

# John Ray Times

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

7<sup>th</sup> September 2026

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## Online learning links

|                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br><a href="#">Accelerated Reader</a> | <br><a href="#">Century Tech</a> | <br><a href="#">TTRockstars</a> | <br><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 Unit 32-33 Block B, Braintree Enterprise Centre, Springwood Drive, CM7 2YN

**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:

**Spring/Summer Menus:**

07.09.26 [Week 1](#) 14.09.26 [Week 2](#), 21.09.26 [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.

|                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><a href="#">Zones of Regulation</a><br/>The ZONES of Regulation</p>  | <p><a href="#">School Attendance Difficulties</a></p>  | <p><a href="#">Supporting Anxiety</a></p>  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## My Happy Mind Parent App

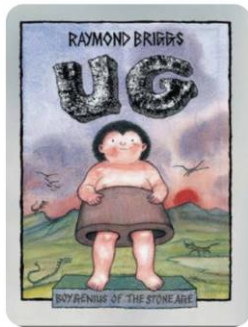
To access these materials just go to <https://myhappymind.org/parent-resources> We will send out a separate letter with the access code to enable you to access these at home.

## Assemblies

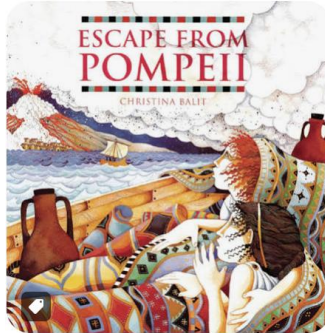
We have started the school year by revisiting our school values and thinking about how we can apply them in different situations. We specifically talked about how we might need to use the core value of courage when starting in a new class or school. In one of our assemblies, we remembered the singer and actress Dolly Parton and discussed the question 'What can help us feel hopeful about a new beginning?'. We discovered that Dolly gave one of her most hopeful songs a fresh start by recording it again this year, 50 years after she had written it and to raise money for a child's cancer charity. Just as Dolly had returned to something in her past, we thought about how a new school year helps us to build on what we have already learned and make a difference to others.

## Class texts

Children in Y3, 4 and 5 have made a start on their class texts for the first half of the autumn term. The children will be using the texts as a stimulus for writing.



Year 3: Ug



Y4: Escape from Pompeii



Y5: Wonder

Children in Y6 are exploring different horror texts as inspiration for their writing.

Our curriculum maps for each year group can be found in our website.

[Year 3 curriculum map](#) [Year 4 curriculum map](#) [Year 5 curriculum map](#) [Year 6 curriculum map](#)

### **09.09.26: Meet the teacher 3:30-4pm**

Parents / carers are invited to see the classrooms and the informally meet class teachers on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September from 3:30. Please collect your children as usual on the playground and then make your way to the white hall doors opposite the bus stop on Notley Road.

### **Apply for a secondary school (year 7) place for September 2027**

If your child is in year 6, you can apply for a secondary school (year 7) place between **12<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2026**.

Information can be found on the Essex website: [Secondary school places | Essex County Council](#)

Should you require any assistance, please contact the school office.

### **Reminder: School fete 18.09.26**

Due to the very warm weather in July, our school fete was postponed and will take place on 18<sup>th</sup> September after school.

### **Toys and trading cards from home**

This is just a reminder that toys and trading cards of any description e.g. Premier League cards are not permitted in school. Children are also not permitted to bring in their own fidget tools or ear defenders. If children need these as a reasonable adjustment, they will be provided for them by a member of staff.

## Changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility

**DON'T MISS OUT ON FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

**MORE FAMILIES THAN EVER NOW QUALIFY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS, EVEN IF YOU'VE CHECKED BEFORE.**

- ★ If your child's eligible, they can enjoy a FREE school lunch every day, saving your family time and money by signing up
- ★ Nutritious meals help keep your child energised and focused throughout the school day
- ★ From September 2026, all Universal Credit households qualify, regardless of income
- ★ Signing up is quick and confidential, and could really make a difference to your child's day

Click the link to find out more, including how to register for free school meals, or contact Chartwells at [education.csu@compass-group.co.uk](mailto:education.csu@compass-group.co.uk) or on free phone 0800 917 6818.

