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John F Kennedy Catholic School

July 17, 2026



The Parable of the Sower Matthew 13

Last Sunday's Gospel reading was one of the easiest and powerful ones to analyse and is relatable to our work with our students in school. It contained the parable of the sower. A sower scattered his seeds in the expectation of growing his new crop. But not all the seeds landed where they should.

Some landed on the path and were immediately eaten by birds, some fell on patches of rock with little soil, sprang up quickly but because there were no solid roots were then scorched by the sun and withered away. Others fell among thorns and the thorns grew around them and choked them. However, others fell in rich soil and produced their crop in great volumes.

Jesus uses the parable as a way of demonstrating the different responses people have to hearing the word of God - the message he taught during his ministry. The four scenarios play out as follows:

The Path - People who hear the message, but immediately dismiss or misunderstand it. The message is lost.

The Rocky Ground - People who receive the message with joy, but lack deep roots. When tough times or challenges arise, they quickly give up.

Among Thorns - People who hear the message, but let the worries of life, the desire for wealth, and worldly distractions choke their faith, making it unproductive.

Good Soil - People who hear, understand, and accept the message. Their faith takes root and grows, resulting in a productive, fruitful life.

Rather like the four scenarios in the parable of the sower, our task at JFK involves:

- constantly promoting the Christian values of our school, so that the message isn't lost.
- helping our students develop resilience, understanding that the learning process should be hard and that determination will achieve success.
- promoting the development of character and an appreciation of the simple things in life rather than striving for material wealth and superficial pleasure.
- giving our students the opportunities to see their faith put into action for the benefit of our community and those in need outside it.

We take a break now for the summer but will return in September ready to sow new seeds, the fruits of which can further enrich our school community.

As is customary at the end of a school year, we say goodbye to some members of staff who are leaving JFK. They are as follows:

Mr Fan - science & maths

Mr Patel - maths

Miss Joyce - geography, RE and previously MFL

Mr Jenkins - Exams Officer

Mrs Mitchell Data Manager

Mrs Nieddu - Assistant Subject Leader for RE

Mrs Brogan - art

Ms Milton - Subject Leader for MFL

Mr Dawson - exams invigilator for the past 18 years

Mr Wood - technology - who retires after 18 years at JFK.

I thanked all these colleagues last night at our traditional end of year celebration, expressing gratitude for the contributions they have made to the JFK community in their many different ways. We wish them all the best for the future.

I also took the opportunity to thank the whole staff body for their hard work over the past school year. As always it has been a very enjoyable year, full of activity and with lots to celebrate, including, of course, our Ofsted Inspection. If you haven't done so yet I would urge you to take a few minutes to read the report, which was emailed to you and is available on the school website.

Thank you for your support for JFK, for encouraging your child(ren) to make a positive contribution to the life of JFK, whether that's in school or outside. On Wednesday evening 75 students went into London to see the show 'War Horse'. The staff accompanying the trip said, "The students we took were a real pleasure to take out into London. They loved the show and were praised by members of the audience for how engaged they'd been in it all"

"The students were amazing and a real credit to our school. Once again, another successful and enjoyable school trip."

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very pleasant summer and I look forward to welcoming the students back in September.

Mr Neves - Headteacher



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SIXTH FORM

JFK Festival 2026



What a year it has been. From the first tentative steps onto the Bridge last September to the confident, focused young adults walking the corridors today, our Year 12 students have handled the academic rigour and personal growth of this year with immense grit and determination.

To mark the end of this chapter and celebrate all that hard work, the annual Year 12 Festival took over the school fields this week and it was the perfect send-off to the academic year.

It was a lovely atmosphere. Under blue skies, the sound of music competed with the smell of a classic summer BBQ, drawing everyone together for an afternoon of well-deserved downtime. Students threw themselves into the garden games, showcasing some surprisingly competitive streaks, while others simply enjoyed the chance to sit back, chat, and reflect on the highs of the past ten months.

