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John F Kennedy Catholic School

June 12, 2026



Last Sunday we celebrated the Feast of Corpus Christi - or to give it its full title the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. Catholics understand that, during the Mass, the process of transubstantiation transforms bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus. This forms the central part of the Mass - the celebration of the Eucharist, a word deriving from the Greek for 'thanksgiving' - which Catholics are called to attend every Sunday. It is referred to as the source and summit of the faith, because it is at this ceremony that we are in communion with Christ and receive his nourishment. Being the source and summit of the faith means that Mass should be a key celebration in the Catholic school, and in particular the best way to begin and end our students' school journey. A few weeks ago we held our Year 13 Leavers' Mass and the Year 11 one will be taking place next week. It is widely acknowledged that Mass attendance of young people today is generally low, which is why we work hard to clarify expectations regarding participation in this celebration. Students need to understand that entering the church is not like entering any other room in the school - Jesus is present and an appropriately reverential demeanour is expected. Whilst the origins of this ritual are rather sombre - Jesus' Last Supper, at which he prepared his followers for his death - the Eucharist is a way in which various occasions in the Catholic Church are marked: confirmations, weddings, baptisms, ordinations, funerals, when praying for the sick and commemorating the dead. At the recent first meeting of parents of next year's Year 7 cohort we talked about how they can support their children in being ready for JFK. In addition to the obvious practical considerations I suggested that those who are Catholic should ensure their children are familiar with Mass and the prayer life of the Church, because that's one aspect of school life that makes our school distinctive.

SCIENCE

Year 12 Biology Field Trip



Our A Level Biology students took part in a three day residential trip to Flatford Mill, near Colchester last week. Following brief background teaching by field centre staff, they undertook a variety of fieldwork studies. The highlights included freshwater sampling and succession on a shingle ridge. We had glorious weather the first day, but it sadly deteriorated on the second, however the students were wonderfully enthusiastic and had great fun! Congratulations and thank you to all for an enjoyable, successful trip.



Mrs Davison - Science Department



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HISTORY

Year 12 History A level students visit to St Albans Abbey.



On Monday 8th June Year 12 History A level students visited St Albans Abbey. Our guide showed us some of the 1700 years of history within the building, including the Norman architecture and the remnants of the Benedictine Abbey which was a thriving religious and commercial centre prior to the Reformation.

A highlight of our tour was seeing a cutting edge installation which uses scanning and projection techniques to reimagine the colourful and vibrant Medieval wall paintings and statues. It was amazing to experience what the cathedral would have been like in the 15th century prior to the iconoclasm of the Reformation. The projections brought to life the face of Saint Thomas Becket and St Christopher, clearly showing the defacing scratch marks left on the wall before projecting an image of the painting in its full original colours. Along with our excellent tour this really brought to life the profound changes of the Reformation for students.

Following our tour we were given the opportunity to visit the Abbey's muniments room (archive). This was an immense privilege as this area is not open to the public and requires the climbing of a very narrow spiral staircase into the roof of the Abbey. Pupils were able to engage and hold documents from the Abbey's 900 year old history and it was great to see their enthusiasm and awe when handling and reading these precious manuscripts. The day was completed with an exam skills workshop that allowed pupils to use the knowledge that they had acquired across their visit to support their A Level studies.

Andrew Hope Year 12:

"I really enjoyed the trip to Saint Albans Cathedral, especially the exclusive access we were given to their archive room. It allowed me to view some clear evidence of the reformation that we are studying in class at the moment. The trip helped me to apply the lessons I have learnt in the classroom to the local area where many of the notorious reformation events, like the dissolution of St Albans Abbey, took place."

Luis Auld Year 12:

"The cathedral was very beautiful, and it was amazing to go behind the scenes, visiting the archive and learning about the history of the place."

Mr Morgan - History Department



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MUSIC

Music News



The Music department has again been a hive of activity this week with our usual extra-curricular activities alongside rehearsals for the Summer Concert. We did an Instagram spotlight on percussion this week - Sylvie is a superb percussion player, in Year 12, and is seen here playing the timpani in one of the pieces for the concert - March from Scipio by GF Handel. She was accompanied by a quartet from the orchestra - violins I and II , flute and recorder. An authentic Baroque ensemble !

