John Ray Times

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

12th October 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:

19.10.26 Week 1 .02.11.26 Week 2, 12.10.26 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.

Free School Meals (FSM): Free School Meals (FSMs)

If you receive Universal Credit, your child will be eligible for free school meals.

If you think your child may be entitled to free school meals, please apply using this link.

Once you have submitted your application, you will receive an instant confirmation confirming whether your child is eligible or not eligible.

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

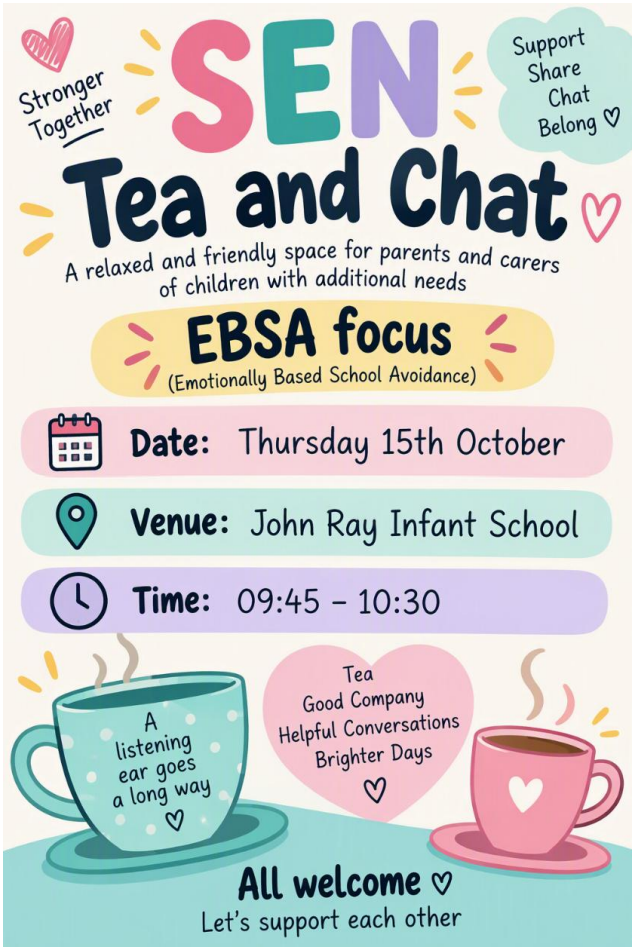
In our assemblies we have been looking ta the role of the Braintree foodbank and discovered that between April 2025 and March 2026, the foodbank helped to supply:

9,425	3,432	44%
emergency food parcels	went to children	of clients were first-timers

You can find more information about the Braintree foodbank on their website.
Home | Braintree Area Foodbank

We also discussed the question 'Who should decide what we have for school lunch?'
This linked in with the UK government's plan to make school meals healthier from September 2027.
We discussed how this related to the British value of the rule of law.

Reminder: SEN Tea and Chat Thursday 15th October 9:45 -10:30



5AW learning conference

Please note a change of dates for 5AW Learning Conferences. These will be held on Monday 12th and Tuesday 13th October.

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.

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.

Unacceptable Behaviour in the School Community

We have updated our Unacceptable Behaviour in the School Community policy. This policy along with our other school policies can be viewed on our school website.

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.

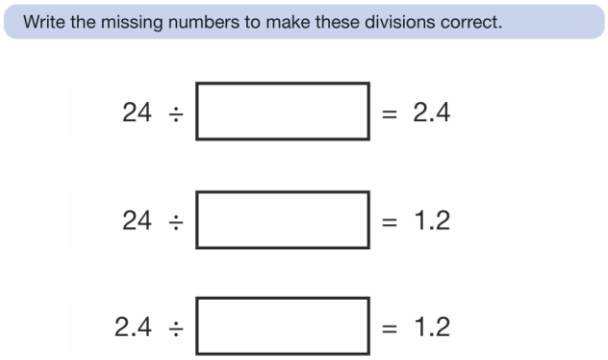
Nuts and nut products

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.

