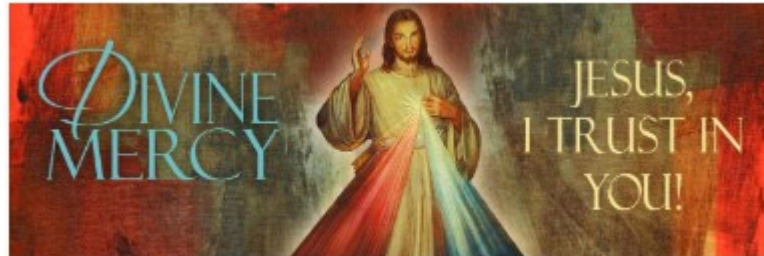


INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE

John F Kennedy Catholic School

17th April 2026



Last Sunday's Gospel reading highlighted one of the key Gospel values - those concepts that should help define followers of the Christian faith, and, as a Catholic school, should be a hallmark of JFK:

Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.'

Our students are becoming young adults and we are here to help prepare them for the adult world. It is not uncommon during these formative years that they will occasionally fall out with their peers and experience dissatisfaction with others' actions. However, we need to instil in them the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation - and, as it says on the school badge, to make peace.

As the Gospel passage continued we learned that one of the disciples, Thomas, had not been in the room at that time, and had not believed what his friends had told him. He wanted his own proof that Jesus had returned from the grave - this he got 8 days later. And so the notion of a doubting Thomas was born - someone needing evidence rather than taking a leap in trust.

The theme this week is 'Trust'. In assemblies this week I considered where we place our trust: in our families, in our teachers, in our friends, in our own judgement...? However, in our Catholic community, we should also recognise the great source of trust we have in God - remembering that, in times of difficulty, anxiety or maybe even helplessness, an eternally loving God is watching over us and sends his spirit to inspire us in our faith. Spending time in prayer really can help to develop that trust. And that time for prayer is made available every day at JFK.

We are starting the term in a celebratory mood. In assemblies I congratulated the Sixth Form Dragons' Apprentice teams, who completed this year's challenge and were celebrated just before the Easter break (see the last newsletter). JFK teams picked up three of the evening's awards, including overall winners of the competition, which included 19 teams. I also congratulated JFK boys' football teams, three of which have made it through to local finals. And I looked forward to celebrating excellent commitment to learning, as measured by the acquisition of huge numbers of house points for excellent effort and quality of work in lessons. In the celebration gatherings that followed I said two things: well done on your fabulous efforts and thank you for your contribution to making JFK a better place.

At the start of a new term I ended assemblies this week with our school prayer:

Loving Father

We join together as one JFK school family to ask for your continued support and care.

Help us to recognise in ourselves the unique gifts and talents you have given us. Grant us the wisdom and courage to use them to inspire others with the way we live our lives according to your will.

Grant us understanding and resilience so that we can strengthen our community and together achieve our greatest potential.

Help us to see others as you do. In all things, help us not to ask what others can do for us, but recognise how we can serve all those around us.

We make our prayer through Christ, our Lord, Amen.



BTEC TRAVEL AND TOURISM



As part of the BTEC Travel and Tourism course, students are required to develop an understanding of visitor attractions. To support this requirement, Year 12 and 13 students visited Kew Gardens on Tuesday 3rd March. Kew Gardens is one of the country's leading tourist destinations, attracting over 2.2 million visits in 2025. It offers a wide range of immersive experiences designed to appeal to visitors of all ages, including the iconic Palm House, the Treetop Walkway, seasonal exhibitions, guided tours, and interactive displays within the glasshouses. Younger visitors can also enjoy dedicated play areas, trails, and hands-on activities designed to engage children with nature in a fun and educational way.

During the visit, students explored the various exhibits and attractions available. In particular, they focused on how accessibility needs are met across the site, how technology is used to enhance the visitor experience, and how visitor needs are addressed through secondary selling opportunities, such as cafés and retail outlets.

Thanks to Mrs O'Connor for organising and to Miss Adams and Mrs Walsh for in school support.

Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew

Mr Cato - Geography Department



REWARDS CELEBRATIONS



It was an absolute pleasure to welcome over 150 Key Stage 3 and 4 students to the library this week to celebrate their exceptional hard work and commitment to learning. Invitations were extended to those who are either the top House Point earners so far this year or those maintaining nearly perfect conduct records, with high House Point scores and either zero or one negative point..

With some students surpassing 1,000 House Points alongside a flawless conduct record, I'm sure you will agree that their achievements are definitely worth celebrating. They truly embody our school mission - to **Inspire, Achieve, and Serve**. We look forward to our end-of-year celebration assemblies, where many of these students will undoubtedly be contenders for the prestigious Head teacher's Awards.



Mrs Bailey - Deputy Headteacher



THE SCHOLARS PROGRAMME: A BRILLIANT LAUNCH



On Wednesday, 14 of our Year 9 students officially began their journey with The Scholars Programme, run by The Brilliant Club. This prestigious initiative introduces students to university-style learning through academic tutorials and an extended essay project.

The launch event opened with a passing of the torch, as some of our own graduates of The Scholars Programme from previous years shared insights into their own projects and offered valuable advice to the new cohort. Students then met their PhD tutor, Dr. George Oliver, who delivered a compelling presentation on his academic journey before introducing this year's project: "To Die For: Early Christians in the Roman Empire."

It was truly inspiring to see our students engage so thoughtfully with such complex subject matter. Dr. Oliver's passion was matched only by the caliber of responses from our students. We look forward to seeing their progress and celebrating their hard work at their university graduation ceremony later this year.

Mrs Bailey - Deputy Headteacher



YEAR 10

Revision Session Talk



On Wednesday 15th April during PSHE, the whole of Year 10 were spoken to by Mr Wainman (Assistant Director of Sixth Form). During the talk Year 10 students were given lots of different strategies to revise. Mr Wainman also dispelled some myths with the Year 10s about some 'brain' facts.

The Year 10s were hugely engaged throughout and we hope will employ some of the strategies they learnt during their mock exams for the next two weeks.



Mrs Galatola - Year 10 Achievement Leader



PE



Well done

The PE department are extremely proud of all the Year 11's who took part in their PE moderation this week. Well done to all students involved.

GCSE practical assessment moderator quote, *"I am blown away by your kids, their kit, attitude and behaviour, this is a special group and clearly a lovely school"*.

PE Kit Reminder

PE shorts should not be short and tight.

Competitive Rounders

Gaelic and Athletics fixtures start this term - it would be amazing to see as many faces as possible at training.

Date for your Diary

Year 11 County Cup Final: 1st May 8:00pm at Harpenden Football Club, all positive support welcome

Miss Rooney - PE Department



PE

Summer Term Sports Clubs

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
HP	MUPH	JYHHP	LJ	LH/JJY
LUNCH 1.35pm – 2.20pm				
Y9&10 Rounders Recreational & Performance		Field Athletics Long/Triple Jump		
Y7&8 Rounders Recreational & Performance	KS3 Dance Recreational Dance Studio		Track Athletics Middle Distance	
Rec Basketball Gym/Courts	Tennis Recreational	Field Athletics Javelin		
Y7&8 Rounders Recreational & Performance		Field Athletics Shot	Track Athletics SAQ, Track & Relay With George	Badminton Recreational Dance Studio
	Athletics Throws Performance Invite	Field Athletics Discuss	Track Athletics Hurdles With Jude	
Y7,8,9&10 Cricket Recreational	Athletics Jumps Performance Invite		Track Athletics Track & Relay	
Y7&8 Rounders Recreational & Performance		Field Athletics High Jump with Phoebe Dance Studio		
KS3 Dance Recreational Alanna & Shaname	Boys Gaelic Recreational & Performance		Girls Gaelic Recreational & Performance	



MUSIC

Music for everyone!



