

# John Ray Times

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

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

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[www.johnray.compassps.uk](http://www.johnray.compassps.uk)



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

## Online learning links



[Accelerated Reader](#)



[Century Tech](#)



[TTRockstars](#)



[Nessy](#)

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](#), 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.

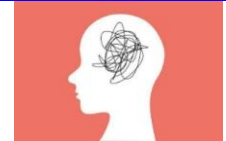
### [Zones of Regulation](#)



### [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.

### Class Texts for this half term

Y3: Varmints, Helen Ward,

Y4: There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom, Louis Sachar

Y5: Pig Heart Boy, Malorie Blackman,

Y6: The Tales of Beedle the Bard, J. K. Rowling



### Our Assemblies

Our assemblies before half term focussed on Safer Internet Day which was held on 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 emphasised the importance of understanding and navigating the implications of artificial intelligence (AI) in our daily online interactions. The theme for this year is **Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI**

The school council delivered a quiz to their class on Friday too.

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

[Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

[Homepage - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

In another of our assemblies, we looked at the question 'Should children have social media?'. This follows on from the decision made by the Australian government to ban social media for under 16s.

We discussed the benefits and the dangers / disadvantages and looked back at things the children could and should do to keep themselves safe online. This linked with the British value of the rule of law and how rules / laws help to keep us safe from harm, ensure we are treated fairly and help us live together.

### Rocksteady

On Monday, the children had an assembly led by a company called Rocksteady who introduced them to the different instruments in a rock band and the children were able to sing along with them. They then took part in workshops which showcased the instruments that Rocksteady teach. If you would like your child to take part in these lessons and perform as part of a rock band, please use the flier below to find out more about them.

Group lessons would take place on a Friday during the normal school day.



## WOULD YOUR CHILD LIKE TO PLAY IN THEIR OWN ROCK BAND AT SCHOOL?

**ROCK STEADY**

Hi Parent or Guardian,

Do you want your child to experience the magic of playing music in their very own band? Rocksteady Music School is the leading provider of in-school rock and pop band lessons for primary age children – and we're delighted to let you know we're teaching in your child's school!

**How does it work?**

With Rocksteady, children learn to play an instrument through weekly band lessons. It's the perfect way to learn new musical skills, make friends and have fun – all at school! Rocksteady lessons are also shown to boost confidence, wellbeing social skills and even academic achievement.

Your child will learn to play songs instantly through listening and playing. There's no music theory involved and lessons are designed to be fun, inclusive and accessible. They will be making progress in every lesson and can also achieve an Ofqual-regulated Trinity Music qualification, without having to take a single exam!

**Here's what else you need to know:**

- Most lessons take place during the school day. There's **no experience necessary and all instruments for lessons are provided.**
- You can choose if they shine on **vocals, keyboard, drums, guitar or bass.**
- Proudly watch as your child performs in their **end of term concerts**, showing just how far they have come!
- Rocksteady band leaders are professional musicians who inspire a passion for music and support your child every step of the way.

Places are offered on a first come, first served basis. There's a **money-back guarantee** for the first month and you can **cancel at any time.**

For more details on availability and cost, visit [rocksteadymusicschool.com](http://rocksteadymusicschool.com) and find your school on the sign up page or call 0330 113 0330.

Best wishes,  
Rachel Hawker | Director of Education

**98%**  
OF PARENTS SAY  
THEIR CHILD LOVES OR  
ENJOYS ROCKSTEADY  
BAND LESSONS

\*Parent Survey 2024

**94%**  
OF PARENTS SAY  
ROCKSTEADY  
IMPROVES THEIR  
CHILD'S CONFIDENCE

\*Parent Survey 2024

*My daughter loves her Rocksteady lessons. She has fun, learns new skills and builds her friendships during school time.*

Sade

*I love the exam-free qualifications, as the focus is my child's enjoyment of music and learning without the pressure of an exam.*

Juliet

*The concerts are a brilliant opportunity for the children to develop their music skills and increase their confidence together.*

Grace

*Rocksteady has given my child the confidence to perform in front of his whole school.*

Michelle

*Our child loves Rocksteady and looks forward to every lesson. Watching him and the whole band was an honour – it's amazing to see their progress and teamwork!*