***If your child currently receives free school meals, you will now have to reapply for this academic year. If you do not complete the form, your child will no longer be entitled to receive FSM***

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit will be entitled to receive a free school meal. There will no longer be an income threshold of £7400 for the purposes of free school meals.

In order for us to check if you are eligible, please complete this [form](#) if you are in receipt of Universal Credit. One form should be completed per child. Full details can be found on the letter that was sent to parents on the 1<sup>st</sup> June.

## Nuts and nut products

Please be aware that nuts, including peanuts, or products containing nuts are not allowed in school under any circumstances. This includes chocolate spread with nuts like Nutella and filled crepes and croissants.

Nuts should not be provided as part of a packed lunch.

## Year 6 SATs question of the week

Here is a question worth 1 mark from the 2024 Maths Reasoning paper.

Here are four fractions.

|               |               |               |                |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| $\frac{7}{8}$ | $\frac{1}{5}$ | $\frac{3}{4}$ | $\frac{8}{10}$ |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|

Write the fractions in order starting with the least.

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|

least

Here is a question from the 2024 grammar and punctuation paper. It is worth 1 mark.

What is the grammatical term for the underlined words in the sentence below?

The cat that was stuck in the tree belongs to my sister.

Tick **one**.

- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| a noun phrase               | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a relative clause           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a co-ordinating conjunction | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a main clause               | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### **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).

### **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 will be awarded this Friday.

### **PE**

#### **PE lessons start this week**

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.**

Monday: 3LA, 6NG, 4CS, 5CE  
Tuesday: Y5, 3BB, 3DB, 3JB  
Wednesday: Y4, 6CO, 6JL, 6RR  
Thursday: Y3, 4JB, 4JW, 4SJ  
Friday: Y6, 5AW, 5DC, 5KS

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.easypundraising.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.



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

JusTalk Kids is an alternative version of the JusTalk app, aimed at an audience aged 13 and under. As that upper age limit suggests, this social networking platform is intended to be suitable for youngsters, providing them with a space of their own to interact with a community their own age.

Unfortunately, there are still risks associated with JusTalk Kids, so it's vitally important for parents and educators to understand the potential dangers for those who use the app. Our guide delves into the most prominent online safety concerns of JusTalk Kids, while also letting you know how to ensure that children can be protected, should they wish to create an account.

