

INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE

John F Kennedy Catholic School

14th November 2025



In keeping with tradition, we commemorated Tuesday's Remembrance Day at JFK. In recognition of those who sacrificed their lives in wars and conflicts over the years, a group of our student leaders and our newly formed Chamber Choir gathered in St Mark's church for our Remembrance Service. The rest of the school community watched via Google Meet; some images from a classroom are shown below - here Year 11 students followed the service with prayerful respect. The service began with the Chamber Choir, whose exquisite singing set the tone for this sombre gathering. That was followed by scripture readings, a reflection and prayers. A specific mention was made of those service men of the Hemel West Parish who died in the First World War. Their names were read out and then a wreath was laid at the altar. At 11 o'clock Marek Kosala in Year 11 played the last post to signal the start of a two minute silence. As we stood in silence I recalled the traditional quote used at remembrance services:

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

And so we pray...

God our Father, your Son Jesus gave up His life to free us from the power of sin and death. He showed us that the greatest love is in giving up one's life for others.

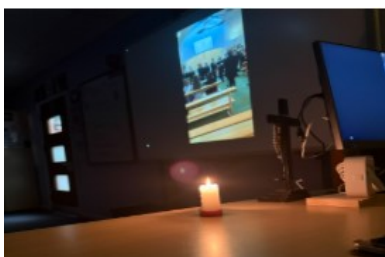
This week we remember those who fought and died for our freedom. We ask you to bless and console them together with their families.

Help us to understand the sacrifices they made in leaving their loved ones to face the horrors of war. May we never forget their generosity.

May your Holy Spirit give us the courage to resist evil in all its forms and show us how to be peacemakers through prayer and action, lest we forget those who fought, suffered and died, that we might have the freedom we enjoy today.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.



Mr Neves - Headteacher

admin@jfk.herts.sch.uk



GYM AND DANCE



JFK Gym and Dance Show 2025: A Spectacular Celebration of Talent and Teamwork

This week, JFK hosted its most ambitious and inspiring Gym and Dance Show to date. A sold-out celebration that brought together friends, family, and our wider community in a vibrant showcase of creativity, athleticism, and passion.

With 186 performers spanning all year groups, this was truly our biggest show ever, and the energy on stage reflected months of dedication and collaboration. Across 29 dazzling performances, the audience was treated to a stunning variety of styles, from the precision and flair of tap and jazz, to the powerful rhythm of commercial, the elegance of ballet, and the rich tradition of Irish dance. Each number captured the hard work and artistry of our dancers, leaving the audience inspired and uplifted.

The gymnastics performances were equally impressive, showcasing the incredible skill and teamwork of students from every year group. From graceful solos and dynamic duos to large-scale routines featuring up to 34 performers, each act demonstrated courage, discipline, and creativity.

A special thank you goes to our exceptional sound and lighting team, whose professionalism and attention to detail elevated every moment of the show. Our epic choreographers also deserve high praise for their creativity and commitment, guiding our performers with passion and precision. These 20 girls have worked tirelessly over the past three months, not only perfecting their own routines but also inspiring others through their leadership and dedication.





GYM AND DANCE





GYM AND DANCE





DRAMA

Year 13 Drama



This week the Year 13 Drama students have been experimenting with their component 2 scenery and stage positioning. They are creating a Theatre of Cruelty style performance, which was created by Antonin Artaud, exploring the wonderfully creepy world of Alice in Wonderland.



Ms Horton - Drama Department



SIXTH FORM

Enrichment



On Thursday we were delighted to welcome Sharon Frost, former JFK student (1984–1991) and senior HR leader, back to school to speak with our Year 12 and 13 students.

Sharon shared her honest and uplifting journey, from struggling at A-level to completing an HND, Diploma and BA (Hons), thanks in part to the guidance of “the legend that is Mr Janacek.” She went on to join the Sainsbury’s Graduate Management Programme, where she made an immediate impact, before moving into Human Resources, gaining a postgraduate qualification, and building a diverse career across retail, entertainment, education, marketing, guardianship, and health science communications.