Year 6 SATs question of the week

Here is a question worth 2 marks from the 2026 Maths reasoning paper.



Here is a question from the 2026 grammar and punctuation paper. It is worth 1 mark.

2 Which sentence is the most **formal**?

Tick **one**.

- Come on – find a seat! ☐
- Sit down, won't you? ☐
- Have a sit-down. ☐
- Please be seated. ☐

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.

Football: Logan (6CO) has been accepted into a football academy

Football: players' of the match: Jackson (6JL), Sydney (6CO), Dunamis (5CE), Damisi (3BB), Mason (6JL), Aqib (4JW)

Swimming: Lyla (4SJ), Albus (3DB), Eive (5DC)

Kickboxing: Ibrahim (6JL)

Dancing: Shia (3JB) 1st place, Victoria (6RR) 3rd place, Mya (6RR) 3rd place, Basia (4JW) 1st and 2nd place, Isis (5AW) 3rd place, dancer of the week Roxy (4JW)

Acrobats: Isla (3JB)

Show: Willow (4SJ), Maddie (5AW)

Run: Willow (5KS) took part in a 5K run

Netball player of the match: Rosie (6CO)

Karate: yellow belt, Albus (3DB), 2 golds, Finley (5AW), bronze, Reuben (6CO), silver and gold, Oliver (3JB) Carter (5DC)
Boxing: 1st place sparring Ibrahim (6JL), bronze for sparring Willow (5KS)

Well done to Miss Adams who completed the Chelmsford Half Marathon on Saturday.

A special well done to Reuben (6CO) who volunteered at the Alzheimer's society walk at the weekend.

Stars of the week

3BB: Elsie, Bella-Rose	4CS: Darcie, Carla	5AW: Julia, Elana	6CO: Evan, C
3DB: Joe, Hope	4JB: Dawud	5CE: Jude, Daniel	6JL: Jack, Ella
3JB: Ingrid, Aaliyah	4JW: Basia, Moana	5DC: Louie, Eive	6NG: Maja, L
3LA: Nural, Freddie	4SJ: Lyla, Harry	5KS: Alex, Zion	6RR: Mia

PE

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: What parents and carers need to know about LooksMaxxing

Looksmaxxing encourages people – particularly young men – to 'improve their appearance' through everything from grooming, skincare and exercise to far more questionable techniques. As this trend becomes increasingly visible on social media, the guide explores how appearance-focused content can affect boys' confidence, self-worth and body image, while exposing them to misleading or potentially dangerous advice.

The guide also examines how looksmaxxing content can become increasingly extreme, with links to obsessive behaviours, mental health difficulties and harmful online communities. It offers practical advice for parents and educators on spotting changes in behaviour, recognising looksmaxxing terminology, understanding what young people may be seeing online and opening supportive conversations about appearance, influencers and unrealistic expectations.

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, kbreen@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
30/09/26 Colchester Castle - Year 4 only
23/09/26 The Snowman – Year 5 only
02/10/26 Learning Conferences – All year groups
05/10/26 Enhanced One-Plan – Selected children only
05/10/26 Focused One-Plan – Selected children only
09/10/26 The Compass Eko Trust Strategy 2026-2031 - All year groups

Dates for the academic year 2026-2027 (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**
13.10.26 5AW Learning conferences 14.10.26 Enhanced one planning for specific children 15.10.26 3:30pm Y6 parents invited into class to share spooky stories with the children, Please note change of date 15.10.26- SEND tea and chat 9:45-10:30 (at JRIS) 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 07.11.26 Open morning for new parents 9:30-11am 13.11.26 Children in need (non – uniform: children can wear spots / stripes in return for a donation) 19.11.26 Wonderdome for Y5 children 20.11.26 Non uniform day in exchange for a donation for the PTA gift shop	**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 22.03.27 School Council to visit the Houses of Parliament 24.03.27 Y5 and Y6 to walk to St Michael's church for an Easter service *(This takes place in*	**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

