Friday 13th November 2026

King James's School Newsletter



Inside this issue:

- Message from Ms Oakley
- Student Voice
- Save the Date - Christmas Concert
- Remembrance Day
- PSHE What are we learning the half-term?
- Cupcakes & Milkshakes!
- Food Bank Donations
- Senior UK Maths Trust Challenge
- HT1 Recognition Points
- MP visit to school
- The Week Ahead
- Attendance - Every Day Counts
- A Busy Week of Sport
- Spotlight on SEND
- Creative Writing Workshop
- Book Recommendations
- Community Pharmacies & Winter Health

Message from Ms Oakley



Dear parents, carers and students,

Visits to Classroom

One of the highlights of my job is getting to visit classrooms – in recent weeks I have had the pleasure of listening to Year 8 perform music ensembles, discussed whether Romeo truly loved Juliet with Year 9, had my mind boggled by chemistry and physics and been in awe of the design skills of students who sanded, buffed and polished their acrylic shapes so that they could see their faces in them!

A Moment to Pause, Give Thanks and Remember

On Wednesday we joined the nation in giving thanks to our armed services. The school fell silent as we heard Ella G, Alicia M, Jacob P and Dan H play The Last Post, their poignant notes echoed around the school and were the perfect back-ground to our thoughts.

And finally...Is this you?!

At the end of last half term, I received a lovely phone-call from a 94-year-old local resident who had, had a recent fall. He takes blood thinners so when his arm and nose hit the ground there was a lot of bleeding. The man was so grateful as a group of our students came along and stayed with him until help came. Were you one of these students? If so, thank you! The man was so grateful and impressed – and we are so proud of you.

Thank you as always for your on-going support,

Kind regards,

Miriam Oakley
Headteacher

Student Voice - Your Voice Matters!

We are excited to launch our new Student Suggestion Form, giving every student the opportunity to share their opinions and ideas about how we can make our school even better.

Whether its a new initiative, an event, an improvement or something you'd love to see happen, we want to hear from you.

The Student Suggestion form can be accessed through the Student Voice button on SharePoint.

The Student Council meet once a half term and will review and discuss your ideas in each meeting.

Save the Date!



Our music students are rehearsing hard preparing for this year's Christmas concert which will take place on Tuesday 8th December at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £5 on the door and refreshments will be available before the concert. We hope to see you there!

Remembrance Day





We have had a big focus on Remembrance this week. Mr Green has delivered assemblies to all year groups throughout the week, we had 'Take a Moment to Read' on Wednesday which enabled students in Years 7-13 to have 'The Gardener' (Rudyard Kipling) read to them by the end of Period 6 and our sixth form student leaders have been selling poppies and raising money for the Royal British Legion .

In addition, the whole school paused for 2 minutes at 11am on Wednesday to reflect and remember.

PSHE: What are we learning this half-term?



Apologies, in last week's newsletter, you were given some incorrect information. In PSHE this half term Years 7-10 are completing the unit titled: ***Celebrating Difference*** Year 11 students as stated will complete ***Being Me in My World*** before moving on to ***Dreams and Goals***.

Year 7: Students explore identity, belonging and the importance of valuing differences. They consider how similarities and differences make individuals unique and how to challenge stereotypes and treat others with respect.

Year 8: Students explore diversity in families, cultures and beliefs. They consider how prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes can affect individuals and communities, and the importance of promoting equality and respect.

Year 9: Students consider the influence of peer groups and social groups on identity and behaviour. They explore prejudice, discrimination and bullying, developing an understanding of how to challenge harmful attitudes and promote inclusion.

Year 10: Students explore equality, diversity and human rights, considering how prejudice, discrimination and social inequalities affect individuals and society. They examine how to challenge discrimination, promote inclusion and become respectful and responsible members of society.

Year 11: Having completed ***Being Me in My World***, students will explore their future goals, aspirations and plans for life beyond school, considering the choices, skills and attitudes that can help them succeed.

Please ask your child about what they are learning, as conversations at home will help reinforce their learning in the classroom.

Food Bank donations - One Item can Make a Huge Difference!

We are asking everyone to get involved in supporting our local food bank and helping families in our local community who may be struggling this Christmas. Our challenge is simple. If every student donates just ONE item, together we could collect over 1500 items! The deadline for bringing in items is Friday 4th December. Please take items to the food collection point at reception.

A list of essential items are listed below:

- tinned fish / tinned meat
- tinned goods- soups, veg, pulses
- cooking sauce
- flour, plain and self-raising
- sugar, tea, coffee, biscuits
- breakfast cereals
- long-life milk / fruit cordials
- kitchen / bathroom cleaners / toilet rolls
- shower gel / shampoo / toothpaste / deodorant
- washing powder or tablets / fabric conditioner

foodbank

Cupcakes & Milkshakes!

