

John Ray Times

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

19th January 2026

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



@ facebook.com/johnraycompassps

Online learning links



[Accelerated Reader](#)



[Century Tech](#)



[ITRockstars](#)



[Nessy](#)

Links for permission for children in Y5/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

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

Breakfast club queries email: hwiltshire@compassps.uk

School dinner menus are on our website:

26.01.26 [Week 1](#) , 02.02.26 [Week 2](#), 19.01.26 [Week 3](#)

A Message from our catering provider, Chartwells:

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.

Road closures, road works and school car park

Please be aware that there are several road closures and roadworks currently taking place, with more due to begin soon, around the school area. We kindly ask that you allow extra time when dropping off and collecting your child from school.

Please ensure that you park respectfully within the neighbouring streets and do not park on the grass verges outside the school.

The car park will remain available only for parents who have received consent from Miss Harrison or Mrs Christian. It should not be used for breakfast club drop-off, collection or return from appointments, after-school clubs, or Tiddly Winkers.

Year group newsletters

To help parents / carers to know what is being taught in school, we will be sending out year group newsletters outlining what is being covered this half term. These will be emailed to parents / carers and a paper copy will be sent home with your child. Copies will also be available on our website.

Please look out for the year group newsletters later on this week. We would also be pleased to receive any informal feedback.

Y5's visit from Ranger Stu

Year 5 enjoyed a thrilling visit from **Ranger Stu**, who brought the wonders of the rainforest directly into JRJ. The children were captivated as they came face-to-face with an incredible array of exotic creatures, including a thick-scaled **armadillo**, a majestic **python**, a curious **tenrec**, and even a formidable **scorpion**. Throughout the session, the students remained eager and engaged, asking insightful questions about the animals' unique adaptations and their natural habitats. It was a fantastic, hands-on learning experience that truly brought our geography and science topics to life!



Friday 13th February

On Friday 13th February, the catering team will be making pancakes for dessert.



An exciting opportunity

An exciting opportunity has arisen for children aged 10-18 to take part in ten free Filmmaking workshops. The workshops are run by The Offshoot Foundation, who are a charity, and take place at Notley High School on Sundays from 11am-4pm. Please use the QR code below to find out more or click here: [Braintree Filmmaking workshops](#).

Big Garden Birdwatch

23–25 January 2026

Once again, the RSPB are running their annual Birdwatch. If you would like to take part at home with your child, it is simple and easy to do. Simply choose an hour between 23rd – 25th January 2026 and count the birds you see in your garden, from your balcony, or in your local park. Only count birds that land. Children can take an information sheet on how to record their results as well as a bird identification sheet from their teacher or take a look at the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch website [Big Garden Birdwatch](#)

We will also be registering for the Big School's Birdwatch.

Online safety at home

Teaching children how to stay safe online is part of our curriculum and we regularly revisit this. In addition, most social media and messaging apps have an age rating that is higher than primary aged children. While we teach online safety in school, we cannot oversee or control internet use outside of school hours. We encourage you to set appropriate boundaries and regularly discuss safe and responsible online behaviour with your child. Parents should also take responsibility for monitoring and managing their children's online activity at home. Each week, an online safety section is added to this newsletter and we have access to parental guides for many aspects of online games and apps. If you would like paper copies of these, please contact the school office.

Additional advice and support can also be found on the following sites:

[Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

[Homepage - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

Is my child too ill for school?

The NHS has produced useful information to support parents when deciding if their child is too ill to attend school. Information can be found on the NHS website.

[NHS- Is my child too ill for school?](#)

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

Football: Daniel (5E) player of the match, Freddie, Joe and Jenson (all in 6R) secured a place in the cup final.

Swimming: Finley (3W) stage 3, Lilian (3W) stage 5, Harry (3P) 10m
Acro: Gracie (3C) has passed her acro foundation 2 exam with merit



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: Dexter	4B:	5B: Reuben	6G: Scarlett
3C: Ella	4CB:	5C: Morgan	6L: Nicholas
3P: Harley	4J: Evie	5E: Bessie	6O: Melody
3W: Darcie	4T: Sienna	5W: Varad	6R:

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](#) at any time on [0800 1111](tel:08001111)



National Online Safety: What parents and carers need to know about digital devices and wellbeing

Digital devices are woven into everyday life for children and young people, but balancing the benefits with potential risks can feel challenging. This #WakeUpWednesday guide explores how screen use can influence sleep, emotional regulation, physical health and online experiences, offering clear context around why concerns about wellbeing are growing.

Written with schools and families in mind, the guide shares practical, realistic advice for setting boundaries, encouraging open conversations and building digital literacy. With insights from an experienced mental health professional, it supports adults to help children develop healthier, more mindful relationships with technology.

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

3C: cwaspe1@compassps.uk

Year 4

4B: pwatts@compassps.uk, jbird@compassps.uk

3B: dbanks@compassps.uk 3P: sphillips@compassps.uk 3W: zwatson@compassps.uk	4CB: hcollier-brown@compassps.uk 4J: jbrennan@compassps.uk 4T: tbeeson@compassps.uk, kbreen@compassps.uk
Year 5	Year 6
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 Mrs Breen (Assistant Head) if your child is in Y3 or Y4 – 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	
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 20.01.26 Learning conferences - Spring term (all year groups)	
Dates for the academic year 2024-2025 (new dates in red) Please see the website for the term dates	

Spring term	Summer term
22.01.26 Young Voices at the O2 03.02.26 SEND tea and chat 04.02.26 Enhanced one planning for specific children 05.02.26 In class individual photos (<i>Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag</i>) 09.02.26-15.02.25 Children's mental health week 10.02.26 Safer internet day 16.02.26 Half term week 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>) 09.03.26 Science week 11.03.26 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:00 12.03.26 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:30 13.03.26 Parent workshop: Neurodiversity and sleep workshop 9:30-11:30 in the hall 23.03.26 Last week for clubs	13.04.26 Children return to school 20.04.26 First week of after school clubs 11.05.26 SATs week 20.05.26 Sports day (<i>Y5 / 6 in the morning, Y3 / Y4 in the afternoon, picnic 12-12:45</i>) 25.05.26 Half term week 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) 26.06.25 School fete after school 29.06.26 Last week of after school clubs 01.07.26 Class photos (<i>Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag</i>) 09.07.26 Annual reports sent out 30.06.26 Children to spend time with new teacher

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

27.03.25 PTA Break the rules day

27.03.26 Last day of term

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

16.07.26 Last day of term for children

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SLEEP DISRUPTION

Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.

ONLINE PEER PRESSURE

Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.

CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE

Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.

REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.

EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

Fast-paced digital content can overstimulate young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.

PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS

Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

Advice for Parents & Educators

SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Trying a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.

MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 10 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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for supporting your primary aged
child with mental health and wellbeing

Provided by your Mental Health Support Team

@set_camhs_nhs

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OUT MORE



Do you need help supporting your child? We offer a variety of online workshops to help you to support your child on the following topics:

- ✓ Fears and Worries
- ✓ Challenging Behaviour
- ✓ Emotionally Based School Avoidance
- ✓ Understanding Autism
- ✓ Understanding ADHD
- ✓ Sleep Support

Sessions will be held online during the day and evenings.



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