

# John Ray Times

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

9<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Phone:** 01376 324107 **Email:** [johnrayjunior@compassps.uk](mailto:johnrayjunior@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>
---	---	---	--

**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:

### Autumn/Winter Menus:

09.03.26 [Week 1](#) , 23.02.26 [Week 2](#), 09.02.26, 02.03.26 [Week 3](#)

### New Spring/Summer Menus:

We're excited to launch our new Spring/Summer menus after the Easter holidays!

You can view the updated menus below and they're also available on our school website.

13.04.26 [Week 1](#), 20.04.26 [Week 2](#), 27.04.26 [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

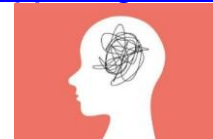
The ZONES of Regulation

			
Blue Zone Sad Bored Tired Sick	Green Zone Happy Focused Calm Proud	Yellow Zone Nervous Frustrated Silly Overhead	Red Zone Overwhelmed/Anxious Frenzied Angry Terrified

### 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.

### Our Assemblies

This week is Children's mental health week and in assembly last week we explored the theme for this year: **'This is My Place'**. The theme is based around belonging and what that means to us in school and at home. We discussed how we can feel a sense of belonging and help others feel like they belong. Children's Mental Health Week takes place every February. It was started in 2015 to give a

voice to all children and young people and to raise awareness of children and young people's mental health. More information can be found on the [children's mental health week website](#).

In another of our assemblies, we discussed the question: does seeing yourself in a story or toy help you feel like you belong? The assembly was based around recent news that toy company Mattel has released a new Barbie doll designed to represent people who have autism. The doll has features such as a fidget spinner and noise-cancelling headphones. This linked in with the British value of individual liberty and a reminder that it is differences that make us special.

### **Parent Governor Vacancies**

Each Compass school has a local school committee composed of a group of volunteers drawn from the community, each bringing a range of skills, expertise and professional experience. John Ray Infants and John Ray Juniors have a joint committee and we currently have vacancies for parent governors. Our Governors provide essential links between the school, parents/carers and the local community and work with staff and parents in an atmosphere of co-operation to provide the best possible framework for educating our children. Formal meetings are held once a term and training is provided. In addition, governors undertake termly monitoring alongside school leaders

If you would like further information about becoming a governor, please contact the school office.

### **Vacancy – Midday Assistant**

We are looking for a Midday Assistant to join our team and support our children at lunchtime. If you would like further information and to apply for this role, please click [here](#).

### **Reminder: Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February**

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



## PTA – Wish upon a bar

The Friends of John Ray Infant and Junior School have organised a wish upon a bar book day treat. Children will be coming home this evening with a copy of the flyer below. Please ensure that you complete the form correctly and the correct monies are placed in a named envelope. Children may hand their envelope to the school office no later than **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February**.



**FRIENDS OF JOHN RAY INFANTS AND JUNIORS PTA**

**Wish Upon A Bar** £2 PER 100g BAR

THE OOMPA LOOMPAS HAVE BEEN BUSY hiding golden tickets under the wrappers of 40 wish upon a bars. Will you be lucky in finding one.

lots of prizes including in school treats, chocolate and books

**40 GOLDEN TICKETS TO BE FOUND**

**WILL YOU FIND A GOLDEN TICKET INSIDE?**



**WISH UPON A BAR**  
**WILL YOU FIND A GOLDEN TICKET**  
**PRE-ORDER FORM**

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are excited to share a special World Book Day treat with you. This year, we are offering the chance to pre-order a "Wish Upon a Bar" 100g chocolate bar for your child to enjoy at home. Hidden inside 40 of these bars are Golden Tickets. Will you be lucky enough to find one? Each Golden Ticket gives your child the chance to win a prize. These include in-school prizes, as well as books or chocolate. Each bar costs £2, and all orders must be placed by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February. Please make sure to enclose correct monies as the office is unable to give change. Pre-ordered bars will be handed to children on World Book Day, Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March, for them to bring home. Thank you for supporting our school and helping us make World Book Day extra magical.

Sincerely,  
Friends of John Ray Infants and Juniors PTA

Please hand your slip in to the office with the correct money by Friday 27<sup>th</sup> February

Child's Name: .....

Child's Class: .....

Quantity: .....

Total enclosed: .....

please enclose correct money.

FRIENDS OF JOHN RAY INFANTS AND JUNIORS PTA

## Safer Internet Day – Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February

Safer Internet Day (SID) is an annual global event aimed at promoting safe and responsible use of the internet, particularly among children and young people. In 2026, the event will take place on **February 10<sup>th</sup>** and will emphasize the importance of understanding and navigating the implications of artificial intelligence (AI) in our daily online interactions. We will be discussing this in our assembly and in class councils.

### Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI

We encourage you to join us in celebrating by continuing the conversation about AI technology at home and will be sending out a separate letter outlining some ideas for you to try at home.

[Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

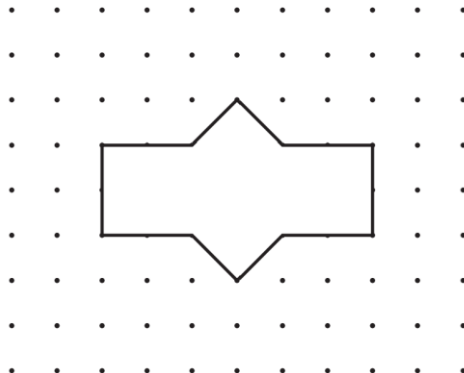
[Homepage - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

### Year 6 SATs question of the week

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

Draw all the lines of symmetry on this shape.

Use a ruler.



### 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 Weekend Roadshow- Sunday 22nd March** **SEND Local offer Roadshow Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March**



### 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).)

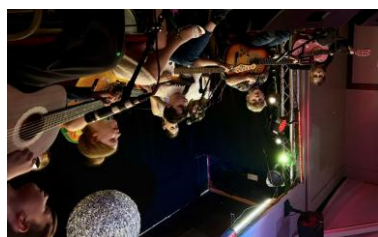
### STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

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.

Dancing: Edith (3W) young achieved highly commended in her dance group for gym and freestyle.

Skiing: Jacob (3B)

Well done to all the children who took part in the concert lead by Marc, our music teacher. The children and the audience had a great time and the performances were amazing.



Marc offers music lessons in a variety of instruments and singing both at John Ray Juniors and privately. For further information please contact the school office or Marc directly on the [Braintree Music Lessons website](#).

### 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: Ivy	4B: Emily	5B: Amelia	6G: Max
3C: Dan	4CB: Seth	5C: Finley	6L: Mia
3P: Amber	4J: Victoria	5E: Reuben	6O: Zac
3W: Sonny	4T: Ivanna	5W: Matas	6R: Scarlett, Oscar

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 Supporting safe use of AI**

Artificial intelligence is becoming a familiar part of young people's online experiences, with a myriad of school tools and entertainment platforms in use. This #WakeUpWednesday guide breaks down what AI really is, helping adults explain it clearly and realistically so children don't overestimate its abilities or trust it unquestioningly. It explores how AI systems work, where they appear online, and why understanding them matters.

The guide also highlights key online safety considerations, including misinformation, data privacy, bias and over-reliance on AI tools. With practical advice on setting boundaries, choosing age-appropriate platforms and encouraging ethical, creative use, it empowers parents and educators to build digital literacy while keeping children safe, curious and critically engaged.

[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: <a href="mailto:pwatts@compassps.uk">pwatts@compassps.uk</a> , jbird@compassps.uk 4CB: hcollier-brown@compassps.uk 4J: jbrennan@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 [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](#)

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
09.02.26-15.02.25 Children's mental health week	<b>13.04.26 Children return to school</b>
10.02.26 Safer internet day	20.04.26 First week of after school clubs
<b>16.02.26 Half term week</b>	11.05.26 SATs week
05.03.26 World book day (Children are invited to dress as a book character or bring in a prop from a book)	20.05.26 Sports day (Y5 / 6 in the morning, Y3 / Y4 in the afternoon, picnic 12-12:45)
<b>05.03.26 Wish upon a bar sale (golden tickets) - details to follow</b>	<b>25.05.26 Half term week</b>
09.03.26 Science week	01.06.26 Multiplication check for 3 weeks (Y4 only)
11.03.26 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:00	02.06.26 Enhanced and focussed one plans
12.03.26 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:30	03.06.26 reserve sports day in case of poor weather
	08.06.26 - 10.06.26 Mersea residential for Y6
	<b>19.06.26 Non uniform day (donation for summer fete).</b>

13.03.26 Parent workshop: Neurodiversity and sleep workshop 9:30-11:30 in the hall

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

27.03.25 PTA Break the rules day

**27.03.26 Last day of term**

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 *(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

**16.07.26 Last day of term for children**

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

## SUPPORTING SAFE USE OF AI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly woven into young people's digital lives. It can offer some educational benefits and day-to-day assistance; however, it also raises concerns about misinformation, privacy, fairness, and safety. This guide provides parents and educators with practical strategies to support young people to navigate AI tools responsibly, and to use them safely and with discernment.

### 1 DEMYSTIFY WHAT AI REALLY IS

Children encounter AI in most online places, including games, streaming platforms, and school tools. Explain that AI uses patterns from past data to make decisions, but it doesn't think or feel like humans. Use age-appropriate examples, like how recommendations on YouTube or Netflix work, to build understanding and prevent false beliefs about AI being all-knowing or alive.