Twenty four Year 8 and 9 students who have made a great start to the new school year during HT1 received their rewards this week.

Students enjoyed a cupcake and milkshake from Butter & Bean in Knaresborough and received a +10 Positive Points on Bromcom.

The next cohort will be decided just before Christmas.



King James's Sixth Form

warmly invite Year 11 students and their parent/carers to our

Post 16 Options Evening

6:30pm – 8:00pm

Tuesday 24th November 2026

Please join our introduction in S1 at 6:30pm with our Headteacher, Assistant Head and Director of KS5

All welcome, no need to book

KING JAMES'S SIXTH FORM

Senior UK Maths Trust Challenge

In October, all students studying Maths in Sixth Form had the opportunity to take part in the UKMT Senior Maths Challenge. We have now received the results and are proud to report that the Best in School Award went to Leo N in Year 13 with Keira B and Freddie C also achieving gold awards – these three students have qualified for the follow-on round later this month.

Nine students achieved silver awards including Henry M who took the "Best in Year 12" accolade. Twenty students achieved bronze awards.

1. What is the product of two numbers whose sum is 20 and whose difference is 26?

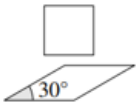
A 6 B 46 C 12 D −46 E −69

2. Alana buys 4 apples and 5 pears for £3.20. At the same prices, 5 apples and 4 pears cost £3.10. What is the total cost of one apple and one pear?

A 50p B 60p C 70p D 80p E 90p

3. The square and the rhombus with interior angle of 30° have the same area. What is the ratio of the side-length of the square to the side-length of the rhombus?

A 1 : 1 B $1 : \sqrt{2}$ C $\sqrt{3} : 2$ D 2 : 3 E 1 : 2



4. $2^x = \sqrt{4\sqrt{4\sqrt{4}}}$. What is the value of x?

A 3 B $\frac{5}{2}$ C 2 D $\frac{7}{4}$ E $\frac{3}{2}$

Well done to all who took part, anyone wanting a go at home can take a look at the first few questions above. Rresults and the full paper are accessible here

Half Term 1 Recognition Points



Below are the winners of the Form Recognition Points League for Half Term 1. They have the highest average points each week and the winners are the most consistent. Well done to you all.

Year 7	7S2
Year 8	8S1
Year 9	9S2
Year 10	10N1
Year 11	11SCL



MP visit to school

Tom Gordon, MP for Harrogate and Knaresborough, visited school last week to give a talk to and take questions from Year 12 and 13 A Level Politics pupils.

Tom gave a really interesting talk about his background and how he got into politics, touching on issues important to him in his political journey. He then got a thorough grilling from a mix of Year 12 and 13 pupils who asked questions ranging from the Russian invasion of Ukraine to questions of political morality, the use of AI and funding for schools and teachers. The visit was ended by a question on who was the most down to earth MP which gave a real insight into daily life in Westminster!

Year 12 and 13 pupils did the school proud in their attentive listening and effective questioning and Tom commented on the large numbers of pupils attending and great questions.

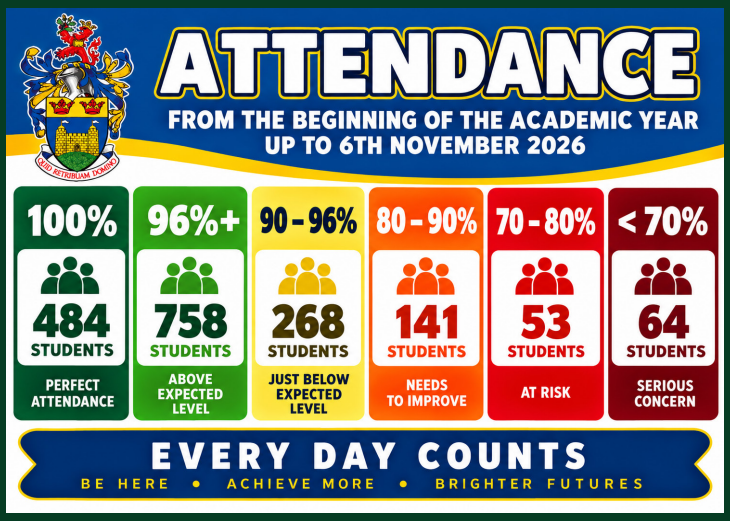


We are really grateful to Tom and Monika for giving up their time hot off the train from London and to Mrs Bryden for hosting us in the wonderful setting of the library. Thanks also to Ms Oakley for all your support with Tom's visit.