The afternoon culminated in our Subject Awards ceremony. Teachers took the opportunity to publicly recognise those students who have gone above and beyond, whether through academic excellence, sheer determination, or being a supportive force in the classroom. Congratulations to all of our award winners.

Most importantly, the spirit of the day was unmatched. The laughter, camaraderie, and genuine support our students showed for one another proved what a tight-knit community this cohort has become.

An event like this doesn't just happen. A huge thank you to everyone who made the festival possible. Year 12, you have earned this break. Have a fantastic, restful summer, recharge those batteries, stay safe, and we will see you in September, ready to conquer Year 13!

Mr Joyce - Director of Sixth Form



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SIXTH FORM

JFK Festival 2026



Mr Joyce - Director of Sixth Form



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CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Shining Equally Day



On Tuesday, we were fortunate enough to provide a Shining Equally Day retreat day for every single student of St Albert's the Great Catholic Primary School, to celebrate the Catholic Social Teaching of Human Dignity.

The day was split into different key stages (the morning for KS2 and the afternoon for KS1) filled with games, arts and prayer. Attaching onto our Inspire Achieve Serve Leadership Programme, we were able to bring 9 brilliant students along with us to lead!

Starting with our normal ice breakers, our students (namely Emilia, Jakub and Ben) showed their talents at leading whole classes of children at a time with check-ins.

We moved into teams, where each student had roughly 12 children at a time for their games of the 'Floor is Lava', 'Water Bucket Transfer' and 'Candle And Spoon Race'. Led by Andrew, Emilia and Callum, all groups fully understood and thoroughly enjoyed the games they played. We then had a huge round of 'Animal Charades Relay', where all leaders showcased their communication skills by explaining to their whole team what to do. All children at St Albert's ran, acted and celebrated their success in completing the game.

We spent some time painting rocks to celebrate each person within the St Albert's community, each pebble representing a person. Whether it be a favourite colour, sport, flower or animal, each child got the chance to leave their mark in the prayer garden on a pebble.

The JFK students then led the liturgy to round off the day, with Ada, Andrew, Kuba, Ben, David, Sarah and Emilia putting themselves forward to help lead.

I'm proud to say the whole day went amazingly, with lots of joy for the children of St Albert's and copious amounts of praise from the teachers for our day of Human Dignity and Equality.

Please be super proud of our Year 12s: Jakub Pawlina, Rissah Salido, Andrew Hope, Ada Milan, Vesperiah Young, Sarah Abe, Emilia Blasi-Colleran and our Year 10s: Ben Pritchard and David Grant-Holm.

Thank you all so much for your support and have a blessed Summer Holiday!

Miss Milnthorpe - Youth Ministry



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MATHS

Year 12 Visit Bletchley Park



On Monday 13th July, 27 Year 12 mathematics and computing students visited Bletchley Park to learn about the remarkable work carried out there during the Second World War. The visit provided an excellent opportunity to explore the contributions of the mathematicians, engineers and cryptanalysts whose efforts enabled Britain to break the German Enigma code, which was widely believed to be unbreakable.

The day began with the students exploring the museum exhibits, gaining an insight into the daily operations of Bletchley Park and the vital role it played in the Allied war effort. A particular highlight was seeing a replica of a Bombe machine, developed by Alan Turing and his colleagues to help decipher Enigma-encrypted messages. This was then followed by an informative lecture outlining the history and significance of the site.

The visit concluded with an engaging workshop in which students investigated the principles behind a simple cipher, examined a working Enigma machine and calculated the enormous number of possible Enigma settings—158 962 555 217 826 360 000—demonstrating why the code was considered so secure.

The students represented the John F Kennedy Catholic School exceptionally well throughout the day and their exemplary behaviour, enthusiasm and thoughtful participation in the workshop were a credit to both themselves and the school.



Mr Wesley - Maths Department



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DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Silver Award Expedition



On Wednesday 8th July, our Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award students embarked on their qualifying expedition in the Peak District. With the exceptionally warm weather presenting a significant challenge, several adaptations were made to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all our students.