Tickets for the concert, Monday 29th June , at 7:00pm are on sale on WisePay .



Dates for the Diary

Tuesday 23rd June - DJ and Music
Production
workshops for Year 8 and 9

Thursday 2nd July - Year 7 House
Music Competition

Mrs Metcalfe - Music Department



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Year 7 Church Tour



Last week Year 7 students got the opportunity to take part in a workshop and Church Tour as part of our RE curriculum.

The students participated in 3 sessions; one at St Mark's Catholic Church, one at Hemel Hempstead Methodist Church and the last session took place in M Block in the form of a workshop. Hemel Hempstead Methodist Church welcomed us with open arms and gave an insightful talk about their Church, how they worship, as well as speaking about the many different ways they provide opportunities for people to develop in their faith and fellowship. The students were really engaged and enjoyed conversing with the volunteers from the church and asked brilliant questions.

In St Mark's, students got to reflect upon the Catholic Church's approach to worship and were able to make good comparisons with the Methodist Church in terms of the interior design of the two places of worship.

The workshops were designed for students to explore more about the differences between Conformist and non-Conformist Christians as well as the differences between modern and traditional churches. The students even had fun designing and building their own churches out of lego and labelling key features of their churches.

Overall, this was a great experience for Year 7 students to be introduced to the diversity of Christianity in the local area. We hope to run the trip as an annual event and hopefully get other churches involved too.



Mr Brophy - RE Department





Year 9 Language Leaders Inspire Young Learners on French Day at St Albert the Great Catholic Primary School

Pupils at St Albert the Great Catholic Primary School enjoyed an exciting and immersive French Day on Friday 5th June, made even more special by a visit from our 12 enthusiastic JFK Year 9 Language Leaders.

Our Year 9 Language Leaders worked alongside primary school pupils, leading a variety of engaging and fun French language activities they had planned prior to the visit. Their aim was to inspire younger learners and demonstrate how learning languages can be both enjoyable and rewarding. Their positive approach created a supportive learning environment and encouraged pupils from Year 1 to Year 5 to participate actively in all activities throughout their sessions.

They taught their activities with such compassion, patience and adaptability that all primary school children and their teachers thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The event was a wonderful example of collaboration between ASCAT schools and highlighted the benefits of language learning from an early age.

We are very proud of our Year 9 Language Leaders who were such amazing ambassadors for our school and the MFL department. Well done to all of you for achieving your KS3 Language Leader award!

Mrs Mitchell - MFL Department



LIBRARY



We are looking forward to a half term full of activity here with special events planned throughout the warm sunny days of June and July (here's hoping!). Think picnics, book swaps, reading celebrations, reading mountain ranges and more!

Craft Club (run by Mrs Cole on Wednesday lunch times) and Book Club (Thursday break time) continue to be well attended with new students joining as word spreads. At Book Club we are going to be voting on our favourite book for the Spark! Book Awards soon so I'm encouraging the students to read the four shortlisted titles. One of the books, 'I Dare You' is a fantastic and gripping story about two best friends vying for fame and hits on their TikTok channel until it all goes hideously wrong - a salutary tale for our times.

On Instagram I've been featuring staff from History, English, Physics, PE and Careers talking about their favourite reads and the strangest places they've read, so do take a look @libraryjfk and follow us. It's great for the students to see that staff across all subjects enjoy reading and gives them a new insight into what staff enjoy doing in their spare time!



Mrs Powell - Librarian



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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.



ATTENDANCE

Supporting Every Student's Journey

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." — John 10:10

At the heart of our Catholic community is the belief that every child is a unique gift from God, blessed with individual gifts and talents. Our mission is to nurture the whole child—spiritually, academically, and emotionally—so they can flourish and thrive.

To truly experience "life to the full" within our school community, consistent attendance is vital. When your child is here, they aren't just attending lessons; they are building friendships, growing in faith, and developing the resilience they need for the future.

Working in Partnership

We understand that life can sometimes bring challenges that make school attendance difficult. Whether it is a health concern, anxiety, or a change in family circumstances, please know that you are not alone.

In line with the latest Department for Education guidance, we believe that attendance is a shared responsibility. Our goal is to work in partnership with families to remove any barriers your child may be facing.

