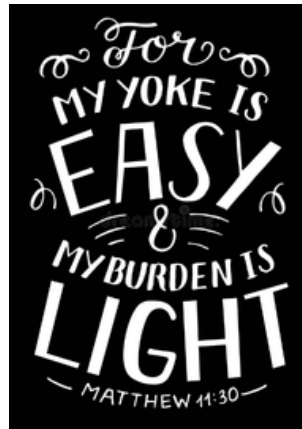


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John F Kennedy Catholic School

July 10, 2026



I can think of situations in school where a task needs completion and the help of several willing students would be beneficial. I'd be tempted to say, "many hands make light work". Conversely, there might be times when a smaller focused group might get better results - and I'd naturally say, "too many cooks spoil the broth". I wonder what reaction I would get? I'm not sure how familiar our students are these days with proverbs? I grew up being familiar with lots of them and I must have picked them up from my schooldays, when they were naturally woven into everyday language - there was no social media back then!

A proverb - a short, traditional saying that expresses a perceived truth or practical advice based on common sense or experience - has always been a way to get across an important message simply.

One such proverb that I believe is so true and so useful is, 'a problem shared is a problem halved'. The idea is that discussing your worries or difficulties with someone you trust makes the emotional burden lighter and the situation easier to manage. Even if the issue isn't immediately fixed, talking about it reduces the stress you carry alone. This underpins the pastoral care we provide for our students and the ethos that leads to the support we offer to one another as colleagues in school. However, as a Catholic school, our task is to ensure our students are aware of the eternal presence in their lives: the God who loves them and cares for them. In times of trouble, distress, sadness there is always someone you can turn to - to share your burdens in prayer. I do that and I feel comforted as a result.

In last Sunday's Gospel we had the beautiful words of Jesus' invitation, which mirrors the proverb about 'a problem shared' and provides wisdom that for those of faith makes perfect sense:

'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'

SCIENCE

Snowdrop Project Presentation at the Royal Society, London



Last Thursday, six of our students had the incredible privilege of attending the prestigious Royal Society's Summer Science Exhibition in London.

JFK was one of just twelve schools nationwide selected to showcase investigative work alongside world-leading scientists. This milestone celebrated our ongoing collaboration with Bedford School, investigating DNA sequences in snowdrops. Backed by a generous £3,000 Royal Society Partnership Grant, our students worked with experts from Anglesey Abbey, Rothamsted Research, and EMBL-EBI to map the evolutionary links between different snowdrop species.

Our students were outstanding ambassadors for JFK, confidently presenting their findings to cutting-edge researchers and the public alike. A huge thank you to the Royal Society for funding this inspiring opportunity, and congratulations to our brilliant young scientists for their dedication and professionalism!

Mrs Davison and Ms Digby

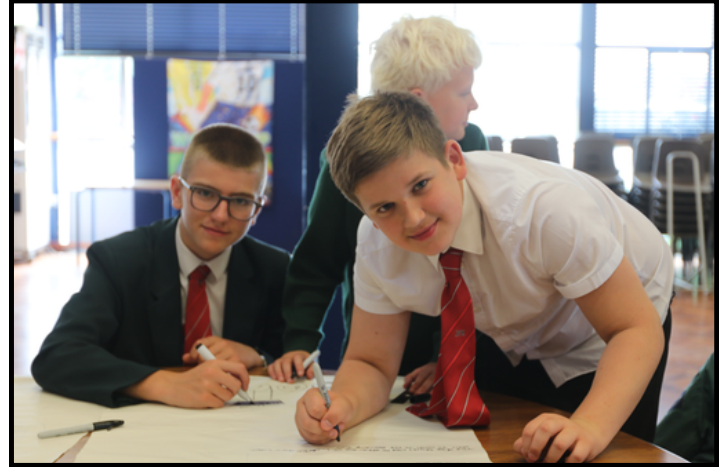
Mrs Davison - Science Department



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LIBRARY

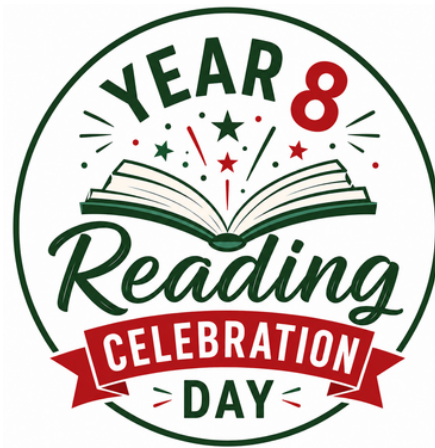
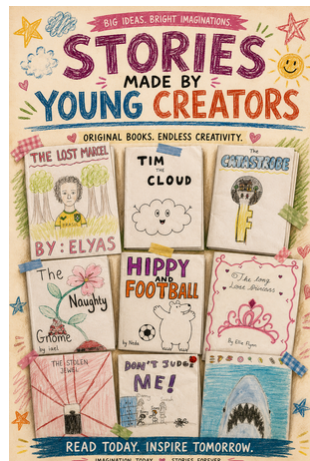
Reading Celebration Day



**GO
ALL
IN.**

National
Year of
Reading
2026

Mr Littlejohn and Mrs Powell would like to thank all staff and students involved in our Year 8 Reading Celebration Day to celebrate the National Year of Reading. Our visiting author, Ali Sparkes, was fantastically engaging. The students had a wonderful time and brought their own brilliant book ideas from concept to reality throughout the day.