Students enjoyed hearing about the highlights of her career, including time at a Sony–Warner joint venture (and even a BRITs after-party courtesy of Duncan from BLUE!). Sharon also spoke about the importance of resilience, lifelong learning, embracing unexpected opportunities and qualities that helped her earn an MBA with distinction and serve as a Companies House–listed Director.

A huge thank you to Sharon for returning to JFK and inspiring our students with her story.



CAROL CONCERT 2025



Tickets are now on sale !

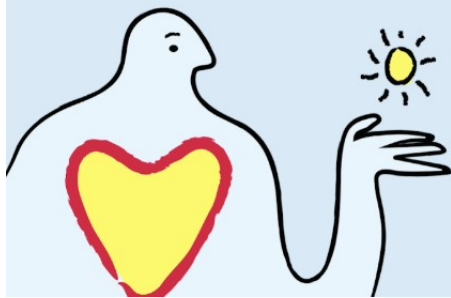
The Orchestra, Chamber Choir and the Year 7/8 choir will lead this joyous evening with both traditional Christmas Carols and new pieces to guide us through the Christmas Story. For Year 7 it is their first opportunity to take part in this whole-school celebration. Please look out for the email sent home with all details included.

Mrs Metcalfe - Music Department



ENGLISH

Poetry Competition



Choose poems

Find a poem to learn from any of our timeline and showcase collections

Learn poems by heart

With tips on how to memorise poems and how to polish them for performance

Perform poems out loud

Share your poems aloud in a class, club or event of any shape or size, at school or college

Enter the national competition

Do it your way - either the 1-poem Freestyle celebration or the 2-poem Classic championship

Come to the Grand Finale

Classic finalists and the best Freestylers perform on stage at Shakespeare's Globe, London - with guest tickets for schools taking part

Everything you need is here

Videos of past finalists, hundreds of classic and contemporary poems, and pupil and teacher competition guides

This year JFK will be entering an exciting national poetry competition called Poetry By Heart.

Students from any year group can come along and choose a poem, learn it by heart and perform it, it's as simple as that! Any students who take part in the showcase event at school could become national finalists and be invited to Shakespeare's Globe Theatre to perform on stage.

Students should come and see Mrs Sharp in A14 on Wednesdays at lunchtime to get involved.



TRIPS 2025 – 2026

**"A Gentle
Reminder"**

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

- Ski Trip, February 2026
 - Valencia 2026
- Taste of Italy, February 2026

Upcoming trips :

- National History Museum, **Year 7**. All students are expected to attend. Payments outstanding.
 - A Level RE , Conference
 - DofE Bronze and Silver
 - Panto , December 2025 - **Year 7**
 - Back to the Future, January 2026, **Year 9**
 - Matilda
- Senso Licence , payment is due for **Years 7,8,10 and 11**.





DIGITAL SAFETY



In today's digital world, apps are part of everyday life for secondary-age children. They offer creativity, entertainment, and social connection. However, alongside the positives come risks that parents and carers should be aware of.

Understanding the risks

Many apps collect large amounts of personal data, from location details to contacts, often without children realising the implications. Others expose young people to inappropriate or harmful content, whether through unfiltered videos, anonymous chats, or user-generated posts. Bullying and harassment can also take place within these platforms, sometimes hidden from parents and carers' view.

Another concern is the presence of online predators who may disguise themselves as peers in order to exploit children. On top of this, the design of many apps can encourage overuse through constant notifications and endless scrolling which can interfere with sleep, wellbeing, and school performance.

Financial risks also exist, with in-app purchases or "loot box" style features that can tempt children into spending money without fully understanding the consequences. Some apps may even appear harmless but are designed to hide conversations or bypass parental oversight, adding another layer of complexity for families.



DIGITAL SAFETY

What parents and carers should look out for

When your child asks to download a new app, it's worth considering a few key questions. What age is the app designed for?

- Does the rating match your child's stage of maturity?
- How much personal data does it request?
- Are the privacy settings easy to control?
- Does the platform have strong moderation and reporting tools?
- What is the community culture like?

You may also want to check how easy it is to make in-app purchases and whether parental controls are built in. Exploring these factors together with your child not only helps you assess the risks but also builds digital literacy, encouraging them to think critically about the online spaces they inhabit.

A trusted resource

To make this easier, **Internet Matters** has put together a clear, parent-friendly guide to the apps and platforms most commonly used by children today. It highlights what each app does, its key features, and the potential risks to be aware of.

