John Ray Times

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

21st September 2026

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

@ 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 Unit 32-33 Block B, Braintree Enterprise Centre, Springwood Drive, CM7 2YN

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:

Spring/Summer Menus:

28.09.26 Week 1 05.10.26 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.

Zones of Regulation	**School Attendance Difficulties**	**Supporting Anxiety**
		
Curriculum maps are available on our website	Year 3 curriculum map	Year 4 curriculum map
	Year 5 curriculum map	Year 6 curriculum map

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

In our assemblies last week, we discussed the question 'Do we all have a part to play in helping those in need?'. . We explored the story that Prime Minister, Andy Burnham, has pledged, that by Christmas, everyone sleeping rough in England will have a safe place to stay. We talked about what this support might look like. We talked about how this linked in with the British value of democracy and the different ways we help each other in different situations in school.

Dogs in school

From time to time, we may invite dogs, including therapy dogs, into school. In line with our risk assessment, let the school office know if your child has a phobia about dogs.

School council meeting to Church of St Peter and St Paul, Black Notley

Next year, is the 400th anniversary of the birth of John Ray. John Ray was an English naturalist and botanist who grew up in Black Notley. He is known for many things including being the first person to study the full life cycle of the butterfly and discovering that trees could be dated by counting their rings. The John Ray Trust are working hard to arrange events to celebrate John Ray's life and have gifted the school a new commemorative bench. A stained-glass window is also being installed in the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Black Notley where John Ray went to school and is buried. In one of our assemblies, we learnt more about John Ray and his life.

On Thursday, we took our newly elected school council to the church to meet the Vicar, Rachel and look around the church.

We also received the following email today as Rev Nigel, Rachel and Zoe, the church children's worker, were keen to provided feedback on how impressed they were with the children's behaviour and interest.:

It was such a pleasure to have the children from your school council visiting the Church of St Peter and St Paul last week, what a credit they were to John Ray Junior School. They showed respect throughout, were engaged and interested in everything and asked really thoughtful questions. You should be very proud of them.

Well done School Council!

School Fete

It was lovely to see so many of you at the school fete on Friday. Thank you to the PTA for all their hard work in helping to raise funds for both John Ray schools. We look forward to sharing the total raised with you all.

Parking around the school site

We have received complaints from local residents regarding driveways being blocked during school drop off an pick up times. Please be considerate when parking around the school.

Individual photos 25.09.26

Individual photos will be taken on Friday 25.09.26. Children who have PE on Fridays should come to school wearing their school uniform and bring their PE kits in a separate bag.

Year 3 parent feedback form

We are keen to gather Y3 parents' early views on how the Y3 children have settled into JRJS. If you haven't already, please take a few moments to complete this short survey.

Y3 parent feedback form – Fill in form

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 **12th September and 31st 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.

Changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility



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 1st June.

Chartwells' parent taster session – save the date, 10.12.26

Chartwells, our school meal provider, will be hosting a school meal taster session for parents on 10.12.26 at 3:30 . This will take place in our school hall.

Football Trials

Mr Mills and Miss O'Sullivan are doing football trials over the next two weeks for our year 5/6 boys and girls football team.
The following dates for the trials are:
Monday 14th - Year 6 boys
Tuesday 15th - Year 6 girls
Monday 21st - Year 5 boys
Tuesday 22nd - Year 5 girls
If your child wants to attend, they need to go in for lunch first thing and come to the Astro for 1 o'clock and it will last roughly 30 minutes.
Children need to wear astros/trainers and do not need to wear PE kit unless it is their PE day.
If your child has any questions, please ask them to speak to Mr Mills.

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.

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.



The Government's Children's Commissioner is conducting a country-wide survey. They are hoping to have as many as 1 million children complete the survey, which explores what it is like to grow up in England today. This includes questions on children's concerns, their experiences in their communities, and their ideas about what a "good childhood" should look like now and in the future. You can access the survey **here**.

Year 6 SATs question of the week

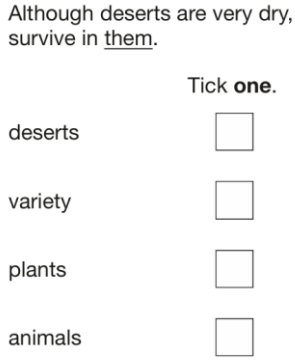
Here is a question worth 1 mark from the 2022 Maths Reasoning paper.

Write the missing values.

$$\frac{3}{10} = \frac{\square}{20}$$

$$\frac{12}{15} = \frac{4}{\square}$$

Here is a question from the 2022 grammar and punctuation paper. It is worth 1 mark.


