

# INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE

## John F Kennedy Catholic School

23rd May 2025



### An essential part of being a Christian



The Gospel reading at Mass last Sunday was very short, because it contained one simple message - the message that is at the heart of what it means to be a Christian. I know Christianity is not the only religion that has it in its teachings, but for us as Catholic Christians what's important is that it was told to us by Christ himself. If everyone did as they were instructed all the time the world would be a very different place, our school community would be even better too. So what was the Gospel reading...?

Jesus said,

'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'

In school we remind our students of this message with our mantra 'think kindness and choose respect'. This should underpin all behaviours and choices our students make, in order to build a community of peace. This was one of the many messages delivered this week to the parents and carers of our new students who will be joining JFK in September. It was wonderful to welcome them to the JFK community at the first part of the transition process.

One section of the presentation that was delivered was about how parents/carers can support their children to achieve success at school. Apart from the obvious practical support and encouragement for school work and attendance at important parents' meetings, I spoke about the need for parents/carers to support the values of the school, for example, in the occasional case of students falling foul of our behaviour policy. The expectation is that parents/carers will support the school's responses to these situations, including the use of sanctions, in order to maintain a consistently high set of expectations.

A revisiting of high expectations and standards will be a focus for the last half term of the year. In the meantime I wish you an enjoyable half term week.



## A MUSICAL AFTERNOON AT THE CARITAS TEA



On Sunday 18th May, students from Year 7 to Year 13 showcased their musical talents at the Caritas Tea, held at *Our Mother Queen of All Creation* in Hemel Hempstead. The afternoon was filled with beautiful performances, delivered with confidence, skill and true musicality.

From voice to piano, violin to clarinet and saxophone, each student brought something special to the event. You could have heard a pin drop as Harry (Year 9) transformed an old upright piano into a concert grand with his expressive playing. Anneliesa (Year 7) delighted the audience with the cheerful *Wallace and Gromit* theme, and Eva (Year 8) brought energy and precision with a sprightly *Allegro*. Freddie's (Year 11) saxophone solo of a *Spanish Love Song* even brought the sun out!

Breanna (Year 13), a regular performer at this event since her days at St Cuthbert Mayne, gave a heartfelt rendition of a Taylor Swift song, accompanying herself on guitar in what was her final performance as a member of JFK. Sienna (Year 10) sang *Hopelessly Devoted To You* from *Grease* with such skill and conviction. Lily (Year 8) also impressed with a pitch-perfect version of *Somewhere Only We Know*, while Eva (Year 10) took us back to *Matilda the Musical* with a powerful and emotional performance of *Quiet*.

Annabelle (Year 10) and Sophia (Year 7) then joined with fellow performers for a lovely, harmony rich, version of *When I Grow Up*, followed by a brilliant and cheeky duet of *Naughty* from *Matilda*, performed by our two Matildas, Eva and Lily.

The audience was thoroughly enchanted, with one guest even sharing a photo of her daughter performing in *The Wizard of Oz* back in 1976, proof that the tradition of school music lives on strong.

A heartfelt thank you to all our talented students who gave up their Sunday afternoon, and to their ever-supportive families. It is a truly special community event, and one we are proud to be part of each year.

**Mrs Bailey – Deputy Headteacher**



## GEOGRAPHY

### Year 7 Africa



Our Year 7 groups have just started their final topic of the year, Africa. Students will spend time developing an understanding of the continents, human and physical geography. The topic will allow students to apply geographical skills developed through the course of Year 7. A detailed look at the environmental challenges, development success stories and the life experiences of people across the continent will deepen understanding of the world's 2nd biggest continent. We finish the year by taking a deeper look at one particular African nation.