Lunchtime Music

- Monday - Year 7 and 8 singers
- Tuesday - Chamber Choir
- Wednesday - Orchestra
- Thursday - Keyboard Club
- Friday - Rock Bands

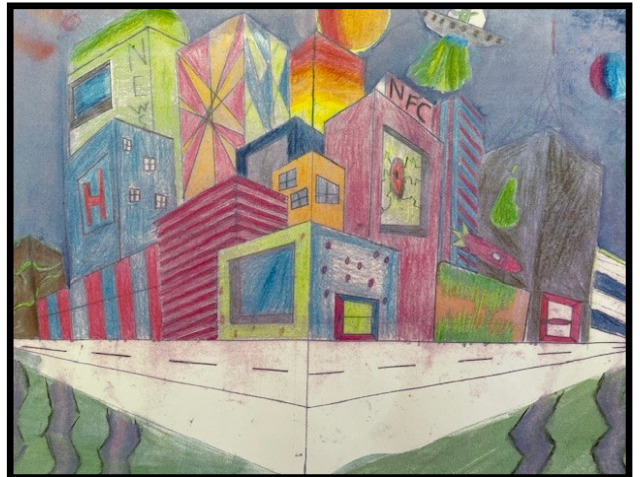
ALL 1.45-2.15pm

Mrs Metcalfe - Music Department



ART

Year 9 Perspective





SAFEGUARDING IN FOCUS



At John F Kennedy Catholic School, safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do, and we work hard to ensure that every child feels safe, supported and listened to within our school community.

Our safeguarding team plays a vital role in this work. The team works closely with students, families, staff and external agencies to promote a culture where safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Students and families can reach out to the safeguarding team for support. We recognise that parents and carers are key partners in safeguarding. We encourage families to familiarise themselves with our safeguarding approach, policies and procedures, which are available on the school website:

Safeguarding information and policies:

<https://www.jfk.herts.sch.uk/page/?title=Safeguarding&pid=82>

In addition, the school provides a range of **supportive links and resources** for students and families, covering areas such as mental health, online safety, wellbeing and external support services:

Support for students and families:

<https://www.jfk.herts.sch.uk/page/?title=Support+for+students+and+families&pid=100>

If you ever have a safeguarding concern, no matter how small it may seem, we urge you to share it. Concerns can be raised confidentially by emailing:

staysafe@jfk.herts.sch.uk

Letting us know about concerns, however small they may seem, allows us to offer the right support when it is needed. Working closely with families helps us maintain a safe, inclusive and caring school community where every child can feel secure and valued.

Mrs McKenzie – Assistant Headteacher



TRIPS 2026 – 2027



**"A Gentle
Reminder"**

NEW TRIPS COMING.....

Sports Tour 2027 – Current Year 7 and 8 students

UPCOMING DAY TRIPS AND EVENTS

Year 10 Rock Climbing, May/June 2026 - PE students only

TRIPS

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

A Level Biology F/T, 1st - 3rd June 2026

Croft Farm, 22nd - 24th June 2026

Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella, 30th June - 7th July 2026

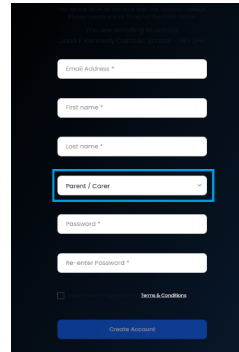
GCSE Geography F/T, 6th - 8th July 2026

Duke of Edinburgh 2026, Bronze and Silver





SAFEGUARDING IN FOCUS



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



CYCLING SAFETY



Cycling to school is a great way for pupils to stay active and independent, but it's important that it's done safely.

We strongly encourage all pupils who cycle to wear a properly fitted helmet every day. Helmets can greatly reduce the risk of serious head injury in the event of a fall or collision.

It is important that:

- **The helmet fits snugly and sits level on the head**
- **Straps are fastened correctly every time**
- **The helmet is in good condition and has not been damaged in a previous fall**

Bicycles are designed for one rider only. Carrying passengers on handlebars, luggage racks, or the back of a bike is unsafe and affects balance and control. Pupils should be reminded not to carry friends and to make sensible decisions even if others encourage them to do so.

