

INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE

John F Kennedy Catholic School

11th July 2025



Travel essentials



Earlier this year I flew to Perugia, Italy on Ryanair. Conscious of the strict baggage rules enforced by that airline I booked a ticket that included a checked bag. Sure enough, at the gate, I witnessed a passenger being challenged about the size of his carry-on bag. To be fair, like all airlines, Ryanair specifies the rules and places metal gauges at check-in that your bag must fit into in order to be of an acceptable size. If it's too big, you have to pay an extra fee to check it in. So imagine my surprise when Ryanair was featured on the news last week, announcing that they are increasing the size of the cabin bag allowance - yes, **increasing** - from 40cm x 25cm x 20cm to 40 x 30 x 20 - leading to an increase in volume of 20%. One would not have expected that! This is great news because when we go on our travels we generally like to take with us as many changes of outfit and creature comforts as possible without having to pay for them.

In contrast, at Mass last Sunday we listened to a reading from Luke's Gospel, when Jesus sent out 72 disciples, two by two, to spread the Gospel message across the land. His instructions were clear: travel light and rely on the hospitality of the people you meet for food and drink and lodgings. No small carry-on bag for the journey - in fact, take nothing. For me, this is a reminder that to be a successful disciple of Jesus, to preach the Gospel in words or actions, you don't need a bag full of props or the finest accessories. What you bring to this task is yourself. As I have now started to say in my Open Evening presentation, what makes a great school is not a shiny new building or the finest facilities and resources - it's about the people - the quality of the relationships, the kindness, compassion and sense of welcome exemplified by staff and students that all make a strong, happy community. Perhaps from now on I'll use an air travel analogy when referring to attendance at school:

So when you arrive at school don't concern yourself too much about checking-in all the superfluous material items that you deem essential for the day, just check yourself in, as you are, be ready to share the person that God has created you to be...oh, and enjoy the journey!

Year 6 Transition Day

On Thursday we welcomed 180 new students to JFK at the Year 6 Transition Day. A very busy day involved an introductory assembly, getting to know tutor groups and Form Tutors, tours of the school site, a taste of different lessons, lunchtime extra-curricular activities and a closing liturgy in St Mark's church. The students were supervised by a dedicated team of staff and our amazing JFK student leaders from different year groups. Feedback I received during the day was highly complimentary of the Year 6 children. They all appeared to have a wonderful day at JFK and this was confirmed by the many parents I spoke to in the evening, when we held the final part of the induction process, including the purchasing of school uniform and PE kit. I am very much looking forward to welcoming these children back to JFK in September to begin their journey in Year 7.



INTRODUCING THE NEW STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM PART 2



Hi, my name is Nathalie and I'm both honoured and excited to be taking on the role of 'Achieve' in the Senior Student Leadership Team. Over my time in the team I aim to support students with their academics, managing school life and making the most of their JFK journey. I want to encourage and support students across all year groups, helping them to reach their potential, stay motivated and ultimately feel proud of their progress both in and outside the classroom.



Hi, my name's Ashlee and I feel privileged to be taking on the role of 'Serve: Ethos' for the following year as a new member of the Senior Student Leadership Team. Within my duty of 'Serve: Ethos', it requires recognising how each student can represent the school and actively participate to be a proud member of the JFK community. My aim is to ensure every student recognises their talents in order to make the most of school life. I am excited for the coming academic year and make my promise to be a student voice to be representative for all members at the school.



THE BRILLIANT CLUB

The Scholars Programme



Fourteen Year 9 students have been working hard since March to complete The Scholars programme run by The Brilliant Club. The programme began with a virtual launch event giving them a taste of what it might be like to study at one of the top universities in the country. Following this, the students met with their PhD tutor Rachel Kayani who delivered weekly sessions in school on the topic 'Future Vaccines'. This was a biology based programme looking at the history of vaccines and how this has developed in modern day. They had to write a final assignment of 2000 words responding to the question 'How should we respond to the disease x outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo?'. All students received a 2:2, 2:1 or 1st for their final assignment, which is a great achievement.

The final part of the programme was the graduation trip. This took place on Tuesday at the beautiful Magdalene College, Cambridge. This was a great celebration of their achievements. They met student ambassadors from the college and we had a guided tour from a second year medical student. We were lucky enough to step inside one of their three libraries, the beautiful chapel, the student bar and also eat our lunch in the stunning grounds on the bank of the river.

