

INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE

John F Kennedy Catholic School

2nd May 2025



If you watched any of the coverage of Pope Francis' funeral on Saturday morning, you could not fail to be impressed by the sense of occasion - the huge numbers of people gathered - including the hierarchy of the Church, many clergy and religious, leaders of nations from around the world and thousands of ordinary people. Sticking very closely to the instructions that Pope Francis had left, it was a magnificent yet simple ceremony. The homily delivered by Cardinal Re was a superb tribute to the pope, in which he reflected on Francis' approach to the papacy. Some extracts from the homily are as follows:

The decision to take the name Francis immediately appeared to indicate the pastoral plan and style on which he wanted to base his pontificate, seeking inspiration from the spirit of Saint Francis of Assisi.

He maintained his temperament and form of pastoral leadership, and through his resolute personality, immediately made his mark on the governance of the Church. He established direct contact with individuals and peoples, eager to be close to everyone, with a marked attention to those in difficulty, giving himself without measure, especially to the marginalized, the least among us. He was a Pope among the people, with an open heart towards everyone. He was also a Pope attentive to the signs of the times and what the Holy Spirit was awakening in the Church.

His charisma of welcome and listening, combined with a manner of behaviour in keeping with today's sensitivities, touched hearts and sought to reawaken moral and spiritual sensibilities. Evangelization was the guiding principle of his pontificate. With a clear missionary vision, he spread the joy of the Gospel, which was the title of his first Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii Gaudium. It is a joy that fills the hearts of all those who entrust themselves to God with confidence and hope.

The guiding thread of his mission was also the conviction that the Church is a home for all, a home with its doors always open. He often used the image of the Church as a "field hospital" after a battle in which many were wounded; a Church determined to take care of the problems of people and the great anxieties that tear the contemporary world apart; a Church capable of bending down to every person, regardless of their beliefs or condition, and healing their wounds.

His gestures and exhortations in favor of refugees and displaced persons are countless. His insistence on working on behalf of the poor was constant.



THANK YOU POPE FRANCIS

Pope Francis always placed the Gospel of mercy at the center, repeatedly emphasizing that God never tires of forgiving us. He always forgives, whatever the situation might be of the person who asks for forgiveness and returns to the right path.

He called for the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy in order to highlight that mercy is “the heart of the Gospel.”

Mercy and the joy of the Gospel are two key words for Pope Francis.

In contrast to what he called “the culture of waste,” he spoke of the culture of encounter and solidarity. The theme of fraternity ran through his entire pontificate with vibrant tones. In his Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti, he wanted to revive a worldwide aspiration to fraternity, because we are all children of the same Father who is in heaven. He often forcefully reminded us that we all belong to the same human family.

“Build bridges, not walls” was an exhortation he repeated many times, and his service of faith as Successor of the Apostle Peter always was linked to the service of humanity in all its dimensions.

Various themes resonate with our Catholic Life and Mission here at JFK. Francis’ priorities certainly match with our school ethos and the Catholic Social teaching themes that guide us throughout the year. In particular:

- The importance we have always placed on our pastoral care and sense of community
- A focus on the marginalised, the least among us
- The building of peace in our world
- Seeing life as an opportunity to serve others
- Mercy and forgiveness
- Evangelisation as the driving force for our work

As a school we give thanks for Pope Francis’ inspiration in our daily lives. The conclusion of the homily went as follows:

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Pope Francis used to conclude his speeches and meetings by saying, “Do not forget to pray for me.”

Dear Pope Francis, we now ask you to pray for us. May you bless the Church, bless Rome, and bless the whole world from heaven as you did last Sunday from the balcony of this basilica in a final embrace with all the people of God, but also embrace humanity that seeks the truth with a sincere heart and holds high the torch of hope.

And to that we say, “Amen.”