The roads close to school can become particularly busy at the beginning and end of the school day, with cars, buses, and pedestrians all sharing limited space. Pupils should ride sensibly, stay alert, follow road signs and signals, and clearly signal their intentions when turning. Pupils should not weave in and out of traffic or between vehicles, as this is dangerous, unpredictable, and greatly increases the risk of an accident. Distractions such as mobile phones or headphones should be avoided.

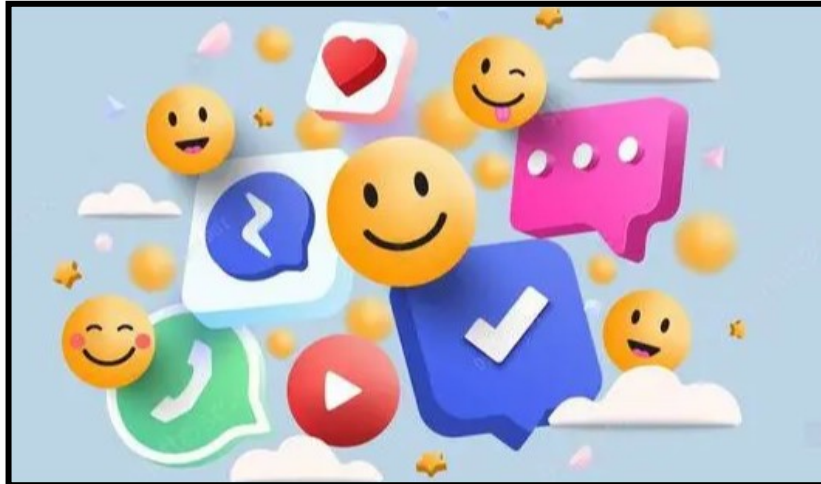
We ask that parents and carers to reinforce these messages at home and check that bikes are roadworthy, with working brakes, lights, and reflectors, especially during darker mornings and afternoons.

Thank you for your continued support in helping pupils travel to and from school safely.

Mrs McKenzie – Assistant Headteacher



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.

Mrs McKenzie – Assistant Headteacher



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



UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 21st April, Duke of Edinburgh Awards Evening, Hall
Monday 4th May, Bank Holiday, School Closed
Wednesday 6th May, Year 12 Consultation Evening, In Person
Tuesday 19th May, New Year 7 Parent Information Evening, 6.30pm
Monday 25th May - Friday 29th May, Half Term, School Closed

WE ARE HIRING!

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



FUTURE DATES

Monday 8th June - Friday 12th June, Year 10 Work Experience Week
Friday 19th June - Year 11 Leavers Day
Monday 22nd June - Wednesday 24th June, Year 7 Residential Trip
Wednesday 24th June - Creative Exhibition, D Block Gallery
Thursday 25th June, JFK Sports Day @ Jarman Park
Friday 26th June, INSET Day, School Closed
Thursday 9th July - New Year 7's Transition Day



ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS 2025-2026

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 9.10 am constitutes unauthorised absence and can legally be the basis of an offence by the parent/carer
- Those students who arrive very late (after 9.10 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



BECOME A FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

Make a Difference Where It Matters Most —

Become a Foundation Governor!

Are you passionate about helping children thrive? Do you want to use your skills, values, and experience to strengthen your local community? We are looking for inspiring, committed people to join our Local Academy Councils as **Foundation Governors** — and you could be exactly who we need.

The Local Academy Council (LAC) is responsible for supporting the mission and strategic direction of the Catholic Multi Academy Trust (CMAT) at a local level. Rooted in the values and teachings of the Catholic Church, the LAC serves as a key link between the individual academy, its parish community, and the wider Trust. The primary responsibilities of the LAC include:

- **Faithful Stewardship and Ethos:** Uphold and promote the Catholic identity, values, and mission of the academy, ensuring Gospel principles guide all aspects of school life.
- **Advocacy and Governorship:** Act as advocates of the Trust's vision and strategy while serving as Governors for the local academy within the Trust, parish and wider community to build partnerships.
- **Impact and Accountability:** Provide local support and challenge to school leaders by monitoring standards, inclusion, safeguarding, and ensuring effective implementation of Trust policies.