Although deserts are very dry, a rich variety of plants and animals can survive in them.

Tick **one**.

- deserts ☐
- variety ☐
- plants ☐
- animals ☐

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. Although class teachers would love to see photos, we are now unable to publish these photos on our newsletter.

Well done to the following children for their achievements out of school:
Gracie (4JB) was named Supporters Player at her football match
Albus (3DB), Afnan (4SJ) were players of the match in football
Ibrahim (6JL) was awarded his black belt in shotokan karate
Basia (4JW) came first and second in a dance competition
Victoria (6RR) came 3rd, 5th and 6th in a dance competition
Harry (4SJ) bowled the furthest distance in cricket
Lorelei (4JW) moved to stage 2 in gymnastics

Stars of the week will be awarded this Friday.

3BB: Harper	4CS: Sonny	5AW: Taylor Dr	6CO: Elisa
3DB: Jack	4JB: Ella P	5CE: Samuel	6JL: Callum
3JB: Evie	4JW: Lexi	5DC: Toby	6NG: Ivy
3LA: Keira	4SJ: Carly	5KS: Molly	6RR: Jason

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.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.



Keeping children safe: Supporting children to build emotional resilience.

Facing unpleasant feelings can be a challenge, even for adults – let alone for children and young people, whose minds are still developing. To many youngsters, a mistake in an exam, a hurtful word or even losing in a game can sometimes feel like the worst thing in the world, causing them to react accordingly.

However, this isn't always an effective way to deal with difficult emotions or life's setbacks, so it's important that parents and educators are able impress a healthy approach to these feelings on the children in their care. This guide offers you expert tips on how to instil emotional resilience in young people, helping them to learn from unexpected feelings and situations – and to process them in a mature, effective manner.

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.

Year 3	Year 4
3BB: tbeeson@compassps.uk, kbrighton@compassps.uk	4JB:jbird@compassps.uk
3DB: dbanks@compassps.uk	4CS: csteadman@compassps.uk
3LA: larcher@compassps.uk	4JW: jwhitehouse@compassps.uk
3JB: jbrennan@compassps.uk	4SJ: dsayer-jones@compassps.uk
Year 5	**Year 6**
5KS: kswann@compassps.uk	6NG: ngibson@compassps.uk
5CE: cellis@compassps.uk	6JL: jlarbalestier@compassps.uk
5DC: dcasey@compassps.uk	6CO: cosullivan1@compassps.uk
5AW: awilson1@compassps.uk, rcottee@compassps.uk	6RR: 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 Cottee (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 johnrayjunior@compassps.uk

17/09/26 Year 5 Wonderdome - Year 5 Only

Dates for the academic year 2025-2026 (new dates or changes in red)

Please see the website for the term dates

Academic diary dates for 2026-27		
Autumn term	**Spring term**	**Summer term**
25.09.26 Individual photos *(Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag))* 14.10.26 Enhanced one planning for specific children 14.10.26 2:30pm Y6 parents invited into class to share spooky stories with the children, 15.10.26- SEND tea and chat 9:30-10:30 20.10.26 3:40 – 6:30 Learning Conferences 21.10.26 3:40 – 6:30 Learning Conferences **26.10.26 Half term week** 31.10.26 Secondary school admissions close 13.11.26 Non uniform day in exchange for a donation for the PTA gift shop 19.11.26 Wonderdome for Y5 children 20.11.26 Children in need (non – uniform: children can wear spots / stripes in return for a donation) ~~28.11.26 Christmas fete at JRIS~~ 30.11.26 last week for after school clubs 03.12.26 PTA gift shop 05.12.26 Christmas fete at JRIS Note change of date 07.12.26 SEN tea and chat 2-3pm 10.12.26 Chartwells school meals parent taster session in hall 3:30pm 16.12.26 Y3 and Y5 Christmas dinner day *(children in Y3 / 3 are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper and / or accessory)* 17.12.26 Y4 and Y6 Christmas dinner day *(children in Y4 / 6 are welcome to wear a Christmas jumper and / or accessory)* 17.12.26 Y3 and Y4 to walk to St Michael's church for a Christmas service *(This takes place in school time and is for staff and*	**04.01.27 Children return to school** 11.01.27 After school clubs start 01.02.27-7.02.27 Children's mental health week 09.02.27 SEND tea and chat 9:30-10:30 03.02.27 Enhanced one planning for specific children 05.02.27 Individual photos *(Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag))* 9.02.27 Safer internet day **15.02.27 Half term week** 04.03.27 World book day *(Children are invited to dress as a book character or bring in a prop from a book)* 05.03.27 Science week 9.03.27 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:00 10.03.27 Learning conferences 3:40 – 6:30 22.03.27 Last week for clubs 24.03.27 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)* **26.03.27 Last day of term**	**12.04.27 Children return to school** 19.04.27 First week of after school clubs 10.05.27 SATs week 19.05.27-21.05.27 Mersea residential for Y6 25.05.27 Sports day *(Y5 / 6 in the morning, Y3 / Y4 in the afternoon, picnic 12-12:45)* **31.05.27 Half term week** 07.06.27 Multiplication check for 3 weeks (Y4 only) 08.06.27 reserve sports day in case of poor weather 09.06.27 Enhanced and focussed one plans 21.06.27 Secondary school transition week (schools will choose their own dates) 28.06.27 Last week of after school clubs 29.06.27 School group photos *(Children having PE today should bring their PE kit in a separate bag))* *29.06.27 Class swaps – children to spend time in their new class* 02.07.27 Y6 leavers' disco 5pm-7pm 07.07.27 Open afternoon 3:30-4:30 08.07.27 Annual reports sent out 13.07.27 Y6 production for 6JL and 6CO 2pm and 4:30 14.07.27 Y6 production for 6RR and 6NG 2pm and 4:30 **16.07.27 Last day of term for children**