How We Can Help

The best time to reach out is always the early stage. If you notice your child is reluctant to attend or is struggling, please don't wait for the situation to escalate.

- **Early Conversation:** A simple phone call to your child's Achievement Team can start a supportive dialogue.
- **Tailored Support:** We offer a range of internal pastoral support, from mentoring to counselling and mental health support.
- **Our Online Support Hub:** We have a dedicated Attendance page on our school website. This includes practical tips, links to external wellbeing resources, and a clear guide on how we work with families to improve attendance.

[Attendance JFA Website](#)

By working together we ensure that every student feels safe, valued, and ready to learn.

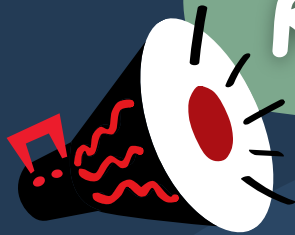
Mrs Bailey - Deputy Headteacher



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TRIPS 2026/27

A GENTLE REMINDER



- Year 7 Croft Farm, 22nd - 24th June 2026
- Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, 30th June - 7th July 2026
- GCSE Geography F/T, 6th - 8th July 2026
- War Horse - Drama and History (Year 9, 10 and 12) - 15th July 2026
- Duke of Edinburgh 2026, Bronze and Silver
- Year 11 Prom 2026
- Iceland 2027



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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	 
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 sixthform@jfk.herts.sch.uk

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



[Is my child too ill for school?](#)

NHS advice about when to keep your child off school



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UPCOMING EVENTS

MONTH OF JUNE

- Friday 19th June - Year 11 Leavers Day
- Monday 22nd June - Wednesday 24th June , Year 7 Residential Trip
- Thursday 25th June , JFK Sports Day @ Jarman Park
- Friday 26th June, INSET Day, School Closed

FUTURE DATES

- Monday 6th July, Year 12 Work Experience
- Tuesday 7th July, Sports Presentation Evening , 7.00pm
- Wednesday 8th July, DofE Silver Expedition
- Thursday 9th July - New Year 7's Transition Day
- Thursday 9th July - GCSE and A Level Creative Exhibition
- Friday 17th July, End of Term, 12.35pm



UPCOMING EVENTS



THE JOHN F KENNEDY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

CREATIVE EXHIBITION

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MONDAY - 6TH JULY 4PM

D BLOCK GALLERY



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COMMUNITY

Are you looking for local activities and SEND services for a child or young person with SEND?

The SEND community activities directory promotes a wide range of local activities and support groups. Some activities will also include discounts for families registered with a Herts Card (SEND).

We will be adding additional activities on a regular basis.
Find fun, inclusive activities your child will love – all in one place! [Explore the SEND community directory](#).

If there are any activities you know of or wish to see promoted through this directory, please email us on: SENDcommissioning@hertfordshire.gov.uk



Are you a family with children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Need and/or Disabilities looking for local activities?

The SEND directory promotes a wide range of local activities and support groups, some activities will also include discounts for families registered for our Herts Card (SEND).

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/SENDdirectory



STEVENSONS

Summer Shopping

Your uniform is supplied through our
St Albans Branch

Address:

131-135 Victoria Street,
St Albans,
AL1 3XS

Contact:

stalbanbranch@stevensons.co.uk

Please note we are a cashless branch.

Opening Hours:

Monday: 9:30am - 5pm
Tuesday: 9:30am - 5pm
Wednesday: Closed
Thursday: Closed
Friday: 9:30am - 5pm
Saturday: 9:30am - 5pm
Sunday: Closed

Online

Shopping online at www.stevensons.co.uk is easy!

You can select home delivery or opt for convenient Click & Collect from your local store.

Our in-stock items are typically dispatched within 48 hours.
Plus, with our 365-day return policy, you can shop with confidence knowing that returns are hassle-free.

In Store Opening Hours

Will be open for pre-booked fitting appointments from Monday 20th July - Friday 21st August.

We recommend booking a fitting appointment so we can offer you dedicated one-to-one service during the summer period.

Walk-in customers are welcome. Saturdays are a great option for visiting without an appointment, and our team will assist you as soon as they are available.

Please visit our website to check extended opening hours over the summer.



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