Mr Neves - Headteacher



SENIOR STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM 2025 – 2026

Commissioning of the new Senior Student Leadership Team

This morning our Inspire, Achieve, Serve Leaders gathered in St Mark's church to witness the commissioning of our new student leadership team: Jakub Buda, Ashlee Garnham, Nathalie Morgan and Miriam Standen. Mr Fenrych-Fahy led a beautiful ceremony, consisting of a Gospel reading, reflections and prayers and the awarding of leadership badges. A poignant part of the proceedings was the reflection and sharing of advice from each of the outgoing leadership team: Gemma East, Emma Kandiah, Grace Kelly-Whyte and Raphael Salido. They are coming to the end of their time at JFK and will soon be starting their A level exams, but they have been superb ambassadors for our school and spoke in a wonderfully inspiring way to their successors. I am very grateful for all they have done as role models for our students. I very much look forward to working with the new team during the year ahead.



Mr Neves - Headteacher



GEOGRAPHY

Year 9 - Global Economy

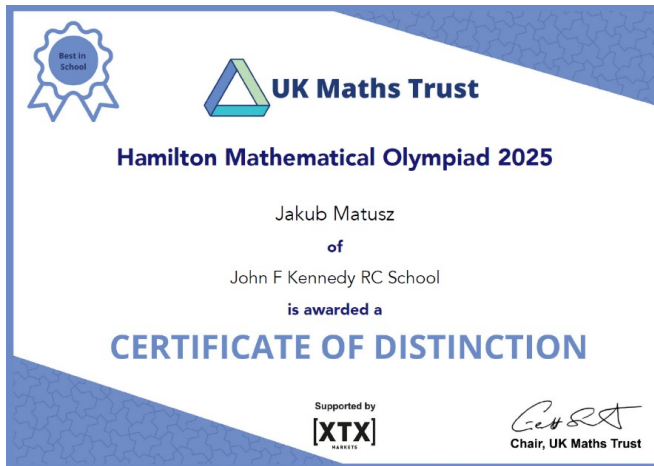


Our learning in Geography this term has focused on the global economy and how we now exist in an interconnected world. Students have been developing an understanding of global trade and commerce through the study of product examples including cocoa, cotton and mobile phones. In their lesson this week students in 9D learned about the nature of global transport through a study of the container shipping industry, the biggest of these ships can now carry over 24,000 containers. As well as plotting the route a container ship takes from China to Europe the students also visited our very own on site container, a recycled shipping container that is now used for storage. This gave them an impression of the scale of an individual container and an appreciation of the amount of product being transported globally at any given moment.



MATHS

Intermediate Mathematical Challenge 2025 Follow On Round Results



Hamilton Olympiad

Question 1 - There is a water tank which is a cuboid with base area, x , and height, h . Standing in the tank are three identical metal columns, each a cylinder of height, \square , and base a circle of area, y . The tank is then filled with a volume, v , of water. When one column is removed, the water level drops by 50. When a second column is removed, the water level drops by a further 30. Find how much further the water level drops when the last column is removed.

Entrance into the Hamilton Olympiad is by invitation for students who score very highly in the Intermediate Maths Challenge. The distinction award is then achieved by the top 25% of competitors in the Olympiad. This really is a fantastic result given the difficulty of the competition and that Jakub was competing against the best mathematicians. Congratulations and well done!

Jakub Matusz – Certificate of Distinction

Pink Kangaroo

15. The two shaded rectangles are identical. They both have an area of 4 cm^2 .

What is the area of the large rectangle?

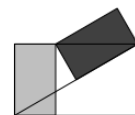
A 10 cm^2

B $8\sqrt{3}\text{ cm}^2$

C 8 cm^2

D 12 cm^2

E $4\sqrt{3}\text{ cm}^2$



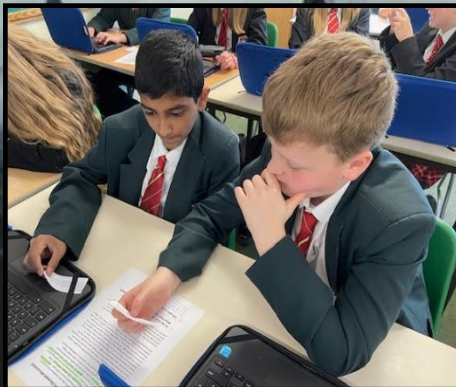
Similarly, entrance into the Pink Kangaroo is by invitation for students who score highly in the Intermediate Maths Challenge. In the Kangaroo, the top 10% receive gold, the next 20% silver and the next 30% bronze. Again, this is an excellent result and many congratulations goes to Adam.