You can find the full guide here: [Internet Matters – Apps & Platforms \(11–16\)](#).

This resource is regularly updated, so it's a reliable way to stay informed as new platforms emerge and existing ones evolve.

The NSPCC website also contains helpful advice regarding keeping children safe online - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Practical steps you can take

The most effective safeguard is open communication. Ask your child what apps they use and why, and take time to explore those apps together. Set clear boundaries around screen time and "offline hours" such as at mealtimes or after bedtime. Encourage your child to block or report users who behave inappropriately, and make sure location sharing is switched off unless absolutely necessary.

Apps can be positive spaces where young people learn, create, and connect. But without awareness and guidance, they can also present real risks. By staying informed and keeping conversations open, parents and carers can empower children to use technology safely and responsibly.

Mrs McKenzie – Assistant Headteacher



SAFEGUARDING IN FOCUS

A screenshot of the online enrolment form for The National College. The form is dark-themed and includes fields for 'Email Address', 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Parent / Carer', 'Password', and 'Re-enter Password'. A blue button at the bottom is labeled 'Create Account'.

We're delighted to let you know that John F Kennedy Catholic School has become a member of The National College – a multi-award-winning online training provider for staff and parents.

What does this mean for you?

As part of our membership, The National College provides dedicated training and resources for parents and carers – particularly, around online safety and keeping children safe online.

Online safety advice on any topic

Of course, staff will continue to teach children about the risks online. But with the internet so readily accessible, the most effective approach to online safety needs everyone involved, including parents and carers.

That's why you've now got access to **hundreds of courses, explainer videos and online safety guides** to support your awareness of the online world. Topics range from understanding apps like TikTok and Instagram to recognising the signs of online harm and what you can do to help.

Signing up is easy

Signing up to the platform is simple. Just follow <https://v2.nationalcollege.com/enrol/john-f-kennedy-catholic-school> and complete your details. You will be asked to enrol and enter some key details. As you enter your details it is important that you sign up as a parent/carer. Once you're set up, you'll get instant access to all training and resources.

Download the app for free

Another fantastic benefit of The National College is its National Online Safety app, which you can download for free. It gives you access to all their parent and carer resources on the go, whenever you want.

You can download the National Online Safety app using the links below:

- [App store](#)
- [Google Play](#)

They're always here to help

The National College has a brilliant support team if you have any questions. Their [help centre](#) provides a comprehensive bank of answers to most FAQs, but if you still can't find the answer you're looking for, you can always get in [contact](#) with them.

Mrs McKenzie – Assistant Headteacher



UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday 28th November, Occasional Day, School Closed
Wednesday 3rd December, GCSE Presentation Evening, 6.45pm, Hall
Tuesday 9th December, Year 10 Consultation Evening, 4.00pm, Hall
Monday 15th December, Carol Concert, 7.00pm, Hall
Tuesday 16th December, Year 7 Pantomime Trip
Wednesday 17th December, Year 11 Mock Results Day
Friday 19th December, End of Term, 12.35pm

WE ARE HIRING!

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



FUTURE DATES

Monday 5th January, INSET Day, Closed to students
Tuesday 6th January, Spring Term Starts
Thursday 15th January, Year 11 Consultation Evening, 4.00pm, Hall
Friday 23rd January, JFK Day
Wednesday 4th and Thursday 5th February, School Production, 7.00pm, Hall
Tuesday 10th February, Year 10 Consultation Evening, Online



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



The All Saints Catholic Academy Trust is recruiting for Clerks for two school boards, St John's Catholic Primary School and St Joan of Arc Catholic Secondary School. This is a great opportunity with flexible working and professional development.

More information is available at:

[Clerk to Local Academy Council](#) - St John's

[Clerk to Local Academy Council](#) - St Joan of Arc

Interested parties can contact Director of Governance & Compliance, [Christina Reffold](#) at governance@ascat.co.uk for more information

Admissions Consultation 2027/28 Policy

The governing body is putting the [2027/28 Admissions Policy](#) out for consultation between 27th October 2025 and 7th December 2025.

The published admission number (PAN) for 2027-28 will be 180 and this has not changed from previous years.

