10} \quad \boxed{\phantom{< > =}} \quad 0.07$$

$$\frac{23}{1000} \quad \boxed{\phantom{< > =}} \quad 0.23$$

### Y3 Experience Christmas workshops at St Michael's Church

Year 3 had a wonderful time at St Michael's Church last week. During the visit, the children spent time at different stations within the church learning about the Christmas story. The children were wonderfully behaved and displayed our core values both on the way to and from the church but also during the workshop, asking great questions and listening well. Well done Year 3.

### Y3 and Y4 Christmas service at St Michael's Church

Y3 and Y4 will be walking to St Michael's church for a Christmas service on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December to take part in our Christmas service. This visit is covered under our local visits permissions but if you have any questions or concerns then please contact class teachers by Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December.

Children should wear comfortable shoes for walking to the church (trainers are permitted) and should also have a coat.

### **Invite to Y5 parents**

Y5 Parent/Carers are invited to visit class from 2.45pm. Children will be sharing a piece of their writing with you and there will be an opportunity to watch a recording of the class perform a piece of music. Visits are on the following days:

16.12.25 5W & 5E

18.12.25 5C & 5B

Please enter via the white hall doors at 2:45pm

### **Dodgeball**

Last week, Mr Mills, Mrs Baker and Miss Jones took a group of children to Notley High School to participate in a Dodgeball competition. The children played well as a team, trying their best and working hard together. Well done to:

Jack (6L), Awesome (6O), Charlie (6O), Daniil (5E), Emily (6R), Noah (6G), Laice (5E), Zac (6O), Isabella B B (6R), Daisy (6R), Stacey (6O), Akasya (5C), Lexi (6O), Henley (5E), Bessie (5E), Oscar (6R), Freddie (6R), Jayden (6L)

### **Promoting Responsible Use of Fidget Tools**

To help pupils get the most benefit from fidget tools, we've introduced a **Fidget Tool Contract**. This agreement is completed and signed by both teachers and pupils. It clearly sets out:

- **How fidget tools should be used** – to support focus and learning, not as a distraction.
- **Where fidget tools should be kept** – ensuring they are accessible but not disruptive.

By signing the contract, pupils take responsibility for using these tools appropriately, and teachers can support them in developing positive habits. This initiative encourages independence, self-regulation, and respect for classroom routines.

**Children are not permitted to bring in fidget tools from home.**

### **Christmas Gift Sale.**

Many thanks to the PTA for organising the gift shop for the children last week. The PTA help to raise funds for both John Ray schools. If you are interested in helping on a regular or ad hoc basis, please contact the PTA school office.

**Christmas services at St Michael's Church**



### 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@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 \(pop-essex.org\)](http://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.

Kung Fu: Harry (6G) orange sash

Karate: Amelia (6O) yellow stripe

Hockey tournament: Xavier (6L) 2<sup>nd</sup> place

Dance: Mya (5W) 1<sup>st</sup> place; Mia-Elena (6L) Dancer of the week, 1<sup>st</sup> place, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, 7<sup>th</sup> place;

Victoria (5W) 1<sup>st</sup> place, 3<sup>rd</sup> place; Basia (3B) 1<sup>st</sup> place, 5<sup>th</sup> place, Darcy (5C) Dancer of the week

Swimming: Greg (3C) 25 metres, Ivy (3B) 100m Alice (3W) stage 3, Penny (3W) stage 3, Annabelle (3P) 20m, Theo (6O) stage 4, Freddie (3B) stage 3. Samuel (94T) stage 3

Girl Guiding: Quinn (6G) and Alicija (6G) several badges

Tennis: Player of the week Eive (4T)

Football. Players of the match: Max (6G), Theo (5E), Bertie (3W), Adam (3W)



Well done Fabi (6R) who received award for his efforts at Kumon club.



### 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.

3B: Nylah	4B:	5B: Billie	6G: Quinn & H
3C:	4CB: Jude	5C: Mason	6L:
3P: Seb	4J: Dunamis	5E: Ella	6O: Sammas
3W: Finley	4T: Eive	5W: Leo	6R: Bella

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 days for each class are:  
 Monday: 4B, 4CB, 3W, 6G  
 Tuesday: Y5, 3P, 3B, 3C  
 Wednesday: Y4, 6R, 6O, 6L  
 Thursday: Y3, 5B, 5E, 5C  
 Friday: Y6, 4J, 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: 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. **Please note: Miss O'Sullivan now has a new email address.**