Students began each day earlier than planned, allowing them to complete their walking by 1:30pm at the latest, before temperatures reached their peak. They carried only smaller rucksacks containing essential items, and expedition routes were carefully modified to include more frequent opportunities to refill water bottles and stay hydrated.

After completing their walks each day, students were rewarded with ice cream and enjoyed a well-earned period of rest in the shade. This downtime provided the opportunity to relax, play card games, and, as temperatures eased later in the afternoon, enjoy activities such as catch and football.

On Day 1, students set off from Biggin and made their way to Birchover. Day 2 saw them continue South from Birchover to Grangemill, before completing the final leg of their expedition on Day 3, finishing at Carsington Water.

We are immensely proud of the resilience, determination, and positive attitude demonstrated by all of our students throughout the expedition. Despite the challenging conditions, they approached every aspect of the experience with maturity and perseverance. We are delighted to announce that every student successfully passed the expedition section of their Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Miss Casserly - DofE Coordinator



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LIBRARY



We've come to the end of another fantastic year at the Library and a big thank you goes to many of the students who have enjoyed it, participated in competitions, suggested books for me to buy and helped make it look even more brilliant with stunning window art work (thank you Mrs Cole, Mrs Jenkins and Miss Carr for helping!)

A special thanks to the brilliant Library Ambassadors (you know who you are!) who have helped things run smoothly, created great posters and competitions and even filmed for me! I look forward to working with many of you again next year and recruiting more Ambassadors!

The Library went outside last week and students were invited to take away old or duplicate books. A fair few were taken and it was good to see students in a different setting. I also awarded plenty of house points and prizes to voracious readers in Year 7 who between them have read 74 books over the last few weeks. Borrowing on the whole increased by 304 issues this year with Amelia Sowa borrowing 91 times!

All of this shows that reading is still valued by many students. Next year as I encourage 'Reading for me' throughout the school I hope that more students will discover how amazing reading can be when it's what they like to read, how they like to read and where they like to read.

I hope that everyone has a great summer and that many of you can escape, even if not literally, through the pages of a good book, to distant places...



National
Year of
Reading
2026

Mrs Powell - Librarian



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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.

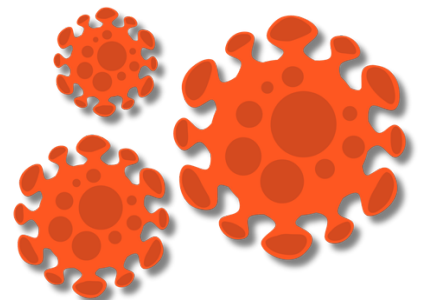
In Hertfordshire we have had outbreaks of measles in some of our schools and cases of measles are increasing. I am therefore asking that parents take the following actions:

- 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.

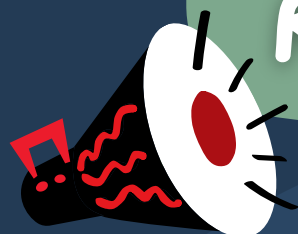
FINALLY

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 :**

- 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)
- Sports Tour 2027



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UPCOMING EVENTS

MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

- Tuesday 1st September - INSET Day (School Closed to students)
- Wednesday 2nd September- Year 7's start. Year 12's clearing periods 4 and 5.
- Thursday 3rd September - All students return. Year 12 clearing
- Friday 4th September - Year 12's start.
- Wednesday 9th September - Year 13 Information Evening, 6pm, Hall
- Thursday 10th September - Year 12 Information Evening, 6pm, Hall
- Monday 14th September - Year 8 Information Evening, 6pm, Hall
- Tuesday 15th September - Year 9 Information Evening, 6pm, Hall
- Wednesday 16th September - Year 10 Information Evening, 6pm, Hall

FUTURE DATES

- Tuesday 6th October - Open Evening
- Wednesday 7th October - INSET Day (School Closed to students)
- Wednesday 14th October - Open Morning
- Wednesday 21st October - Year 13 Consultation Evening
- Monday 26th October - Friday 30th October, HALF TERM



UPCOMING EVENTS

RE Department



Rome Trip 2027

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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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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