### 2 TALK ABOUT RISKS OF MISINFORMATION

AI can create convincing false information, including deepfake videos, photos, and fake 'facts'. Encourage children to think critically about what they see and read. Teach them to double-check information using reliable sources, to look at images and videos carefully, and to ask an adult if something doesn't seem right.

### 3 DISCUSS DATA AND PRIVACY

Explain that AI systems learn by analysing lots of data, sometimes including personal information. Help young people to be mindful of what they share online and why protecting personal data matters. Model good habits like reading app permissions together or reviewing what's collected by voice assistants like Alexa or Siri.

### 4 ENCOURAGE CREATIVE USE OF AI

Support children, when using AI tools, to explore ideas, make art, or build projects. This fosters confidence, imagination, and independent thinking. When children use AI creatively, rather than just passively consuming it, they are more likely to stay engaged and make thoughtful choices.

### 5 USE AGE-APPROPRIATE AI TOOLS

Not all AI platforms are suitable for children. Choose tools designed for education or creativity, with clear safety policies. Review terms of use and privacy settings, and help children use them in age-appropriate ways. For example, some chatbot tools mimic conversation but should only be used with guidance and boundaries in place.

### 6 USE AI TOGETHER

Exploring AI tools together can help adults understand how they work and spot potential issues. Try co-writing a story with an AI writing assistant or experimenting with an AI art tool. This encourages curiosity, helps you stay informed about the latest AI tools, and allows you to reinforce safe and respectful use while modelling critical thinking.

### 7 SET BOUNDARIES FOR AI USE

Establish when, where, and how AI tools can be used, just as you would with any digital technology. For example, you might agree not to use AI tools to complete school assignments without permission, or to avoid unsupervised use of voice assistants. Consistent boundaries help manage overuse and misuse.

### 8 WATCH FOR OVERRELIANCE

Some AI tools, like homework help apps, may be tempting shortcuts. Encourage children to use AI to support their thinking, not replace it. Celebrate effort and process over perfect answers. Reinforce that mistakes are part of learning and that relying too heavily on AI can limit real understanding.

### 9 TEACH DIGITAL ETHICS AND LITERACY

Help children explore how AI works, where it might be biased, and why ethical thinking matters. Building digital literacy alongside ethical awareness ensures children engage with AI critically, not just conveniently. Help young people to understand that not all people use AI for legitimate purposes; some use it for malicious reasons. Encourage questions about fairness, representation, and who benefits from certain tools; talk about algorithms, echo chambers, and the impact of automation on daily life.

### 10 STAY CURIOUS AND INVOLVED

AI is developing rapidly, and staying informed helps you support the young people in your care. Follow trusted sources for updates and keep the conversation going. If a child brings up a new AI trend or tool, take the opportunity to learn about it together. Showing interest builds trust and strengthens digital resilience.

### Meet Our Expert

Home to the world's largest CPD library for educators, The National College has transformed the way education establishments go about developing their workforces and managing compliance. Our three memberships help all phases and types of setting raise standards, save time, reduce risk, and build a culture of improvement.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

# FREE PARENT WEBINARS

for supporting your primary aged  
child with mental health and wellbeing

Provided by your Mental Health Support Team

@set\_camhs\_nhs

SIGN-UP & FIND  
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.



Striving to provide the best care by the best people



**NHS**  
North East London  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Holiday Club



Our free Holiday Club is run once a week during most school holidays. It creates a safe space for children to:

- participate in meaningful activities
- make friends and socialise
- access lunch and snacks

and all of this is while developing social and communication skills and exploring new talents or interests.

### Who is Holiday Club for?

Holiday Club sessions are booked and offered to families according to criteria. Priority will be given to those from lower income families, in receipt of pupil premium or eligible for free school meals.

**Activities are free and suitable for children aged 6 and over in primary school.**

For more information you can [read our Holiday Club Terms and Conditions](#).

### Where are the Holiday Club activities?

Activities are held at our Kids Inspire HQ, Hargrave House, ~~Hollycroft~~, Great Baddow, Chelmsford, CM2 7FW

**Time:** 10:30am-3:30pm

### Upcoming dates for 2026 Holiday Clubs:

**Tuesday 17 February 2026 - Animal Discovery with [Eden Oasis](#)**

This February half term, children will have the chance to meet and handle eight amazing animals with a visit from Eden Oasis! **Please be aware that this will include cockroaches, leaf insects, royal python, blue tongue skunk, tortoise, ferrets, armadillo and rabbits.**

Expressions of interest are now open for our February activity, please **complete our [expression of interest form](#)**.

[Eden Oasis - Animal Discovery Tuesday 17 February 2026 – Fill in form](#)

---