

September 2026

John Ray Infant

Absence line:

01376 323 071



Helping our children learn, belong and thrive

Welcome back to a new school year! September is such an exciting time as our children settle into new classrooms, make new friends and begin another year of learning and growing together. At our infant school, attendance is about much more than being in the classroom. Every day is an opportunity for children to build friendships, develop confidence, learn new skills and feel that they truly belong.

Friendships grow every day

For young children, friendships are incredibly important. Every school day gives children the chance to:

- Make and strengthen friendships
- Talk, listen and share ideas
- Learn through play with others
- Develop empathy and kindness
- Build confidence and independence

When children are in school regularly, they have more opportunities to develop those important relationships and feel connected to their class.

Attendance and wellbeing

Young children thrive on routine, familiarity and consistency. Coming to school regularly helps children know what to expect and gives them a sense of security.

Being part of the daily school routine can help children to feel safe, confident and ready to learn.

Regular attendance also helps children feel that they are an important part of our school community — because **we notice when they are here, and we value their presence!**

Did you know?

Missing just 1 day every 2 weeks = around 10% of the school year missed.

For a young child, that can mean missing lots of little moments — a new game with friends, a class discussion, a story, a special activity or an opportunity to practise something they are learning.

Every day really does count!

It's about belonging

School isn't just about lessons. Some of the most important learning happens through:

Stories

Creative activities

Play

Friendships

Lunchtime conversations
Singing and assemblies
Talking with adults and friends

These everyday experiences help children develop the **social and emotional skills** they will use throughout their lives.

We understand that children get poorly

We know that children sometimes become unwell and that absence is occasionally unavoidable. We are not expecting children to attend school when they are genuinely too ill to do so.

Our message is simply:

If your child is well enough to come to school, please help them make the most of every day.

If your child is worried about school, friendships, separation or anything else that is making attendance difficult, **please talk to us**. We are here to listen and work with you.

The Importance of Being on Time

Arriving at school on time is just as important as attending every day. The start of the school day is when teachers share important information, introduce learning activities and help children settle into their routines.

When children arrive late:

- They can miss key learning opportunities.
- They may feel unsettled or anxious joining lessons already in progress.
- Their classmates' learning can be disrupted.

A few minutes late each day can quickly add up to many hours of lost learning across the school year.

Holidays and other absences

Please submit an exceptional leave of absent form prior to the absence. This can be collected from the school office. Please see below a link to Essex penalty notices.

[School attendance and absence: Penalty notices | Essex County Council](#)

Planned absences (medical or dental appointments)

Please email proof of the appointment to johnrayinfant@compassps.uk . If your child's medical appointment is first thing in the morning and your child normally has a school dinner, please inform the school office their lunch choice for that day.

Thank you for supporting your child's attendance and helping them to make the most of their time at school.

Every day counts. Every child matters. Every child belongs.

Attend today, achieve tomorrow!