Year 3	Year 4
3C: <a href="mailto:cwaspe1@compassps.uk">cwaspe1@compassps.uk</a> 3B: <a href="mailto:dbanks@compassps.uk">dbanks@compassps.uk</a> 3P: <a href="mailto:sphillips@compassps.uk">sphillips@compassps.uk</a> 3W: <a href="mailto:zwatson@compassps.uk">zwatson@compassps.uk</a>	4B: <a href="mailto:pwatts@compassps.uk">pwatts@compassps.uk</a> , <a href="mailto:jbird@compassps.uk">jbird@compassps.uk</a> 4CB: <a href="mailto:hcollier-brown@compassps.uk">hcollier-brown@compassps.uk</a> 4J: <a href="mailto:jbrennan@compassps.uk">jbrennan@compassps.uk</a> 4T: <a href="mailto:tbeeson@compassps.uk">tbeeson@compassps.uk</a> , <a href="mailto:kbreen@compassps.uk">kbreen@compassps.uk</a>
Year 5	Year 6
5B: <a href="mailto:hbreeze@compassps.uk">hbreeze@compassps.uk</a> 5E: <a href="mailto:cellis@compassps.uk">cellis@compassps.uk</a> 5C: <a href="mailto:dcasey@compassps.uk">dcasey@compassps.uk</a> 5W: <a href="mailto:awilson1@compassps.uk">awilson1@compassps.uk</a> , <a href="mailto:rcottee@compassps.uk">rcottee@compassps.uk</a>	6G: <a href="mailto:ngibson@compassps.uk">ngibson@compassps.uk</a> 6L: <a href="mailto:jarbalestier@compassps.uk">jarbalestier@compassps.uk</a> 6O: <a href="mailto:cosullivan1@compassps.uk">cosullivan1@compassps.uk</a> 6R: <a href="mailto:rroberts@compassps.uk">rroberts@compassps.uk</a>

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

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

06.10.25 [Gemma's Farm Visit](#) (Y3 only)

14.10.25 [Autumn Term Learning Conference](#)

15.10.25 [Scroogical pantomime](#) (all year groups)

22.10.25 [Proposal to reduce the Published Admission Number](#)

**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>15.12.25 SEN tea and chat</p> <p>16.12.25 5W &amp; 5E Parent/Carer can visit class from 2.45pm. Children will be sharing a piece of their writing with you and there will be an opportunity to watch a recording of the class perform a piece of music.</p> <p>16.12.25 Y4 and Y6 Christmas dinner day <i>(children in Y4 / 6 are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper and / or accessory)</i></p> <p>17.12.25 Y3 and Y5 Christmas dinner day <i>(children in Y3 / 3 are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper and / or accessory)</i></p> <p>18.12.25 5B &amp; 5C Parent/Carer can visit class from 2.45pm. Children will be sharing a piece of their writing with you and there will be an opportunity to watch a recording of the class perform a piece of music.</p> <p>18.12.25 Y3 and Y4 to walk to St Michael's church for a Christmas service <i>(This takes place in school time and is for staff and children only. Children should wear suitable shoes for walking)</i></p> <p><b>19.12.25 Last day of term</b></p>	<p>05.01.26 Non Pupil day</p> <p><b>06.01.26 Children return to school</b></p> <p>12.01.26 After school clubs start</p> <p>22.01.26 Young Voices at the O2</p> <p>03.02.26 SEND tea and chat</p> <p>04.02.26 Enhanced one planning for specific children</p> <p>05.02.26 In class individual photos <i>(Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag)</i></p> <p>09.02.26-15.02.25 Children's mental health week</p> <p>10.02.26 Safer internet day</p> <p><b>16.02.26 Half term week</b></p> <p>05.03.26 World book day <i>(Children are invited to dress as a book character or bring in a prop from a book)</i></p> <p>09.03.26 Science week</p> <p>11.03.26 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:00</p> <p>12.03.26 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:30</p> <p>23.03.26 Last week for clubs</p> <p>24.03.26 Y5 and Y6 to walk to St Michael's church for an Easter service <i>(This takes place in school time and is for staff and children only. Children should wear suitable shoes for walking)</i></p> <p>27.03.26- SEND tea and chat</p>	<p><b>13.04.26 Children return to school</b></p> <p>20.04.26 First week of after school clubs</p> <p>11.05.26 SATs week</p> <p>20.05.26 Sports day <i>(Y5 / 6 in the morning, Y3 / Y4 in the afternoon, picnic 12-12:45)</i></p> <p><b>25.05.26 Half term week</b></p> <p>01.06.26 Multiplication check for 3 weeks <i>(Y4 only)</i></p> <p>02.06.26 Enhanced and focussed one plans</p> <p>03.06.26 reserve sports day in case of poor weather</p> <p>08.06.26 - 10.06.26 Mersea residential for Y6</p> <p>22.06.26 Secondary school transition week <i>(schools will choose their own dates)</i></p> <p>26.06.25 School fete after school</p> <p>29.06.26 Last week of after school clubs</p> <p>01.07.26 Class photos <i>(Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag)</i></p> <p>09.07.26 Annual reports sent out</p> <p>30.06.26 Children to spend time with new teacher</p>

	<p>27.03.25 PTA Break the rules day</p> <p>27.03.26 Last day of term</p>	<p>08.07.26 Open afternoon 3:30-4:30</p> <p>14.07.26 Y6 production for 6L and 6R 1:30 and 4:30</p> <p>15.07.26 Y6 production for 6O and 6G 1:30 and 4:30</p> <p><b>16.07.26 Last day of term for children</b></p>
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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about VPNs

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.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### 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.



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