Mrs Powell - Librarian



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SIXTH FORM

Santiago Pilgrimage



We have had the amazing opportunity to be able to lead a trip to the Galician region of Spain for a Pilgrimage with 14 of our Sixth Form students.

Arriving in the small town of Sarria on Tuesday, the pilgrims started their journey with a reflection in San Salvador church led by Callum Moore, the Leader of Youth Ministry. The following morning, the 14 students began their 119km journey to the Santiago Cathedral through the Spanish countryside, passing through farms, forests and small churches with gorgeous views of the rolling hills.

By dinner time on Wednesday, we had arrived in Portomarin after our 22km walk, a town that had to move uphill in the 1960s to allow for the Belesar Reservoir to be built and, as a consequence, flood the old town. While on our travels, we met a couple who encouraged us to walk by the reservoir for a chance to see the ruins of the old Portomarin in the case of a low tide.

Thursday was the most physically difficult day with its 25km hill climb past rural areas and picturesque villages. We rested in Palas de Reis where we were ten steps away from the local parish church, hosting our evening and night prayers.

Friday saw us counting down the 68km left while heading to Melide, the octopus capital of the Camino, famous for its grilled octopus. The easier day of 14km of walking was finished with a stay in Hotel & Spa Carlos desde 1996, the unanimous favourite for our pilgrims for the hydrotherapy spa which most of us visited. An empanada shop was found in the town, at which some of our pilgrims bought their lunch for their walk the following day.

On Saturday, we did the second 14km walk to arrive in Arzua, now only 36km away from Santiago, three Camino trails merged together for the final stretch. From this point onwards, we met more pilgrims with more adventures to share. We had a Vigil Mass at Iglesia de Santiago de Arzua, where all of the pilgrims celebrated and prayed together. This was followed by a group dinner, full of laughs, jokes and apparently maths!

Miss Milnthrope - Youth Ministry



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SIXTH FORM

Sunday saw our last difficult day of over 20km of walking from Arzua to O Pedrouzo. Due to the safety in heat, taxis were taken to the hotel after 11am, but that didn't take away from the quality of the walk! Starting at 7am, some of our pilgrims fought to get as far as they could as a personal challenge, reaching Santa Irene and visiting the healing fountain of youth next to the church. The rest of our pilgrims made it to the midway point, focusing on the endpoint as a motivator and metaphorically carrying each other to the finish line.

Monday was our last stretch to Santiago, our last 16km! Our pilgrims completed the last stretch altogether, growing closer as a whole group and reached the Cathedral by the afternoon. Watching their faces light up at the 5km mark was an amazing experience, they saw the spires of the Cathedral and raced each other to become the King or Queen of the Camino. The Pilgrim's Mass that evening was the perfect way to end our Camino, with a receiving of the pilgrim's blessing and completing our journey by hugging the statue of Saint James the Greater just behind the sanctuary.

Overall, Callum, Mrs Whittaker and I were so amazed with the blossoming friendships, perseverance and optimism shown by every student we had with us. They motivated us, sang with us and grew in confidence when meeting other pilgrims (and animals!).

Please be proud of our pilgrims: Ava Heron, Rebecca Anderton, Charlie Graham, Francesca Covaci, Jakub Buda, Olivia Sibley, Jakub Pawlina, Elizabeth Murren, Viktoriia Khmil, Adam Kandiah, Zuzanna Gasiewska, Polly Body and Emilia Blasi-Colleran!



Miss Milnthorpe - Youth Ministry



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ART

Creative Exhibition 2026



A big thank you to all those who came to join us on Monday evening to celebrate the achievements of both GCSE and A Level art students at the annual Creative Exhibition.



Miss Freed - Art Department



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GENERAL NOTICES

Ahead of the summer break we would like to share an important message from our Director of Public Health Sarah Perman.

Dear Parent, Carer

The number of children with measles has increased since the start of the year, with most cases in unvaccinated children aged 10 years and under. Measles is a very infectious illness which can make children very unwell and sometimes leads to serious complications. Sadly, two children in England have died from measles in 2026.

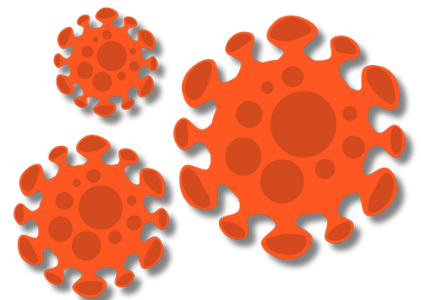
In Hertfordshire we have had outbreaks of measles in some of our schools and cases of measles are increasing. I am therefore asking that parents take the following actions:

- Check your child's red book or the NHS App to make sure your child is up to date with their vaccinations.
- If your child has missed one or both doses of MMR, please contact your GP practice to arrange an appointment.
- You can also contact your local Community & School Aged Immunisation Service who run vaccination sessions for all ages. Details can be found here:
<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/service-details/service/hertfordshire-and-east-anglia-community-and-school-age-immunisations-35/>
- If your child is ill and you are worried it might be measles, check symptoms of measles here:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles>. If you need help, please phone your GP or 111 and follow their advice.