The changes on which we are asking your opinion are:

- Criterion 2 applicants to provide a Certificate of Catholic Practice (CCP) to confirm children are practising Catholics
- Priority of siblings within criterion 7 - Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church

We would be pleased to receive any comments on this to Ms E Final (Clerk to Governors) at the school address or by email to efinal@jfk.herts.sch.uk by 7th December 2025.



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



FLU VACCINATIONS



Vaccination UK

The School Immunisation Team have completed their visits to the school to offer the flu vaccination. If your child did not receive their vaccination and you would like to book a community clinic appointment, please do so via this link: <https://bed.schoolvaccination.uk/flu/2025/book>

Area:	Town:	Address:	Date:	Time:
Hertfordshire	St Albans	Marshalswick Community Centre, AL4 9TU	Wednesday 29th October	10.00-2:00pm
Hertfordshire	Bishops Stortford	Bishops Park Community Centre, Lancaster Way, CM23 4DA	Saturday 1st Nov	10.00-2:00pm
Hertfordshire	Ware	Widford Village Hall, Ware, SG12 8SH	Saturday 22nd Nov	10.00-2:00pm
Hertfordshire	Watford	Meridan Centre, Garsmouth Way, Watford WD25 9ET	Friday 28th Nov	15:00-19:00pm
Hertfordshire	Hemel Hempstead	Leverstock Green Village Hall, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 8QG	Saturday 29 Nov	10.00-2:00pm
Hertfordshire	Stevenage	St Nicholas Community Centre, 59 Canterbury Way, SG2 4LJ	Saturday 29 Nov	10.00-2:00pm
Hertfordshire	St Albans	Marshalswick Community Centre, AL4 9TU	Wednesday 10th Dec	16:00-19:00
Hertfordshire	Bishops Stortford	Havers Community Centre, 1 Knights Row, CM23 3GR	Wednesday 10th Dec	15:00-17:00
Hertfordshire	Harpenden	Harpenden Trust Centre, 90 Southdown RD, Harpenden, AL5 1PS	Saturday 13th December	10:00-14:30
Hertfordshire	Borehamwood	Fairway Hall, Brook Close, Borehamwood, Borehamwood, WD6 5BT	Sunday 14th December	10:00-14:00
Hertfordshire	Watford	Meridan Community Centre, Garsmouth Way, Watford WD25 9ET	Saturday 20th December	10:00-14:00
Hertfordshire	Stevenage	St Nicholas Community Centre, 59 Canterbury Way, SG2 4LJ	Saturday 13th December	10:00-14:00
Hertfordshire	Welwyn Garden City	Welwyn Office- Orion House, Bessemer Rd, Welwyn Garden City, AL7 1HU	Saturday 20th December	10:00-14:00



HOP Into Apprenticeships & T Levels The Hertfordshire Virtual Careers Fair for parents and carers



FREE

Wednesday 21st January 2026
17:30 - 19:00
Online (Zoom)



What is the Virtual Careers Fair?

This free event is for parents, carers, and students to explore apprenticeships and T Levels. Visit different exhibitor rooms on a 10-minute rotation to learn about different programmes and opportunities available.

Who should attend?

This event is for all parents and carers but will be particularly useful for those supporting children in year groups 10, 11, 12 and 13. Students in these age groups are also welcome to attend.

Why attend?

This event offers many benefits, including:

- Free of charge to attend (fully-funded by Hertfordshire Careers Hub).
- Find out more about apprenticeships and T Level programmes with local training providers and colleges.
- Hear from local employers about opportunities and the recruitment process.
- Discover more about the skills and training provision being offered within Hertfordshire.
- Select which breakout room you would like to hear from.
- Ask questions and gather information from the comfort of your own home.

Exhibitors will include:



And many more...

How to attend?

- 1 Register by Monday 19th January, 2026 for your free ticket by clicking [here](#).
- 2 Read the attendee guidance ahead of the event to help you prepare.
- 3 Log on and join the event online on Wednesday 21st January 2026 17:30 - 19:00.

BOOK NOW

Further information

Find out about the event by visiting: amapps.uk/HOPIntro

The Hertfordshire Virtual Careers Fair is brought to you in partnership by:





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