[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.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Year 3</b></p> <p>3BB: <a href="mailto:tbeeson@compassps.uk">tbeeson@compassps.uk</a>, <a href="mailto:kbrighton@compassps.uk">kbrighton@compassps.uk</a><br/> 3DB: <a href="mailto:dbanks@compassps.uk">dbanks@compassps.uk</a><br/> 3LA: <a href="mailto:larcher@compassps.uk">larcher@compassps.uk</a><br/> 3JB: <a href="mailto:jbrennan@compassps.uk">jbrennan@compassps.uk</a></p>                              | <p><b>Year 4</b></p> <p>4JB: <a href="mailto:jbird@compassps.uk">jbird@compassps.uk</a><br/> 4CS: <a href="mailto:csteadman@compassps.uk">csteadman@compassps.uk</a><br/> 4JW: <a href="mailto:jwhitehouse@compassps.uk">jwhitehouse@compassps.uk</a><br/> 4SJ: <a href="mailto:dsayer-jones@compassps.uk">dsayer-jones@compassps.uk</a></p>   |
| <p><b>Year 5</b></p> <p>5KS: <a href="mailto:kswann@compassps.uk">kswann@compassps.uk</a><br/> 5CE: <a href="mailto:cellis@compassps.uk">cellis@compassps.uk</a><br/> 5DC: <a href="mailto:dcasey@compassps.uk">dcasey@compassps.uk</a><br/> 5AW: <a href="mailto:awilson1@compassps.uk">awilson1@compassps.uk</a>, <a href="mailto:rcottee@compassps.uk">rcottee@compassps.uk</a></p>                                      | <p><b>Year 6</b></p> <p>6NG: <a href="mailto:ngibson@compassps.uk">ngibson@compassps.uk</a><br/> 6JL: <a href="mailto:jarbalestier@compassps.uk">jarbalestier@compassps.uk</a><br/> 6CO: <a href="mailto:cosullivan1@compassps.uk">cosullivan1@compassps.uk</a><br/> 6RR: <a href="mailto:rroberts@compassps.uk">rroberts@compassps.uk</a></p> |
| <p>Please contact class teachers in the first instance to resolve any issues. Should you feel you need to escalate the issue, please contact:<br/> <b>Miss Coffee (Assistant Head) if your child is in Y5 or Y6</b> – <a href="mailto:rcottee@compassps.uk">rcottee@compassps.uk</a><br/> <b>Mrs Breen (Assistant Head) if your child is in Y3 or Y4</b> – <a href="mailto:kbreen@compassps.uk">kbreen@compassps.uk</a></p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <p><b><u>RECENT LETTERS INCLUDING NEWSLETTERS – MANY OF OUR LETTERS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE</u></b><br/> 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></p>                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <p><b>Dates for the academic year 2025-2026 (new dates or changes in red)</b><br/> <a href="#">Please see the website for the term dates</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| Academic diary dates for 2026-27                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Autumn term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Spring term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Summer term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 09.09.26 Meet the teacher 3:30-4:00<br>12.09.26 Secondary school admissions open (Y6 only)<br>14.09.26 After school clubs start<br>18.9.26 (delayed) Summer Fete<br>21.09.26 Y6 meeting 4:30pm (Mersea and Y6 information)<br>25.09.26 Individual photos (Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag)<br>14.10.26 Enhanced one planning for specific children<br>15.10.26- SEND tea and chat 9:30-10:30<br>20.10.26 3:40 – 6:30 Learning Conferences<br>21.10.26 3:40 – 6:30 Learning Conferences | <b>04.01.27 Children return to school</b><br>11.01.27 After school clubs start<br>01.02.27-7.02.27 Children's mental health week<br>09.02.27 SEND tea and chat 9:30-10:30<br>03.02.27 Enhanced one planning for specific children<br>05.02.27 Individual photos (Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag)<br>9.02.27 Safer internet day<br><br><b>15.02.27 Half term week</b><br><br>04.03.27 World book day (Children are invited to dress as a book character or bring in a prop from a book) | <b>12.04.27 Children return to school</b><br>19.04.27 First week of after school clubs<br>10.05.27 SATs week<br>19.05.27-21.05.27 Mersea residential for Y6<br>25.05.27 Sports day (Y5 / 6 in the morning, Y3 / Y4 in the afternoon, picnic 12-12:45)<br><b>31.05.27 Half term week</b><br>07.06.27 Multiplication check for 3 weeks (Y4 only)<br>08.06.27 reserve sports day in case of poor weather<br>09.06.27 Enhanced and focussed one plans<br>21.06.27 Secondary school transition week (schools will choose their own dates) |

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| <p><b>26.10.26 Half term week</b></p> <p>31.10.26 Secondary school admissions close</p> <p>13.11.26 Non uniform day in exchange for a donation for the PTA gift shop</p> <p>19.11.26 Wonderdome for Y5 children</p> <p>20.11.26 Children in need (non – uniform: children can wear spots / stripes in return for a donation)</p> <p><del>28.11.26 Christmas fete at JRIS</del></p> <p>30.11.26 last week for after school clubs</p> <p>03.12.26 PTA gift shop</p> <p>05.12.26 Christmas fete at JRIS Note change of date</p> <p>07.12.25 SEN tea and chat 2-3pm</p> <p>16.12.26 Y3 and Y5 Christmas dinner day <i>(children in Y3 / 3 are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper and / or accessory)</i></p> <p>17.12.26 Y4 and Y6 Christmas dinner day <i>(children in Y4 / 6 are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper and / or accessory)</i></p> <p>17.12.26 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>18.12.26 Last day of term</b></p> | <p>05.03.27 Science week</p> <p>9.03.27 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:00</p> <p>10.03.27 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:30</p> <p>22.03.27 Last week for clubs</p> <p>24.03.27 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><b>26.03.27 Last day of term</b></p> | <p>28.06.27 Last week of after school clubs</p> <p>29.06.27 School group photos <i>(Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag))</i></p> <p>29.06.27 Class swaps – children to spend time in their new class</p> <p>02.07.27 Y6 leavers' disco 5pm-7pm</p> <p>07.07.27 Open afternoon 3:30-4:30</p> <p>08.07.27 Annual reports sent out</p> <p>13.07.27 Y6 production for 6JL and 6CO 2pm and 4:30</p> <p>14.07.27 Y6 production for 6RR and 6NG 2pm and 4:30</p> <p><b>16.07.27 Last day of term for children</b></p> |
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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about JUSTALK KIDS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### SUBSCRIPTION FOR PREMIUM ACCESS