Stanislava

*My children eagerly anticipate their lessons and come home excited to share what they've learned. It's wonderful to see!*

Emm

0330 113 0330  
(Mon-Thurs 9am-5pm, Fri 9am-5pm, local rate)  
[rocksteadymusicschool.com](http://rocksteadymusicschool.com)

**Find out what parents say about Rocksteady**

0330 113 0330  
(Mon-Thurs 9am-5pm, Fri 9am-5pm, local rate)  
[rocksteadymusicschool.com](http://rocksteadymusicschool.com)

TRINITY

### Year 6 SATs question of the week

Here is a question worth 2 marks from the Reasoning paper.

In this tower, two numbers are **multiplied** to give the number above.

12	
4	3

Write the missing numbers in the tower below to make it correct.

75	24	
		4

### Y4 Easter Experience visit to St Michael's Church

Children in Y4 will walk to St Michael's Church in the week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> March. The children will take part in an Easter Experience workshop in which they will learn about the Easter story.

Classes will be at school for lunch and visits will be taking part at the following times:

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March **4B**  
 Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March **4T** and **4CB**  
 Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March - **4J**

We suggest that all children wear comfortable shoes for walking to and from the church (trainers can be worn on the visit day). If the visit takes part on a PE day, children should still come to school in PE clothes. Please ensure all children have a coat.

Permission is not required as this is covered under the local visits consent. However, if you do not want your child to take part, you must email class teachers by **5pm on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March**.

### **Chartwells parent taster sessions**

On 16<sup>th</sup> April Chartwells our school meal provider will be hosting a parent taster session after school in the hall. We look forward to seeing you there. Please enter via the hall doors.

### **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.

### **World Book Day – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March**

World Book Day inspires every child to enjoy the life-changing benefits of reading for fun.

Low cost dressing up ideas can be found on the World Book day website: [Dressing-up Ideas for Parents and Carers This World Book Day](#)

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](#).

### **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**  
PER 100g BAR

THE OOMPA LOOMPAS HAVE BEEN BUSY hiding golden tickets under the wrappings 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 27th 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 5th 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

### 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 \(pop-essex.org\).](#)

### 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.

Well done to :

Football: Player of the match: Afnan - (3P)

Cricket: Afnan and Harry - won a competition

Dancing: Ruby (3P) - student of the week

Swimming: Annabelle (3P - level 3 swimming, Effie (3P)

3B: Henry	4B: Taylor	5B: Chloe	6G:
3C: Skyla	4CB: Evelyn-Rose	5C: Darcey	6L: Simon
3P: Lucas	4J: Arabella	5E: Lexi	6O:
3W: Setrih	4T: Michael	5W:	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](tel:08001111) at any time on [0800 1111](tel:08001111)



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

With its end-to-end encryption and huge popularity, WhatsApp is often seen as a private and secure way to stay in touch; however, that same privacy can make it harder for trusted adults to see when things go wrong. This guide explains how features like group chats, disappearing messages, 'Channels' and location sharing can expose young users to pressure, unwanted contact and inappropriate content.

It also looks at emerging concerns such as scams, advertising and the in-app AI assistant, helping adults understand how these elements may affect children and young people. Alongside the risks, the guide offers practical advice to support meaningful conversations, encourage safer settings and build young users' confidence in navigating WhatsApp responsibly.

[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: pwatts@compassps.uk, jbird@compassps.uk 4CB: hcollier-brown@compassps.uk 4J: jbrennan@compassps.uk 4T: tbeeson@compassps.uk, kbreen@compassps.uk
<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: <b>Miss Coffee (Assistant Head) if your child is in Y5 or Y6 – <a href="mailto:rcottee@compassps.uk">rcottee@compassps.uk</a></b> <b>Mrs Breen (Assistant Head) if your child is in Y3 or Y4 – <a href="mailto:kbreen@compassps.uk">kbreen@compassps.uk</a></b>	
<b><u>RECENT LETTERS INCLUDING NEWSLETTERS – MANY OF OUR LETTERS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE</u></b>	
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 <a href="mailto:tojrcontact@compassps.uk">tojrcontact@compassps.uk</a>	
18.07.25 <a href="#">School meal cost</a> (all year groups) 06.10.25 <a href="#">Gemma's Farm Visit</a> (Y3 only) 14.10.25 <a href="#">Autumn Term Learning Conference</a> 15.10.25 <a href="#">Scroogical pantomime</a> (all year groups) 22.10.25 <a href="#">Proposal to reduce the Published Admission Number</a> 20.01.26 <a href="#">Learning conferences - Spring term</a> (all year groups) 10.02.26 <a href="#">Safer Internet Day 2026</a> (all year groups)	
<b>Dates for the academic year 2024-2025 (new dates in red)</b> <a href="#">Please see the website for the term dates</a>	