The Week Ahead: 16th November 2026

Day	Event	Year	Time	Location
Mon	Maths Week starts			
Tue				
Wed				
Thur	Harrogate Knit and Stitch Show trip	12	All day	Harrogate
Fri	Rewards trip to York Christmas Market Year 10 & 13 reports issued	11 10 & 13	All day	York

Attendance - Every Day Counts



As we move beyond the halfway point of the first term of the academic year, this feels like an appropriate time to reflect on our attendance figures, recognise the progress being made and highlight the areas where further improvement is needed.

As you may be aware, the Department for Education (DfE) has set schools individual attendance improvement targets, known as Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectations (ABIEs). These targets form part of a national effort to improve school attendance and return attendance levels to those seen before the pandemic.

Unfortunately, last academic year we did not meet our attendance target of 91.9%, finishing the year at 90.5%. Our longer-term expectation is to improve attendance by at least 1.3 percentage points by the end of the 2028–2029 academic year.

Currently, our whole-school attendance stands at 91.3%. While this represents an improvement on last year's final figure, we recognise that there is still work to be done.

Last year, our areas of strength were Years 7, 8 and 11. However, our analysis of attendance data so far this year indicates that Years 8, 10 and 11 will require particular attention. These year groups will therefore be a key focus of our attendance improvement work, alongside our continued monitoring and support of attendance across the whole school.

As illustrated in the infographic above, we currently have 261 students identified as persistently absent, under 90%. This is a significant concern, and we are working hard to understand the individual circumstances contributing to these levels of absence. Our priority is to identify barriers to attendance and, wherever possible, find practical and sustainable solutions that work for both students and their families. These figures provide a general overview, as they do not distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences, but they offer a useful indication of overall absence trends.

We recognise that there are occasions when improving attendance is particularly challenging and that solutions are not always straightforward. However, our commitment remains to maintain positive, supportive relationships between home and school, ensuring that families feel listened to and that appropriate support is offered wherever possible.

We have previously shared the strong relationship between regular school attendance and positive academic outcomes. Being in school consistently gives students the best opportunity to engage with their learning, develop friendships, build confidence, and achieve their potential.

Equally, we recognise that the mental health and wellbeing of our students must remain a priority. As a mainstream secondary school with over 1,300 students, we understand that individual needs and circumstances vary considerably. We will always endeavour to consider reasonable adjustments and provide appropriate support wherever possible.

At the same time, our expectation remains clear: students should attend school regularly and engage in classroom-based learning. We firmly believe that being present in school, supported by strong relationships with staff and peers, is fundamental to both academic achievement and personal development.

Ultimately, our school is a reflection of the community it serves. We want every student to feel a sense of belonging, every family to feel valued and every parent or carer to be proud to say that their child attends our school.

Achieving this requires a shared commitment. By continuing to work together, communicating openly, and supporting one another, we can improve attendance, strengthen our school community and create an environment in which every student has the opportunity to thrive.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. Together, we can make a positive difference.

	Whole School	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
9th - 13th Nov	91%	94.7%	92.2%	93.2%	87.7%	87.2%	85.5%	91.4%

A Busy Week of Sport!



It has been another busy week of sport, with students from Years 7 to 10 competing in boys' football and girls' netball as part of the ongoing House Competition. There were some fantastic performances and a variety of winners across the different year groups. However, it was Wharfedale who emerged as the overall winners of both the football and netball competitions – a fantastic achievement and well done to everyone involved!

Away from the House Competition, a group of 15 Sixth Form students enjoyed an evening of padel at Padel Up in Knaresborough. The standard of play was excellent, with some impressive rallies and plenty of friendly competition. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and we hope to make this a regular event in the forthcoming weeks.



A fantastic performance from the Year 9 Netball team on Wednesday against St John Fishers. The girls played two competitive matches and came away with two wins!

Both matches were closely contested, with plenty of teamwork, determination and great netball on display. The players worked hard for each other and showed resilience under pressure. A brilliant team effort.

A special mention to Emily R and Poppy R for being voted as players of the match.

Finally, The Year 11 football team progressed to the 4th round of the National Cup beating Conyers School 5-1. Goals came from Ted, Sean, Max and a brace from Sam. The team will now face Malton High School in the next round. Well done to all the students involved.

Spotlight on SEND

What support is there for students and their families in North Yorkshire?

SEND Local Offer | North Yorkshire Council



SEND Local Offer

We are pleased to highlight the comprehensive support available in North Yorkshire for children, young people and families navigating special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
The North Yorkshire Council SEND Local Offer brings together information on education, health, social care and voluntary sector services — all in one place

Whether you're a parent, a young person aged 0-25, or a professional, you'll find key support such as:

•Guidance on requesting an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and how the process works.
•Access to local services for early-years, schools, further education, health, social care, and supported employment.
•A community directory via North Yorkshire Connect to find local activity, childcare and support groups.