Adam Matusz – Silver Award



HISTORY

Year 7 - The Black Death

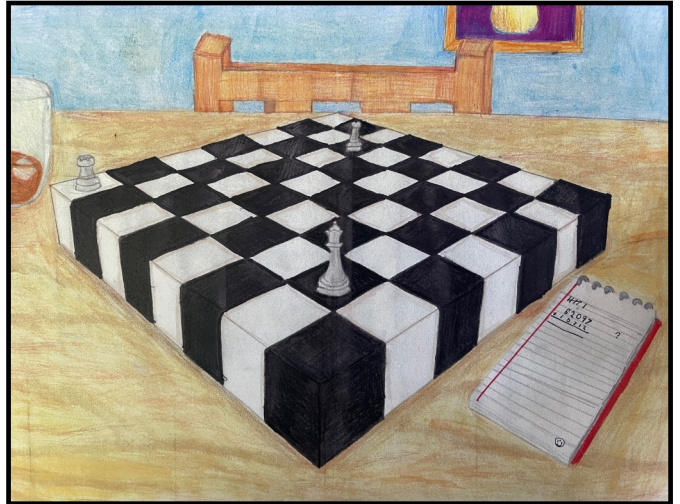


This week the Year 7's in History have been using role plays to find out what had happened to their characters in the village of Walsham during the Black Death to try and assess the impacts on society at the time. Though half the village was wiped out, some villagers benefited financially and some of the women found themselves doing jobs that had previously only been carried out by men.



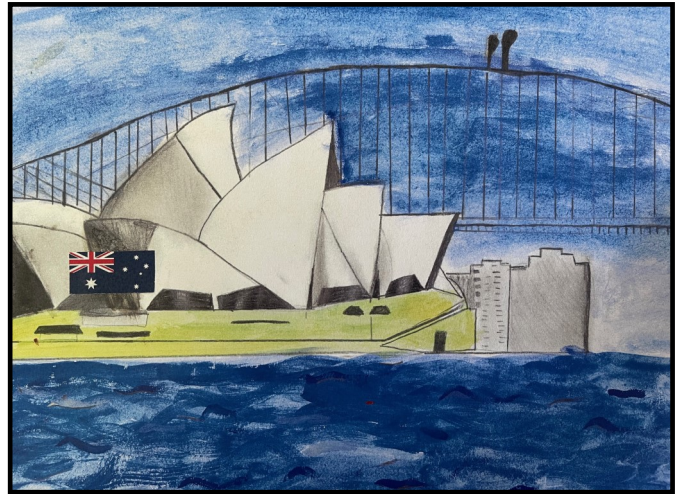
ART

Year 9 Perspective





ART





RUGBY

Sixth Form Touch Rugby Team Crowned National Champions



We are thrilled to announce that our Sixth Form Touch Rugby team has been crowned national champions in the final stages of the England Rugby Touch to Twickenham Tournament, held at the iconic Sixways Stadium in Worcester.

The team remained undefeated in a tough pool of eight teams, playing with skill, determination and outstanding teamwork. What made this achievement even more special was that the squad was made up of an equal split of boys and girls, reflecting the inclusive spirit of Touch Rugby and fostering a strong sense of community.

Throughout the day, the team played with a competitive edge while demonstrating the core values of rugby; teamwork, respect, enjoyment, discipline and sportsmanship. Their commitment and unity stood out at every stage of the tournament.

At the end of a thrilling day of competition, the team proudly lifted the trophy. To top it all off, they were informed they will take part in the on pitch pre-game ceremony at England vs Australia during the upcoming Autumn International Series at Twickenham Stadium, a once in a lifetime opportunity.

A huge congratulations to the entire team for this exceptional achievement and for being brilliant ambassadors of our school.



Mr Chignall - PE Department



PE



County League Athletics 1

We had sunshine for our first County League Athletics Match this week. There were some fantastic performances and JFK once again showed their prowess on the track and in the field events. We will be back on the track on Thursday next week for our 2nd County League Meet.

U14 Girls - 2nd
U16 Girls - 1st
U14 Boys - 2nd
U16 Boys - 3rd

PE Moderations

Well done to all students involved in A Level and GCSE PE Moderations this week!