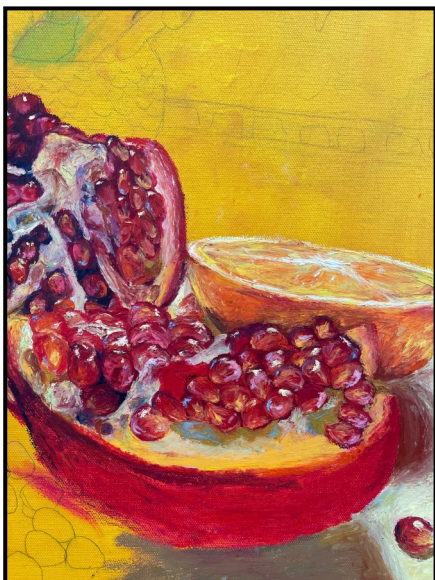
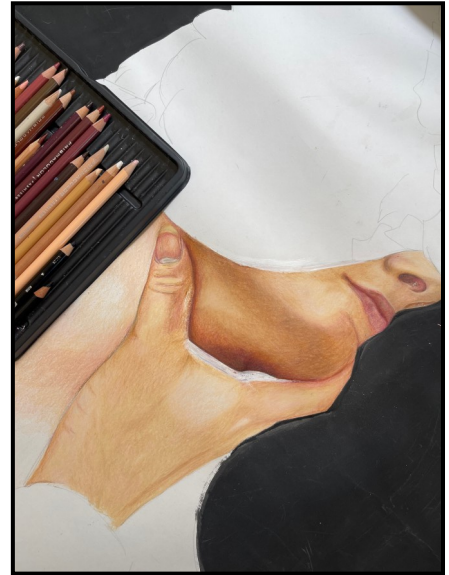
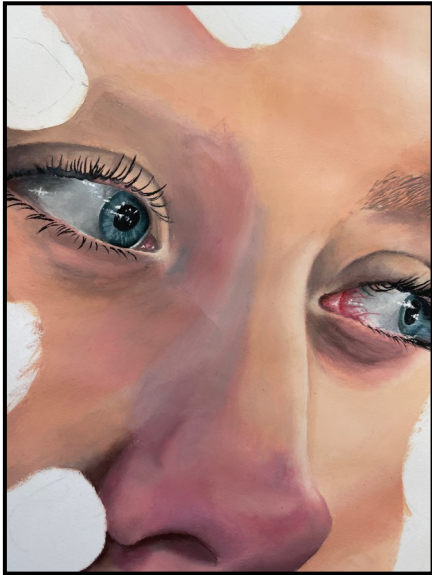
**Mr Cato – Geography Department**



## ART

### Year 12 Mock Exams

This week our Year 12 Art students had their first mock exam. They have all produced some fantastic work so far and we look forward to seeing the finished pieces.





## LIBRARY

### Tell Your Story entries and the winners!

This half term I have been encouraging KS3 to enter 'Tell Your Story' with short pieces of writing about anything they wanted to tell me about!

Just a few students entered but I enjoyed reading all of their entries. I wanted to share part of their work with the whole school community so here are the first parts of each of the entries - they will transport you to a variety of different places!

#### 2 Cats One Mind by Zack Robins (7K)

##### How it began - Chapter 1

It was silent, mother was barely alive when a vet walked past. They were young, they were kind and they were gifted. She came and helped our mother.

Then it happened.

She saw us, we were cold and wet from all the rain. She paused and immediately called a man whose name was Larry on her phone. She hesitated not to pick us up and mother and put us in her car.

Me and my twin sister are both cats or used to be but we get on that a bit later. When we were born on November 8th 2010 we were born with our heads attached. We shared one brain so when the vet brought us there she said this...

#### The Telescope by Shemesh Rajakaruna (7N)

The sun set over the horizon, as the waves crashed over the beach. A solitary figure stood, watching in awe at the wonderful scene unfolding before them. "I wish it was like this every night," they whispered to themselves. Tom was a boy who didn't talk much, and spent most of his time on his own. An array of colours spread out in the sky, from orange to red, which slowly faded to dark blue. Once the sun had left him, he wandered back home, his head staring at the twinkling stars.