An alternative vaccine is available for those who want to avoid pork products. You can find out about this when booking an appointment. The MMR vaccination is safe and free in the NHS and highly effective in protecting children from three serious diseases, Measles, Mumps and Rubella."

Yours faithfully

Sarah Perman
Director of Public Health
Hertfordshire County Council



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 6thform@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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EXAMS



Guidance for parents, carers and students about access arrangements



WHAT ARE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS?

- Access arrangements allow students with specific needs, such as special educational needs or disabilities, to access an exam.
- They allow students to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the exam.



HOW WILL THE PROCESS START?

- Parents and carers should let the SENCo know as soon as possible if their child has additional needs. Good and open communication is important.
- Students in further education should record their additional needs on the college's enrolment form.
- The SENCo will work with teachers and the student to identify possible arrangements.
- Various access arrangements are available. For example, support for students who have difficulties with reading, writing, speed of working or concentration.
- Not all students with additional needs will require access arrangements. This depends on whether their difficulty affects their access to exams. Additional needs or a diagnosis alone do not entitle a student to access arrangements.



WHO WILL MAKE THE ASSESSMENT?

- If a student has learning difficulties, the school or college's appointed assessor must conduct the assessment to determine the need for access arrangements, such as 25% extra time.
- If an external assessor diagnoses a learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia or dyscalculia), the assessment can only be used as evidence for access arrangements if the assessor has liaised with the school or college and received the necessary access arrangements paperwork in advance of the assessment taking place.
- Specialists (for example, a medical consultant or a psychiatrist) are responsible for providing a formal diagnosis. They are **not** responsible for decisions about access arrangements.
- The school or college must decide which access arrangements a student has for their exams.
- Teachers must give evidence to show that an access arrangement is needed. The school or college will record how effective the arrangement is in the classroom, in internal tests or in mock exams.



WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- The school or college will have to apply for some arrangements.
- If a student has complex needs, a school or college can discuss their needs with the exam board.

FINALLY

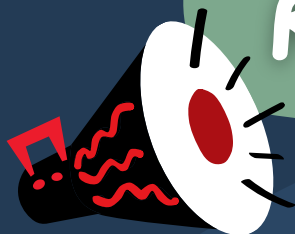
Schools and colleges **must** follow the rules. They are inspected and if they are found to be breaking the rules, this will be malpractice.

**If you have any questions about access arrangements,
please speak to the school, college or SENCo.**



TRIPS 2026/27

A GENTLE REMINDER



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

- War Horse - Drama and History (Year 9, 10 and 12) - 15th July 2026 - places still available.
- Duke of Edinburgh 2026, Bronze and Silver
- Iceland 2027
- A Taste of Italy 2027 - student list to follow shortly. Instalments to start from September 2026
- Rome 2027, 30th April - 3rd May 2027- to students in current years 7,8,9 and 11 (6th form)



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UPCOMING EVENTS

MONTH OF JULY

- Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th July ,Year 10 Geography Field Trip
- Wednesday 15th July, Year 12 Festival
- Wednesday 15th July, War Horse Theatre Trip
- Thursday 16th July, JFK Culture Day
- Friday 17th July, End of Term, 12.35pm

FUTURE DATES

- Tuesday 1st September , INSET Day (School Closed to students)
- Wednesday 2nd September, Year 7's Only
- Thursday 3rd September, All students return



UPCOMING EVENTS

RE Department



Rome – 30th April – 3rd May 2027

Experience the culture, history and beauty of the Eternal City.

Enjoy 3 nights in a welcoming 3-star stay with breakfast and evening meals in Rome.

Your trip includes:

- A guided visit to Vatican City including St Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel
- St Peter's Square on Sunday for a Papal Blessing
- The Colosseum, Roman Forum and Palatine Hill
- The Jewish Museum of Rome

This unforgettable tour will not exceed £1000

Available to current Years 7, 8, 9 and 11

Deposit of £100 needed via Wisepay.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

SACRED HEART RC CHURCH

SUMMER BBQ

food, fun & community for all!

 **SUNDAY 12TH JULY**
FROM 12PM

 **SACRED HEART RC CHURCH, BERKHAMSTED**
PARK STREET
HP41HX

 **GREAT FOOD**

 **BAR**

 **FOOTBALL**

 **BOUNCY CASTLE**

 **EMAIL TO BOOK:**
berkhamsted@rcdow.org.uk

<i>Tickets</i>	ADULTS	5-17 YEARS	UNDER 5'S
	£10	£5	FREE



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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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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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