Visit the website to explore what's available, and feel free to contact the SEND team for further help or an accessible format of information.

Let's continue working together to make sure every child and young person with SEND has the right support to thrive.

KJS IS A READING SCHOOL

We are all readers





Creative Writing Workshops



We are thrilled that over forty students have expressed in interest in taking part in a series of exciting creative writing workshops with our Patron of Reading, Dan Ingram-Brown.

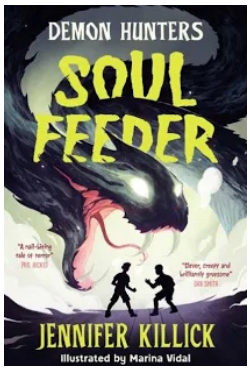
To make the most of this fantastic opportunity, students have been divided into three groups, each exploring different aspects of creative writing. Working together, they will develop their storytelling skills, share ideas and create their very own short story, which will be shared with the whole school on World Book Day next March. We are really looking forward to seeing what they come up with.

The first workshop this week focused on bringing the main character to life. It was wonderful to see such enthusiasm and creativity, and the group are already looking forward to the next session as their story begins to take shape!

"Having a workshop with an author is such an amazing experience! Dan Ingram-Brown is kind and helpful, giving us tips on how to make characters that are believable and show what is most important to them. First, we created objects to put into the character's bedroom . Then we designed the character's looks and personality, using the first task to think of what they would be like. Finally, we chose the five most important objects to the character to evaluate some of their key values. I loved this experience and I hope to have the pleasure again. Thank you Dan Ingram-Bown!"

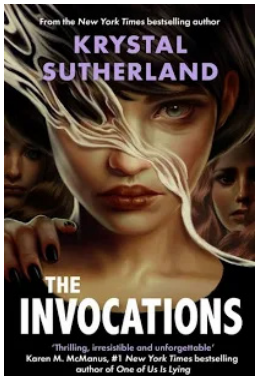
Eden S, Year 8

Book Recommendations



- Interest age: 9-14 years
- Reading Age: 8+ years
- Accelerated Reader level: 4.8
- Dyslexia-friendly font

Caiden and his best friend Sam are used to finding strange things while helping Caiden's dad clear houses. Nothing prepares them however, for the grotesque, otherwordly heads mounted on the walls of Sasha Kinski's house. Something terrible has happened, and an evil presence has followed them back to the warehouse. Can the boys solve the mystery before it's too late?



- Interest age: 14 years
- Reading Age: 14+ years

Five women are dead, and the killer has left no trace. In a world where only women can use magic and the men who know about it seek to eradicate them, three damaged young women, one cursed, one hunted and one out for revenge, join forces to track down and take out a brutal supernatural killer.









Community Pharmacies and Winter Health

As we move into the winter months, community pharmacies can provide fast and convenient access to healthcare advice and treatment, helping children get the support they need quickly and reducing time away from school. Many parents are unaware of the range of NHS services available from their local pharmacy, including **NHS Pharmacy First**. Parents can take children aged at least 1 year and over directly to a participating pharmacy for assessment and treatment of common conditions without needing a GP appointment. This includes:

- Earache (ages 1-17)
- Sore throat (ages 5 years and over)
- Sinusitis (ages 12 years and over)
- Impetigo
- Infected insect bites
- Shingles
- Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women aged 16-64

Pharmacists can provide advice and, where appropriate, supply NHS-funded prescription medicines.

Minor Illness Advice: Pharmacists can offer expert advice on managing:

- Coughs and colds
- Fever
- Chickenpox
- Hay fever and allergies
- Sickness and diarrhoea
- Head lice
- Mild skin conditions

Childhood Vaccinations: While routine childhood vaccinations are delivered through GP practices, pharmacies can help families access information about seasonal vaccinations and signpost to local services.

Preventing Illness Over Winter: Community pharmacy teams can provide advice on:

- Managing winter viruses
- Healthy eating and hydration
- Supporting children with asthma and other long-term conditions
- Appropriate use of medicines

Advice for the Whole Family: Many pharmacies also provide services for adults, including flu vaccinations, blood pressure checks, contraception services, and NHS advice on staying well during winter. Most pharmacies offer walk-in consultations with no appointment required, making them an accessible first point of contact when a child becomes unwell.

Parents can find their nearest pharmacy and available services by visiting the NHS website at: www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy

Community pharmacies play an important role in supporting families and helping children stay healthy, reducing the need for GP appointments and helping children remain in school whenever possible. Further information is available at New patient-facing website to promote NHS pharmacy clinical services - Community Pharmacy England