20.11.26 Dick Whittington panto in school 23.11.26 4CS and 4JW to Colchester Castle 24.11.26 4SJ and 4JB to Colchester Castle ~~28.11.26 Christmas fete at JRIS~~ 30.11.26 Year 5 to Charter Hall for The Snowman 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 children only. Children should wear suitable shoes for walking)* **18.12.26 Last day of term**	*school time and is for staff and children only. Children should wear suitable shoes for walking)* **26.03.27 Last day of term**	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**

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. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about LOOKSMAXXING

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Looksmaxxing is an online trend focused on improving one's physical appearance, particularly among boys and young men. At the milder end, it can involve grooming, skincare, diet and exercise advice, sometimes called "softmaxxing". At its extremes, or "hardmaxxing", it can promote unproven or dangerous practices and contribute to body image concerns, low self-worth, and mental health difficulties.

TARGETING MALE INSECURITIES

Although usually aimed at men, looksmaxxing can also reach boys by promising to improve their appearance and dating success. Forums offer 'objective', and sometimes brutal, views on attractiveness, while influencers may make appearance seem all-important. Advice ranges from useful tips on hygiene, skincare, and fashion to more concerning guidance.

DUBIOUS ADVICE

Some advice moves into dubious territory. One example is "mewing", a tongue exercise claimed to create a more masculine jawline. The American Association of Orthodontists says evidence for its effectiveness is limited and warns that following such guidance could contribute to tooth alignment problems, bite issues, and speech difficulties.

EXTREME REMEDIES

Some DIY remedies are even more extreme and potentially dangerous. While fears of "bonesmashing" – which involves trying to alter the cheekbones using blunt objects for a more 'masculine' appearance – may sometimes be overstated in the media, other guidance can also cause harm. Untrained use of microneedling and derma rollers, taking substances or medication without appropriate medical guidance, and overusing skincare products can all have potentially harmful consequences.

BODY IMAGE ISSUES

This pursuit of physical perfection can become obsessive and contribute to serious body image issues. Exposure to looksmaxxing content can encourage teenagers to tie their appearance to their value and self-worth, as well as making boys and young men feel they need to change perfectly normal aspects of their appearance. This can be associated with disordered eating, overexercising, or other obsessive behaviours that interfere with everyday life.

MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

As well as the physical consequences, body image concerns can be associated with mental health difficulties, such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, body dysmorphic disorder, and psychological distress. They can cause problems both at school and at home, with children and young people potentially avoiding social situations because they fear their appearance will be negatively judged by others.

A PATHWAY TO EXTREMES

Looksmaxxing has its roots in online 'incel' communities but has since become more mainstream on platforms such as TikTok. Algorithm-driven feeds may show users more extreme material as they interact with similar content. Some looksmaxxing spaces have also been linked with misogynistic, incel, and white supremacist ideologies.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WATCH FOR CHANGES

Keep an eye out for concerning behavioural changes in children and young people. This could include an obsession with diet and exercise, spending more time on social media apps, becoming secretive with their phone, or a shift in how they interact with friends and family. If a young person suddenly becomes distressed by their appearance or adopts rigid or extreme routines, try to understand what may be behind the change.

CHECK THE SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media algorithms are tailored to each user, meaning what appears on your feeds may be dramatically different from what children see on theirs. Try to get an idea of the content children and young people are consuming online, and use available parental controls where appropriate. TikTok, for example, provides tools that can help families manage or filter certain types of content.

LISTEN FOR THE LINGO

Like many internet communities, looksmaxxing groups and influencers use distinctive language. As well as "mewing", mentioned above, you might hear terms such as "Chad" (an attractive male), "foid" (a misogynistic term for a woman), and "mogging" (looking more attractive than someone else). Other examples involve adding "maxxing" to another word, such as "jestermaxxing" (using humour to attract women) and "starvemaxxing" (extreme dieting).

TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

Open communication can help children and young people recognise misleading influencers and harmful online communities. Discuss unrealistic ideas about appearance and explain that some creators benefit from controversial or extreme content. Talk about the risks of unqualified health advice and how people's insecurities can be exploited online, while making it clear that it's okay to speak openly about any concerns.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is a technology journalist who has written for publications including Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.

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See full reference list on our website

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