Huge congratulations to all the students involved; Harry C, Archey D, James S, Eve W, Gabi B, Jasmine O, Dawid K, Joseph A, Emmanuella O, Rachel A, Llyan E, Harriet K and Blake L

Mrs Bailey – Deputy Headteacher



SCIENCE

Science Project Presentation at the Royal Society, London



A small group of students were extremely privileged to be able to attend the Royal Society's Summer Science Exhibition on Thursday and Friday last week. Students from sixteen schools across the UK showcased their investigative work alongside exhibits from scientists at the cutting-edge of science. We have been collaborating with Bedford Boys school to develop a project to analyse the DNA sequence in snowdrops. Bedford ran the project last year and we will be continuing their research in September. We were awarded a Royal Society grant of £3000 and will be working with Anglesey Abbey, Rothamsted Research and EMBL EBI next academic year in order to work out the evolutionary links between different species of snowdrop. The project will be open to students from Year 10 upwards, with more information to follow in September. A big thank you to the Royal Society for supporting this inspiring opportunity for students and an even bigger thank you to the students who attended the event as they were the perfect ambassadors for JFK!



Mrs Davison - Science Department



LIBRARY

Library celebration and welcoming our new students



What do 16 students, tasty snacks, certificates and prizes have in common?! They were all part of the inaugural Library Celebration for Reading Champions 2024 - 2025 held this week!

Mr Neves and myself were delighted to congratulate the students on their enjoyment of reading and reviewing books throughout this academic year, their participation in a national book award competition and clocking up amazing Library House Point scores. Mr Neves encouraged the students to continue making time for reading and for using the Library as well as joining in with opportunities to showcase the Library at open evenings.

Our top borrowers were taking out books on average 2-3 times per school week so I hope they will continue to do this in the years ahead and that their enthusiasm for reading will be infectious!

I was also delighted to welcome most of the new Year 7 cohort into the Library this week. We chatted about favourite books (I'm glad to say the Library has most of them), a book bingo card to help them to read in new ways and a brand new reading scheme which they will be the first to take part in when September arrives. I finished our time together by reading aloud the first chapter of one of the September books which left me - and I think most of the students - on tenterhooks! I look forward to welcoming the students to the Library when they start at JFK.

Mrs Powell - Librarian



MUSIC

SUMMER CONCERT

MONDAY 14TH
JULY 2025



JOHN F KENNEDY
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE



7PM
IN THE
SCHOOL
HALL

TICKETS AVAILABLE
THROUGH WISEPAY

INDIVIDUAL TICKET: £5
FAMILY TICKET: £15

Mr Ridout - Music Department



ART

It's time to celebrate!

Come and join us at this years Creative Exhibition 2025. Celebrating the achievements of our Year 11 and Year 13 Art students .

The poster features a background of alternating blue and pink squares. In the center, the school crest is displayed. To the right, there is a large, stylized white daisy with a yellow smiley face in its center. The text 'JOHN F KENNEDY CATHOLIC SCHOOL' is written in bold black letters. Below that, 'CREATIVE EXHIBITION' is written in large, bold, red letters with a blue shadow. To the right of this, the year '2025' is written in large, bold, yellow letters with a blue shadow. Below the main text, the date and time '14TH JULY @ 5PM - 7PM' are written in yellow, and 'D BLOCK GALLERY' is written in white. There are also some colorful confetti-like shapes scattered around the text.

JOHN F KENNEDY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

CREATIVE EXHIBITION

14TH JULY
@ 5PM - 7PM

2025

D BLOCK GALLERY

Miss Freed – Art Department



UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday 14th July - Culture Day

Monday 14th July - Creative Exhibition, A Level and GCSE, 5.00pm

Monday 14th July - Summer Concert , 7.00pm

Friday 18th July - Summer Term Ends , 1.30pm

WE ARE HIRING!