Spring term	Summer term
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> ) 05.03.26 Wish upon a bar sale (golden tickets) - details to follow 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 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> ) 27.03.26- SEND tea and chat 27.03.25 PTA Break the rules day <b>27.03.26 Last day of term</b>	<b>13.04.26 Children return to school</b> <b>16.04.26 Chartwells (Meal provider) parent taster session after school in the hall</b> 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> ) <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 19.06.26 Non uniform day (donation for summer fete). 22.06.26 Secondary school transition week (schools will choose their own dates)

	<p>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 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>
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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

AGE RESTRICTION  
**13+**

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

WhatsApp is a free messaging app owned by Meta, allowing users to send text and voice messages, share multimedia, make video calls, and chat in groups. With end-to-end encryption, only the sender and receiver can view messages. This may offer privacy, but it also comes with risks that parents and educators need to be aware of.

### GROUP CHAT PRESSURES

Group chats enable multiple users to message in the same space, but this can also make it easier for young people to feel excluded or overwhelmed. Negative comments can escalate quickly, and young people may feel pressure to respond or stay engaged even when the conversation is uncomfortable or upsetting.

### SCAMS TARGETING YOUNG USERS

Scammers are increasingly using WhatsApp to trick users into sharing personal information. Common scams include fraudsters posing as family members in an emergency or tricking users into revealing security codes. These can lead to identity theft or access to private conversations.

### DISAPPEARING AND HIDDEN MESSAGES

WhatsApp offers features like disappearing messages and 'Chat Lock', which can give users a false sense of security. While intended to protect privacy, they can be used by young users to hide inappropriate conversations or content, making it harder for adults to spot potential issues.

### EXPOSURE THROUGH CHANNELS

'Channels' are an optional feature that allows users to follow updates from public figures or organisations; however, there is no way to block this feature or filter its content by age. Young users may encounter adult or distressing content, including misinformation and harmful ideologies.

### UNWANTED CONTACT AND LOCATION SHARING

WhatsApp users can share their live location, and if not managed carefully, this can allow others – even those in mutual groups – to track someone's whereabouts. Also, without the right privacy settings, young users may be contacted by strangers.

### COMMERCIAL AND AI CONTENT

WhatsApp now includes ads in the 'Updates' feed and has introduced an AI assistant – Meta AI – across the app, which cannot be removed. These additions raise concerns about targeting, privacy, AI use, and the type of content children and young people might interact with.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER

Help young users check who can see their profile photo, status, and location. Activate the 'Silence Unknown Callers' setting and set group chat invitations to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...' for added safety.

### TEACH HOW TO SPOT SCAMS

Encourage caution around unusual and unexpected messages, especially if they involve money or codes. Help young users understand the signs of scams and what to do if they receive a suspicious message. Enable two-step verification to add an extra layer of protection.

### BE OPEN ABOUT HIDDEN CHATS

Discuss why children and young people might use features like disappearing messages or 'Chat Lock'. Encourage them to share if something made them uncomfortable, even if the messages are gone. Let them know that privacy should not mean secrecy.

### TALK ABOUT ADVERTISING AND AI

Explain that WhatsApp now includes ads and AI tools. Discuss the difference between genuine and sponsored content, and the potential for AI to share inaccurate or age-inappropriate responses. Encourage young users to think critically before trusting or interacting with these features.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College



@wake\_up\_weds



/www.thenationalcollege



@wake.up.wednesday



@wake.up.weds

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# 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



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North East London  
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