#### Ottie by Nicole Wiermiejczuk (7H)

It was Wednesday 29th November 1854 when an expedition flew to Antarctica to find clues of the past. Only one survived against the biting wind and his name was John Neverland. During his time in this arctic continent, he found something mysterious. Something unique. Something uncanny. It froze in a ginormous chunk of ice that made the thing look like a statue. His description of this thing was rather bizarre: sea-green, rough skin, pointy, leaf-shaped ears, a huge mouth that could gobble a bird and a long, thin line at the top of its head that looks like very tiny eyeballs at the upper top of the long string. It's almost like an alien looking creature. Now, standing at the British Museum, John Neverland's discovery stands still in its icy home waiting to come out...

#### The big red combine harvester by Lily Kelly (8K)

Have you ever heard the song "big red combine harvester"? Well here's why it was made...

There was a daffodil-yellow combine harvester chugging away in the farmer's fields. He chugged up and down toiling away at the seemingly endless mud patches every hour of every day. The combine harvester's name was Kevin and even though he faced many challenges he loved his life.

One evening, after a long tiring day of work, some malevolent boys appeared from the bushy canopy of trees and approached him. Why were they here? What were they going to do to him? He was quaking with every step they took. Each step felt like a sharp dagger, being impaled into his soul. It felt like they were watching, waiting, like hounds preparing for attack, and he was their prey. They approached him and...and ...he passed out.

**Mrs Powell – Librarian**



## LIBRARY

### **Year 7 School Life: A Journey of Discovery by Bonnie Findon-Nash (7D)**

As I stepped through the gates of my new school on the first day of Year 7, a mix of excitement and nerves bubbled within me. The towering building loomed ahead, filled with the promise of new experiences and friendships. I took a deep breath, adjusted my backpack, and joined the throng of students bustling towards the entrance.

The first few weeks were a whirlwind. I remember my timetable being a jigsaw puzzle of subjects I had never encountered before. From science experiments that made my heart race with curiosity to history lessons that transported me back in time, each day was a new adventure. I was particularly fascinated by my Spanish class, where we delved into Spanish culture that sparked my imagination and encouraged me to express my thoughts through other languages.

### **Beyond the shades of sky by Anna Slowik (7J)**

Once upon a time there was a girl named Anna. She was in Year 4, when her biggest dream came true. Or was it?

Teacher: teaches Year 4 things

Suddenly a pink dot appeared on Anna's hand, pulling it to the ceiling, making her float. Everyone was frightened by this phenomenon as it has never happened before with Anna.

She was in a pink area with no one but a girl. Or is it a girl? No, that's not a girl, she has ears, a tail and... are those wings?! Anna was scared but somehow recognised the creature from her dreams.

"P-Pinky?" Anna asked, scared.

The creature turned around to look at her.

"How do you know my name, Human? And what is yours?"

Anna: I recognised you from somewhere but forgot where. My name is Anna by the way. Do you mind telling me where I am?

### **The smoke of yesterday by Olivier Albinski (9K)**

19th January 1947

It was still dark outside in the cold bitter morning. I stepped into the ruined rubble filled streets of Warsaw. My breath would steam in the icy air. I could taste the painfully cold air.

They said the war was over, but for us, nothing had really ended. Soviet soldiers now stood where Nazis once had, grey coats and rifles filling the silence between broken walls. They called it peace. They called it liberation. But I saw the red stars on their caps and felt only fear.

People whispered that today was election day, January 19th the day where Poland will rise again. Posters told us to vote for the new Poland, the People's Republic. But everyone knew the results were already written. "Democracy," they called it, but the ballot box was just another order spewed out of the Kremlin's mouth. I must admit their propaganda machines were good indeed they were but even the best lies can never hide the cold harsh reality of the truth.