While JusTalk Kids is free, there's the option to subscribe to a kids' premium account or a premium family account. At a cost, this feature allows children to have access to more fun features such as games they can play with others in a call; exclusive stickers; a badge denoting them as a premium subscriber; and exclusive ringtones and themes.

### RESISTANCE TO CONTROLS

JusTalk Kids endeavours to allow children the sense of having a chat-based app while allowing parents to set controls (within the app or from their own adult JusTalk account). The basis behind this is positive; however, some children are challenging their parents by refusing to use JusTalk Kids, preferring to use the adult version without any restrictions in place.

### KNOWING THE PARENT PASSCODE

After downloading JusTalk Kids, parents can set a passcode which users must enter to add contacts. The parental controls help to manage which content can be viewed and who children can add as a contact: this then allows children to chat with friends in a controlled environment. However, prospective contacts don't have to know a specific username. In theory, someone could type in a random name and then add them as a friend.

### POTENTIAL DATA LEAKS

JusTalk and JusTalk Kids claim to be secure and encrypted, going so far as to state that even the developers themselves won't access your data. However, a security lapse in 2022 highlighted that messages were not in fact encrypted – leading to concerns around the security of the app and the transparency of the development team.

### CYBERBULLYING

Online chats can provide a sense of anonymity, leading some users to post things which they wouldn't normally say in person. Combined with the option of group chats, there's a risk that young people might join in with this kind of behaviour, escalating it further and potentially turning what should be a fun experience into something deeply negative.

### TOO MUCH SCREENTIME

A report by the UK Parliament Education Committee highlighted a 52% increase in children's screen time between 2020 and 2022 – as well as finding that 25% of children used their smartphones in a manner consistent with screen addiction. Introducing children to social networking apps when they're too young can lead to bad digital habits and a reliance on technology from an early age.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### JUSTIFY THE CONTROLS

If parents allow their child to use JusTalk Kids, they should explain that they're putting parental controls in place to make the app safer. Make sure the child knows not to put their full name on the account and doesn't use a photo of themselves as their profile picture. This type of open discussion will help to ensure that a child is aware of the app's potential risks and knows how to reduce them.

### TALK ABOUT ONLINE FRIENDSHIPS

Young children could be excited to use this app. However, highlight that they must do so in a positive, respectful and responsible manner. While it can be easy to get caught up in a group chat, it's important to talk to others politely and call out any unpleasant behaviour. Discuss the importance of limiting their contacts to people they know in real life and use parental controls to enforce this.

### DOS AND DON'TS OF SHARING

Some children might not understand the potential dangers of oversharing online. Set clear guidelines around what *is* and *isn't* safe to share on the internet, and discuss the concept of a digital footprint. Children need to understand that the things they say and share online can never be completely erased. Even if they delete it themselves, it can be saved and distributed by others.

### ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Apps like JusTalk can sometimes lend themselves to bullying behaviours. Parents should monitor what their child is sending and receiving, check in with them regularly and encourage them to share their feelings (both positive and negative) at home. Remind them that they can block a contact if someone is treating them disrespectfully.

### 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.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/justalk-kids>



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