children only. Children should wear suitable shoes for walking) **18.12.26 Last day of term**		

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BUILD EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE

With increasing societal pressures, many children struggle with managing emotions, facing challenges and processing failure in a healthy way. This is why building emotional resilience in young people is vital for their mental health and personal success. This guide provides practical strategies for parents and educators to help children develop resilience and foster confidence, adaptability and a positive mindset.

1 ENCOURAGE OPEN COMMUNICATION

Regularly engaging children in open dialogue fosters trust and emotional expression. Encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings freely without judgment. Set aside time daily, perhaps during dinner, to ask open-ended questions such as, "What's made you happy today?". This encourages children to express themselves openly.

2 MODEL POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Children often learn how to manage emotions by observing adults. By modelling calm and positive responses to challenges, you can teach them valuable emotional management skills. If you've had a difficult day, verbalise how you're feeling and explain how you plan to handle it, such as "I'm a bit worked-up, so I'm going for a walk to clear my mind."

3 TEACH PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Helping children break down challenges into manageable steps encourages a proactive mindset. Explain that every problem has a solution, even if it's not immediately obvious. For example, if a child is stuck on homework, support them in breaking the task into smaller steps, saying things like "Let's focus on just this first question for now."

4 FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET

Encourage young people to view mistakes as learning opportunities. A growth mindset helps them see setbacks as part of the process, rather than something to be upset about. After a child loses a game or performs poorly on a test, for example, ask them what they've learned from the experience. This reinforces the idea that effort – and even failure – leads to improvement.

5 PROMOTE SELF-CARE PRACTICES

Teaching children about self-care helps them understand the importance of balancing work with relaxation to maintain emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers could start a screen-free hour before bedtime where the family engages in relaxing activities like reading, setting an example to the child for how to unwind.

6 BUILD HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Strong relationships with peers and adults provide a support system that enhances resilience. Encourage positive, respectful interactions to develop social skills. Playdates or group activities can be instrumental in teaching children how to resolve conflicts with friends by modelling and practicing calm communication.

7 SUPPORT EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Helping children to identify and name their emotions allows them to manage those feelings more effectively. When a child's upset, encourage them to talk to you about what they're feeling in an empathetic and supportive manner, and ask them why they might be experiencing these emotions.

8 ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE

Giving children opportunities to make their own decisions boosts confidence and problem-solving skills. A good example of this would be letting children choose and pack their own lunches for school, guiding them with options but allowing them to assume responsibility for the task to help them take ownership.

9 DEVELOP COPING STRATEGIES

Teaching children techniques like mindfulness, deep breathing or journaling can help them to manage stress. Show them how to perform breathing exercises when they're feeling anxious, and practise this regularly. Reinforcing this behaviour in young people will make it easier for them to use these techniques of their own accord during stressful moments.

10 CELEBRATE SMALL WINS

Recognising effort, no matter how small, reinforces perseverance and encourages children to keep trying. After a child completes a difficult task, makes progress on a project or reaches another type of personal goal, praise their efforts. Emphasise the hard work they've put in and be sure to let them know how proud you are!

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 provisions.

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