

INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE

John F Kennedy Catholic School

16th May 2025



Pope Leo XIV



Habemus Papam! We heard the traditional announcement last Thursday early evening.

I had received a WhatsApp message a few days before, showing me the papal election odds from Paddy Power but I hadn't really taken notice. For me and I'm sure many lay-people, the American Cardinal Robert Prevost, was a surprise - there had been lots of speculation about an African or perhaps Filipino Pope. However, the more I have learned about Cardinal Prevost the more I realise it was an obvious choice! Some details that I have received:

- Robert Prevost was born in 1955 in Chicago, ordained in 1982, and a member of the Augustinian Order
- When Pope Francis was elected Pope in March 2013 Robert Prevost was not even a Bishop, just a priest - this is rare
- He was a maths teacher in Chicago - he was accepted into Harvard Law school but rejected it
- Shortly after ordination he joined a missionary group and moved to Peru - to live and work in the remote villages, where children die from treatable diseases and families walk miles for clean water
- Here he learned Quechua, the sacred language of the Incas; he slept on dirt floors with the villagers and prayed under the stars
- In 2014 Pope Francis appointed him as apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Chiclayo, Peru. This was the start of a series of new positions of responsibility in the Church:
- 2015 Bishop of Chiclayo
- 2019 member of the Vatican Dicastery for Bishops
- 2020 Apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Callao, Peru
- 2023 called to Rome and appointed as Prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Bishops
- 2023 President of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America
- 2023 He was made a Cardinal - and member of 7 Vatican Dicasteries, member of the Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State
- 2025 from Cardinal Deacon to Cardinal Bishop
- 2025 Elected Pope



POPE LEO XIV

Last Sunday was 'Good Shepherd Sunday', when we pray especially for vocations - and are asked to contribute to the priests' training fund. Sometimes we think priests just drop from heaven like some kind of alien species, but actually they come from ordinary families and ordinary communities - as Robert Prevost clearly did, from the South side of Chicago. This was clear when we saw interviews with his brother, who was as surprised as anyone to see his brother Bob appear on the balcony in St Peter's Square.

Pope Leo XIV has given us a glimpse of his priorities in his first address to the piazza of St Peter's and the homily in his first Mass celebrated as Pope:

On peace

'Peace be with you all - help us, one and all, to build bridges through dialogue and encounter, joining together as one people, always at peace.'

'...we want to be a synodal Church, a Church that moves forward, a Church that always seeks peace, that always seeks charity, that always seeks to be close above all to those who are suffering.'

On faith

'Even today there are many settings in which the Christian faith is considered absurd, meant for the weak and unintelligent. Settings where other securities are preferred, like technology, money, success, power, or pleasure.

These are contexts where it is not easy to preach the Gospel and bear witness to its truth, where believers are mocked, opposed, despised or at best tolerated and pitied. Yet, precisely for this reason they are the places where our missionary outreach is desperately needed.'

'A lack of faith is often tragically accompanied by the loss of meaning in life, the neglect of mercy, appalling violations of human dignity, the crisis of the family and so many other wounds that afflict our society.'

In many ways he seems to have the same priorities as Pope Francis. He has explained that he chose the name Leo to follow on from Leo XIII, who lived in the 19th century and whose encyclical 'Rerum Novarum' addressed important social questions in the context of the first great industrial revolution. Today Leo XIV suggests that Catholic Social Teaching offers a response to another industrial revolution: technology - and specifically to 'developments in the field of AI that pose new challenges for the defence of human dignity, of justice and of labour'

Prayer for our newly elected Pope

Lord of life, love and hope, we thank you for the election of our new Pope.

Watch over, protect and bless Pope Leo XIV

We pray that, led by the Holy Spirit, his faithful witness will be a beacon of hope in our fragile and often divided world.

May the joy of the Gospel inspire him with compassionate understanding so that, together, we can be peacemakers and life-givers.

May Pope Leo XIV be a good and courageous shepherd, concerned for "the least, the last and the lost" of "every tribe and tongue and people and nation". Guide him to be a leader after your own heart, which is more loving than we can possibly imagine.

We ask you, Lord, to surround our new Pope with people of pastoral wisdom as he adjusts to his new role. Fill him with confidence in the power of prayer. Help us to help him.

Amen.

Mr Neves – Headteacher



BRONZE DUKE OF EDINBURGH



On Friday 9th May and Saturday 10th May our Year 10s and some Year 12s who have signed up for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award had their assessed expedition in the Chiltern Hills. We are delighted to announce the successful completion of our Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award assessed expedition. All participating students demonstrated exceptional commitment, teamwork, and resilience throughout the journey, meeting the rigorous standards set by the DofE programme. As a result, every student has successfully passed the expedition section and is now eligible to receive their Bronze Award. This achievement reflects their dedication and the valuable skills they have developed during the programme. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the students on this significant accomplishment!



Ms Casserly – DofE Coordinator



DRAMA TRIP TO THE NATIONAL THEATRE



This changed my views of Gareth Southgate- 'It wasn't just about football but about so much more'- I was immediately invested in the whole thing and loved the anthem singing as it brought back the highs and lows of watching England playing football!!'

It showed me the pressure from everyone all involved in professional football are under in an exciting, immersive, funny and sad way'

'I felt I was there for every penalty they took!'