## LIBRARY

**The Story Of The School by Finn Whiting, Leo Sweeney, Matthew Anderton and Bartek Fituch**

### Chapter 1 - A Mystery to Unfold

In St Greatham's School, a boy named Greg Yanamin thought something was off about one of the kids in the school. His name was Barry. He did not seem to have a surname or an age, or even a birthday, he talks weird, doesn't drink water, doesn't eat food and hates being near water...could this mean he is a *ROBOT* ?

The school was haunted at the same time, also Barry is always ready, sitting down in his chair in our classroom in the school. And there is always a charging plug socket next to him, this is real proof of a robot. One night me and my friends stayed overnight at the school to find any activity going on, Barry never seemed to leave the classroom... he laid his head down. A teacher came AND STARTED CHARGING HIM!!! But then the teacher VANISHED INTO THIN AIR... a teacher I've never seen.

If I had to pick my favourite (and that was part of the deal!) then I think it would be **The Story Of The School** because it had me hooked and I was really keen to find out what would happen next! Well done to Finn, Leo, Matthew and Bartek! Shemesh's atmospheric opening to **The Telescope** also left me with a very vivid picture of Tom and what he was about to see as he gazed into space.

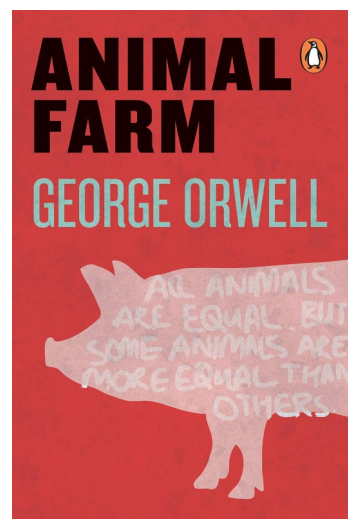
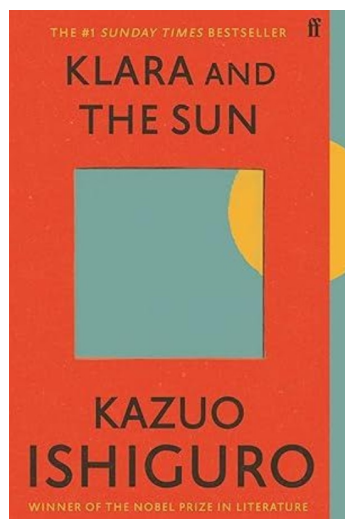
I hope you all enjoy a good half term break. Here are some book recommendations for parents and carers to enjoy:

### **Klara and the Sun by Kazuo Ishiguro**

I could not put this down! I am a great fan of Ishiguro's books and this one did not disappoint. It tells the story of an Artificial Friend purchased to help a young girl and her family. Klara, the Artificial Friend, is unusually perceptive and attentive to detail which makes her the perfect fit for the plans her family has for her. Disturbing and heart-warming in equal measure this is a real page-turner.

### **Animal Farm by George Orwell**

The classic tale of political tensions and Orwell's response to them told through the setting of a farm where 'all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others'. Orwell perfectly captures a dictatorship in play through the pigs and their dominance over the other animals as they silence all opposing opinions and gradually reinvent history in order to dominate and control. A riveting read.



**Mrs Powell – Librarian**



## PE



### Track and Field

Our Junior Girls, Junior Boys and Inter Girls have all made it through to the Track and Field Regional Finals in Watford on the 11th June! Well done!



### County League Athletics Results 4

**U14 Girls - 4th , U16 Girls - 1st , U14 Boys - 5th, U16 Boys - 4th**

Special mentions go to Evelyn Cook (Triple Jump) - a massive new PB of 9m72 and Tomi Bankole (Shot) - a massive new PB - 10m25

Next Fixtures	
<b>Tuesday 3rd June</b>	3.30pm - Y7/8 Rounders @ Ashlyns
<b>Wednesday 4th June</b>	12.00pm - Nichola Mabitt Boys Tennis Tournament @ Berkhamsted Tennis Club
<b>Thursday 5th June</b>	3.30pm - County League Athletics 5 @ Jarman Park
<b>Saturday 7th June</b>	9.00am - 4.30pm - County Athletics Championships @ Jarman Park

**Miss Perry - PE Department**



## JFKSA

### JFKSA Music Quiz Night Hits All the Right Notes!



On Friday 9th May, over 100 quizzers filled the hall for a fantastic night of music, laughter and friendly competition at the School Association's Music Quiz Night. Hosted by Dean Martin, Chair of the JFKSA, the evening featured a brilliant selection of classic tracks spanning from the 1960s to the present day—many of which had guests singing and dancing in their seats!