Why this role matters:

Foundation Governors (practising Catholics) play a powerful role in shaping the future of our school. They help protect and promote our values, support our leadership team, and ensure every child has access to an excellent education. Your voice and your perspective can directly influence the school's direction, priorities, and success. There are limited spaces available for parents in their child's school.

No previous governance experience? No problem.

We welcome people from all backgrounds — what matters most is your enthusiasm, willingness to learn, and commitment to our school's ethos. Full training, guidance, and mentoring are provided.

See next page



BECOME A FOUNDATION GOVERNOR

We're especially keen to hear from people who:

- Care deeply about the wellbeing and development of young people
- Share and support the school's foundation and values
- Can think strategically and ask thoughtful questions
- Bring experience from any profession or community role
- Want to make a meaningful, lasting contribution

What you'll gain:

- A rewarding leadership role with real impact
- New skills in strategy, education, finance, and governance
- Opportunities to work with dedicated school leaders
- A chance to give back and shape the future of children in your community

Time commitment:

Around 6–8 meetings per year, plus some school visits and training.



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 confirmation 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



VACCINATIONS



Vaccination UK

Respiratory and flu-like cases are rapidly on the rise. We urge you to ensure your child receives the flu vaccination. You have a choice between the quick and painless nasal spray or the Injection which is porcine & gelatine free. This not only protects your children against being seriously ill but also protects vulnerable members of your family and community.

We have several community catch-up clinics available. Please use the link below to book an appointment.

[Vaccination UK Immunisation](#)

If you previously declined consent for your child when we visited the school, you **can change** your consent. Please call our office on 01462 427008, and we will book a clinic appointment for you.

Thank you for your support.

Hertfordshire Immunisation Team



VACANCIES



St Cuthbert Mayne Catholic Junior School

Come join the team at St Cuthbert Mayne School in Hemel Hempstead as an **Afterschool Club Manager**. This rewarding role involves creating a fun, safe environment for children after school, leading activities and inspiring creativity. If you're enthusiastic, organised, and passionate about supporting young people, we'd love to hear from you.

Link to apply: [Afterschool Club Manager - Eteach](#)

St Cuthbert Mayne School, Hemel Hempstead, is seeking a reliable **Premises Assistant** to support the day-to-day running of the site. If you are practical and take pride in maintaining safe, well-kept buildings, this could be the perfect role. Join a supportive school community and help create a welcoming environment for staff and students.

Link to apply:- [Premises Assistant - Eteach](#)



SACRED HEART CHURCH

Sacred Heart RC Church Youth Mass and Social - Our next Youth Mass and social is on **Saturday 25th April** at 5pm.

Everyone is welcome to the Mass and we would like to invite all those in Year 7 and above to come to both the Mass and social in the hall.

Look forward to seeing you there for pizza and games!!

SACRED HEART CHURCH
PARK ST, BERKHAMSTED, HP4 1HX

YOUTH MASS AND SOCIAL

SATURDAY 25TH APRIL

5PM

SOCIAL
FOR
YEARS 7
AND
ABOVE

FUTURE
DATES:
30/5
27/6

**COME CHILL WITH FREE PIZZA
AND DRINKS WITH TABLE
TENNIS, FOOTBALL & MORE**

MASS AT 5, SOCIAL 6 - 7.30



EVER THOUGHT OF BECOMING A TEACHER?

School Based Teacher Training with the Dacorum Schools Alliance



We will be offering a School Direct Teacher Training programme in the following subjects for September 2026

Applications accepted from October 7th

Art, Biology, Chemistry, Computing, Drama, Design and Technology, English, Geography, Mathematics, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education, Physics, Religious Studies

We also accept applications for Primary teaching

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR TEACHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES email
David Redwood - dredwood@tring.school

OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE - www.tring.herts.sch.uk/teacher-training