Next Weeks Fixtures	
Wednesday 7th May	Year 8 Football v Adeyfield (Semi Final (Plate))
Thursday 8th May	County League Athletics Meet 2

Miss Perry - PE Department



JFKSA



JFKSA - Music Quiz Night Save The Date - 9th May 2025

The John F Kennedy School Association (JFKSA) have been busy planning their next fundraising event, which I'm delighted to announce will be a Music Quiz Night on 9th May. Keep an eye out for more details over the next few weeks, tickets will be on sale following the Easter break.

So, start getting your teams together as it gets quite competitive! (maximum of 10 people in a team)

We can't wait to see you there!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday 5th May - Bank Holiday, School Closed

Thursday 8th May - Public Exams Start

Wednesday 14th May - Year 7 Croft Farm Residential Parent Information Evening, 6.00pm

Tuesday 20th May - New Year 7 Parents Evening

Monday 9th June - Year 10 Work Experience Week

Monday 9th June - Year 7 Residential Trip

WE ARE HIRING!

[Click here for the latest vacancy information](#)



FUTURE DATES

2025

Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May - HALF TERM

Friday 27th June - school closed INSET Day

Friday 18th July - school closes at 1.30pm



GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT

All Saints Catholic Academy Trust



The All Saints Catholic Academy Trust (ASCAT) is currently seeking to recruit Governors for a number of our Schools local Governing Boards, across the Trust, to ensure high standards of achievement for all children and young people in the school by setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction; holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

The Trust has vacancies for Foundation Governors; Co-opted Governors and Community Governors. This is an exciting opportunity to play a role in a vibrant and collaborative Trust that is in the process of expansion and development.

The role of Governor is incredibly rewarding and the benefits include:

- **Professional development**
- **Supporting the local and wider Catholic community**
- **Gaining insight into the Education Sector**
- **Management & Leadership experience**
- **Being able to have a significant impact on the Schools in the Trust**
- **Build your professional and personal network**

If you are interested in supporting our schools and Trust please contact Christina Reffold, Director of Governance and Compliance at governance@ascat.co.uk or complete the below form.

<https://forms.gle/9XHc98pgQCjgNfG7A>



TRIPS 2025 – 2026



Monthly Instalments are due on the *1st of each month for the following:*

A Level Biology F/T, June 2025

Year 7 Croft Farm, June 2025

GCSE Geography F/T, July 2025

Berlin, October 2025

Ski Trip, February 2026

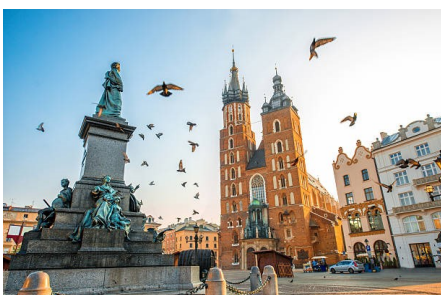
Valencia 2026

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Year 10 and 12 , Dear England Theatre Trip, May 2025 – outstanding payments due

Year 11 Prom – Instalments to be paid

Year 7 - Boxmoor Trust Trip

A Level History - St Albans Trip





ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS 2025

At John F Kennedy Catholic school, we believe that student performance, behaviour and attendance are fundamentally linked. Our ethos is to maximise the full potential of each student and in order to achieve this, high attendance rates are essential.

Our expectation is that individual student attendance should not be below 95%.

Section 7 of The Education Act states that 'parents are responsible for making sure that their children, of compulsory school age, receive a suitable full time education'.

Section 444 of The Education Act clearly states that 'if a child is absent without authorisation, then the parent is guilty of an offence'. This is a strict liability offence - i.e. all that needs to be shown is a lack of regular attendance. Sanctions can include a fine of up to £1000.

Holidays during Term time

Authorisation of absence for Holidays during term time is at the discretion of the Headteacher and is granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Fines are enforceable for a child being absent from school without permission. This is currently £80 per child for each parent, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days.