Each table enjoyed a delicious Ploughman's supper, generously donated by *Nonna's Kitchen* of Hoddesdon ([www.nonnaskitchenuk.com](http://www.nonnaskitchenuk.com))—our sincere thanks to them for their amazing support.

The night was packed with fun, including a lively game of Heads and Tails, impromptu dance moments, enthusiastic singalongs, and a very popular raffle.

While the final total is still being confirmed, early estimates suggest the event has raised around **£1,400**- a fantastic result!

Huge thanks go to all the members of the School Association for their hard work in setting up and running the event, and of course to everyone who came along and made the night such a success.

We're especially delighted that the winning team was one of the JFK staff teams - though not, much to his disappointment, the one with Mr Neves on it!



**Mrs Bailey – Deputy Headteacher**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday 26th May - Friday 30th May - HALF TERM  
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  
Friday 27th June – INSET Day, school closed to students  
Tuesday 8th July - Sports Presentation Evening  
Thursday 10th July - New Year 7 Day

## WE ARE HIRING!

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



## FUTURE DATES

**2025**

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](mailto: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

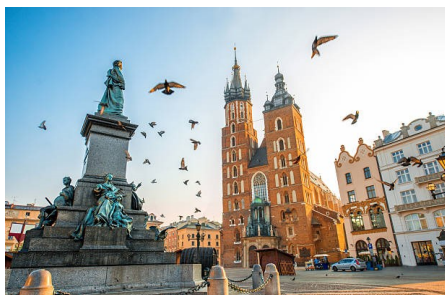
Valencia 2026

.....  
**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

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# WOODLAND TRAIL

WALK OR RUN

## SATURDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE BERKHAMSTED CASTLE

All proceeds help local people facing crisis



# DENS.ORG.UK/TRAIL

Registered charity number: 1097185

Supported by:





**DSPL8**

Delivering Special  
Provision Locally

## DSPL8 SEND information Fayre

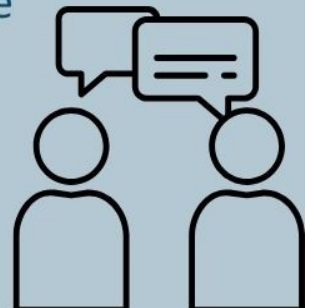
**SAVE THE DATE**

Thursday 26th June 2025

*For Parent and Carers of Children  
with SEN or Disabilities*

At the Warners End Community Centre  
Northridge Way, Hemel Hempstead  
HP1 3QG

Any questions email: [dspl@kls.herts.sch.uk](mailto:dspl@kls.herts.sch.uk)



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

# GIRLS RUGBY

SCHOOL YEARS 5-11

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SKILL LEVELS  
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**FREE TASTER SESSIONS**  
SUNDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> JUNE  
SATURDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE  
3:00-5:00PM



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**07827 908024**

or email [girlsrugby@camelotrffc.co.uk](mailto: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 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> 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**

**7<sup>th</sup> May to 18<sup>th</sup> Jun**

**Online Course: ID 759**

#### Tuesdays

**7.45 - 9.15pm**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Jun to 8<sup>th</sup> 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**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Jun to 8<sup>th</sup> Jul**

**Face to Face: ID 755**

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

#### Tuesdays

**8.00 - 9.30pm**

**6<sup>th</sup> May to 17<sup>th</sup> Jun**

**Online Course ID 756**