'The backdrop of the film footage and the statistics around penalties and in terms of football history how many playing their position had gone before them: brilliant!'

'I loved it when Alex Scott ran on with the Euro Cup which the women had won and offered it to Gareth Southgate to hold it for a moment: we all laughed!'

These are just a few of the comments made by the students who attended the national's revolving stage matinee performance of James Graham's play about the game and the nation to show Gareth Southgate's management of the England side.

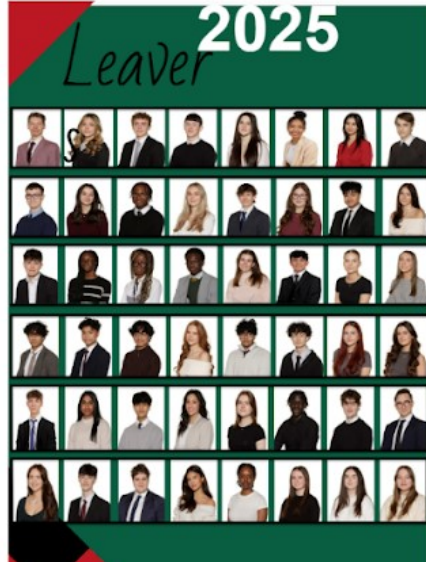
It starts with him watching himself taking and losing the penalty in the Euros in 1996 and reveals the ways he and his team, including a female psychologist, over many years changed the players, fans and pundits, approach the game and what being part of the England team means.

The title comes from a letter he sends to the nation after the racism which beset 3 players who missed penalties in a Euros game and why politically they then always 'take the knee', in solidarity, comradeship, diversity and universality. Football is a metaphor for good and bad outcomes.

Thank you National Theatre for great reduced price stalls tickets and thank you to everyone for letting us go to this brilliantly memorable play!



SIXTH FORM



Year 13 students enjoyed a memorable Leavers Day filled with laughter, reflection, and celebration. The day included their final mass, heartfelt speeches, and a chance for students and staff to share special moments together. It was a lovely occasion, marking the end of an important chapter and the beginning of exciting new journeys.

We wish all of our Year 13 students the very best of luck for their upcoming exams and look forward to celebrating with them soon!

Class of 25

*You've built more than just memories here,
You've made a mark, both deep and true.
So walk on strong without the fear
The world is waiting now for you.*



Mr Joyce and Mr Wainman – Sixth Form Team



PE



JFK Sport VIP's

Jasmine Okoh - Football

National Champion

Hertfordshire School FA's first winners in 30 years!

George Brooks-Johnson - Athletics

County Champion

1st - 100m - 11.65s

1st - 200m - 23.64s

Phoebe Molnar - Athletics

County Champion

1st - High Jump - 1.50m

Anneliesa Ambridge - Athletics

County Champion

1st - Discus - 14.36m

3rd - Shot - 5.90m

Bella Spice - Athletics

3rd - Hurdles - 13.13s

2nd - Triple Jump - 9.96m

Next Weeks Fixtures

Tuesday 20th May

3.30pm - Year 7/8 Rounders @ Ashlyns

Thursday 22nd May

3.30pm - County League Athletics 4 @ Watford

Miss Perry - PE Department



PE



Year 4 Tri Golf



Sixteen of our Year 12 Sports Leaders travelled over to Little Hay last Thursday to help with a Year 4 Tri Golf Event. They were all exemplary role models and did a wonderful job running the activities.



Miss Perry - PE Department



UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 20th May - New Year 7 Parents Evening
Monday 9th June - Year 10 Work Experience Week
Monday 9th June - Year 7 Residential Trip
Wednesday 25th June - Year 11 into 12 Transition Day
Thursday 26th June - Sports Day

WE ARE HIRING!

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



FUTURE DATES

2025

Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May - HALF TERM
Friday 27th June - INSET Day , school closed to students
Friday 18th July - Summer Term Ends , 1.30pm
Monday 1st September - INSET Day, school closed to students
Tuesday 2nd September – Year 7 and 12 only
Wednesday 3rd September - All Students Return



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

**"A Gentle
Reminder"**

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

GCSE Geography F/T, July 2025

Berlin, October 2025

Ski Trip, February 2026

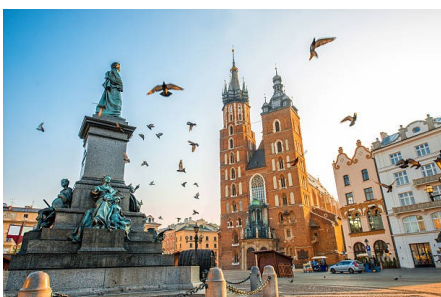
Valencia 2026

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Year 11 Prom – Instalments to be paid

Year 7 - Boxmoor Trust Trip

A Level History - St Albans Trip

Taste of Italy February 2026 - Open to current Year 10 Food Science students and Year 9 students who are studying Food Science next year.





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

INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE



BRAND NEW AT CAMELOT R.U.F.C.

GIRLS RUGBY

SCHOOL YEARS 5-11

ALL
SKILL LEVELS
WELCOME



FREE TASTER SESSIONS
SUNDAY 8TH JUNE
SATURDAY 21ST JUNE
3:00-5:00PM



**SCAN ME
TO REGISTER**

For more information text or call on

07827 908024

or email girlsrugby@camelotrffc.co.uk

Chaulden Lane, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 2BS





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