Lateness

As stated in the school Attendance Policy:

- Students should attend school "full time" and they should remain in school attending all timetabled lessons. This means that students should arrive in time for registration. In practice school buses may be late and in this case students should sign in at Reception so they can receive their mark.
- Avoidable lateness beyond 10.00 am constitutes unauthorised absence and can legally be the basis of an offence by the parent/carer
- Those students who arrive very late (after 10.00 am) without a good excuse will not be credited with an attendance. Their absence will therefore be unauthorised and a different mark (U) will be used to distinguish them from those who are "unpunctual". Steps will be taken by the school with the support of parents/carers to correct those students who are persistently unpunctual



GENERAL NOTICES

Road Safety

Parents/Carers are reminded about the importance of road safety and we highlight a number of points you may wish to discuss with your child:

- The importance of crossing the road at a safe place. Using either a zebra or pelican crossing where possible
- Avoid crossing behind parked cars
- Never run out into the road
- Be aware of your surroundings – take out earphones and stop talking with friends or on the phone when crossing the road
- Have reflective items on jackets or bag.
- If cycling, follow the same instruction and make sure you have lights on your bike and wear a helmet at all times.



Disabled Parking Zones

Please can we ask that the disabled parking bays located along Hollybush Lane be kept clear . They are marked on the path and are needed to be accessed by local residents.



JFK enjoys good relationships with our neighbours and local community. Please be mindful of driveways and access in Hollybush Lane and neighbouring roads if dropping off/picking up your child from school. **Please also try and avoid leaving your car engines running outside of school.**



GENERAL NOTICES

Appointments During School

Please try to avoid making medical appointments during the school day. If this is not possible, please alert the Year Team via email with a copy of the appointment letter/email/screenshot at least 24 hours in advance.

If your child does need to leave for a pre-arranged medical appointment please ensure that they are aware of the time and date of the appointment and are instructed to be ready in reception to be collected. There have been a number of occasions recently whereby the office staff have had to search for a student in order for them to be picked up.

Illness During the School Day

We have seen an increase in students calling parents prior to seeking medical attention at school. Any student feeling unwell during the school day should report to Student Services where they will be seen by a medically trained member of staff. Please do impress upon your children the importance of the school contacting home if it is required during the school day. It can cause parents unnecessary worry which we would like to avoid.

ABSENCE

If your son/daughter is going to be absent due to illness please telephone the school absence line by 9.00am on each day of absence.

Year 7 01442 229105 (year7@jfk.herts.sch.uk)
Year 8 01442 229124 (year8@jfk.herts.sch.uk)
Year 9 01442 229131 (year9@jfk.herts.sch.uk)
Year 10 01442 229132 (year10@jfk.herts.sch.uk)
Year 11 01442 229136 (year11@jfk.herts.sch.uk)
Sixth Form 01442 229137 (6thform@jfk.herts.sch.uk)

Students should bring a letter explaining their absence on their return to school.



Public Health
England

Guidance from Public Health England

Diarrhoea and vomiting: exclusion period: whilst symptomatic
and 48hours after the last symptoms



[Is my child too ill for school?](#)

NHS advice about when to keep your child off school



Parent & Carer Support Summer Term 2025



FREE to parents and carers living in Hertfordshire

All courses are 6 weeks with a break for half term 26th-30th May

TALKING TEENS

6, weekly sessions for parents and carers of children aged **12-19**, covering:

- The Teen Brain: physical and emotional changes taking place and why behaviour changes.
- The link between behaviour and communicating difficult feelings.
- How to maintain your relationship with good communication.
- Understand risk taking behaviour around drugs, alcohol and gang culture.
- How to negotiate and reduce conflict.



Wednesdays

7.45 - 9.15pm

7th May to 18th Jun

Online Course: ID 759

Tuesdays

7.45 - 9.15pm

3rd Jun to 8th Jul

Online Course: ID 760

TALKING ADDITIONAL NEEDS

A 6-week group for parents and carers of children with any additional need aged **2-19**
Your child does not need a diagnosis.

- Understand your child's behaviour.
- Develop strategies that really work.
- Reduce conflict and increase co-operation.
- Improve emotional regulation.
- Explore sensory needs.
- Increase your child's resilience.
- Manage different needs in your family.



Tuesdays

9.30 - 11.30am

3rd Jun to 8th Jul

Face to Face: ID 755

**Gade Community Room
Oakleaf Primary School,
Hemel Hempstead**

Tuesdays

8.00 - 9.30pm

6th May to 17th Jun

Online Course ID 756