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



FUTURE DATES

2025

Monday 1st September - INSET Day, school closed to students

Tuesday 2nd September – Year 7 Only

Tuesday 2nd September - Thursday 4th September, Year 12 Clearing

Wednesday 3rd September - All other students return

Friday 5th September - Year 12 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 Level Geography Trip , last instalment due

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

Berlin, October 2025

Ski Trip, February 2026

Valencia 2026

Taste of Italy, February 2026

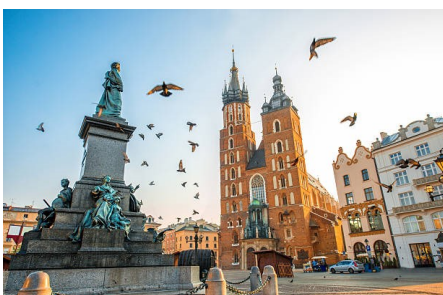
Watch this space for upcoming trips :

Panto , December 2025 - New Year 7

Punch (date to be confirmed), Years 10, 12 and 13 Drama

Matilda, November 2025, Year 8 (next year)

Back to the Future, January 2026, Year 9 (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



Parent & Carer Support TALKING ASD & ADHD Workshops Autumn 2025



Workshops are FREE to parents and carers living in [Hertfordshire](#) of children aged 2-25yrs with suspected or diagnosed Autistic Spectrum Disorder and/or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

← [Eventbrite Page](#)

RESPONDING to ANGER



- Healthy & unhealthy anger.
- How to spot the signs early.
- Our own and our children's triggers.
- Techniques that stop angry and aggressive behaviour escalating and when to use them.
- How to respond to our child in meltdown, keeping ourselves, our child and siblings safe.

Tuesday 23rd September, 9.30-11.15am
Workshop SL781 book via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/asd-adhd-responding-to-anger-781-for-parentscarers-in-herts-registration-1413258727899?aff=oddtcreator>

THE TEENAGE YEARS



- Teenage brain development and how it affects a child with ASD/ADHD.
- Reducing conflict by learning how to respond effectively to difficult situations.
- How to agree appropriate boundaries and teach risk assessment.
- Help teens develop independence skills.

Monday 13th October, 7.30-9.15pm
Workshop SL782 book via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talking-asd-adhd-the-teenage-years-782-for-parentscarers-in-herts-registration-1417376895449?aff=oddtcreator>

SCHOOL AVOIDANCE



- What is Emotionally Based School Avoidance and is this what your child is experiencing?
- Common causes and triggers of school avoidance.
- How EBSA is affecting you and your family.
- Practical steps you can take to support your child and look after yourself.
- How to work with your school in your child's best interests.

Monday 10th November, 7.30-9.15pm
Workshop SL783 book via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talking-asd-adhd-school-avoidance-783-for-parentscarers-in-herts-registration-1417463965879?aff=oddtcreator>

TECH USE



- Keep your child safe online.
- Help your child to switch their device off.
- Support behaviour difficulties when playing.
- The effect of using devices as a reward or consequence.
- Teach children to develop their own methods of regulating device use and staying safe.

Monday 24th November, 7.30-9.15pm
Workshop SL784 book via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/talking-asd-adhd-tech-use-784-for-parentscarers-in-herts-registration-1417436894909?aff=oddtcreator>

Follow us on:



Contact via:

info@supportinglinks.co.uk
www.supportinglinks.co.uk

Funded by Hertfordshire County Council's Targeted Parenting Fund





The Box Moor Trust 2025 Summer Events

July 28th



Bird watching and dissecting owl pellets

Visit our bird hide see the wonderful birds that visit our micro nature reserve. Then investigate the food that our resident owls have been eating by dissecting some owl pellets.

To book visit
www.boxmoortrust.org.uk
Or scan here



River Dipping

Meadow Sweeping



Bug hunting

Pond dipping



Various sessions

Wednesday
6th August

Introduction to Moths

Join one of our Trustees to learn about the fascinating world of moths. During this session, you will also have the opportunity to see some moths up close.



Nature Photography

Join our knowledgeable volunteers to learn how to take good photos of nature, from beetles to frogs. Bring your own camera or phone to take part!
Family sessions and adult only sessions



Wednesday
13th August

1st
Saturday of
the month

Youth Rangers

Youth Rangers is a drop off session aimed at 8 - 16 year old's who have a passion for nature and want to learn more about the natural world. Each month the Youth Rangers will carry out different tasks to get a taste of the life of a Ranger.



Mini Rangers

Come and join us to explore the ever changing world of nature. These sessions are designed to engage children aged 4 - 7 and inspire a life long love of nature whilst giving you the opportunity to expand your knowledge of the natural world.

1st
Saturday
of the
month



We have various sessions throughout the holiday's for those with **special educational needs**. These event are aimed at those who might find sessions overwhelming, so are set at a smaller capacity.
Please scan above QR code for details