

King James's School Newsletter

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Exams and revision

Just a reminder that revision programmes for every subject are on the school website. All students should be following these timetables to help them prepare for their exams. Year 10 and Year 12 exams are in June, and the external written exams start week beginning 11th May.

[Year 11 Revision - King James's School](#)

[Year 10 Revision - King James's School](#)

[Year 12 A-Level Revision - King James's School](#)

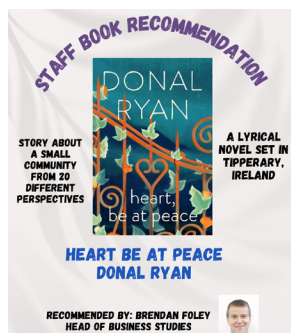
[Year 13 A-Level Revision - King James's School](#)

Two excellent websites to help them revise are in the links below.

GCSE [Home - BBC Bitesize](#)

GCSE and A Level - [Free Homework & Revision for A Level, GCSE, KS3 & KS2](#)

We wish all our students the very best of luck!



Message from Ms Oakley

Dear parents, carers and students,

Thinking ahead to September:

We are already busy working on preparing for next year, with changes to our uniform policy, curriculum model and cycle of reporting to parents and carers. I am excited to share these with you and will update you in a series of letters and updated policies. The first update will be published next week in a letter home about our new Uniform and Equipment Policy, giving everyone plenty of time to be ready for the new academic year.

Changes to Free School Meal Entitlements

Please be aware that from September 2026, the Government will introduce substantial changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility. Under the new national criteria, all families in receipt of Universal Credit will qualify for free school meals, meaning that more students will become eligible. Please see Page 2 of the newsletter for further details.

And finally...

Well done to our Year 13 and Year 11 students who have battled through mishaps with sewing machines, warmer temperatures and on-going lessons as their public examinations start to get underway. Feedback so far is really positive!

Kind regards,

Miriam Oakley
Headteacher



Drama News

Y13 Performing Arts Final Show

Congratulations to 13PA who suitably ended their time in the Drama department going right back to their Year 2 experience with 'flint street nativity'. This class have contributed massively to the department over the last 7 years and will be sorely missed! Thank you to all of the audience who came to support them - what a way to go out!

House Drama

House Drama rehearsals are well underway for our four houses with 'Frozen', 'Shrek', 'Descendants' and 'High School Musical'. It is one of our most anticipated events of the school year and the trophies are on order - look out for tickets after May half term.



The Week Ahead: 4th May 2026

Day	Event	Year	Time	Location
Mon	BANK HOLIDAY			
Tue				
Wed				
Thur	GCSE exams start	11	Various	Various
Fri	Year 13 Leaver's Assembly	13		

Important Changes to Free School Meal Entitlements

From September 2026, there will be two categories of benefit-related FSM:

1. Targeted Free School Meals

This category continues to be based on the existing income threshold. Students will be eligible if their household:

- Is in receipt of Universal Credit, and
- Has an annual household income of £7,400 or less

Only students eligible for Targeted FSM will:

- Qualify for Pupil Premium funding
- Be eligible for extended rights home to school transport, subject to the eligibility criteria for extended rights travel

2. Expanded Free School Meals

This category applies to meals only and covers pupils who:

- Live in households receiving Universal Credit, and
- Do not meet the income threshold for Targeted FSM (i.e. the annual household income is above £7,400)

Pupils eligible for Expanded FSM will be eligible to free school meals only.

Please don't miss out on support that you may be entitled to for your child – and as always, if your circumstances change, or you need support and assistance from us, please reach out contacting your child's Year Manager, our Family Support Worker or our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Students on school site after school and at the weekends

We are experiencing an increase in students on site both after school and at the weekends, predominantly on the top field and 3G pitch. For the safety and security of all students, please can we ask parents/carers to remind students that the school site is not accessible to them outside of normal school hours unless they are attending a supervised activity.

Our facilities are regularly used by external groups who have booked and paid for their use, and it is important that we honour these arrangements. Students found on site without permission after hours may be asked to leave immediately. This also applies to daytime use during the school holidays.

Thank you for your support.

Careers

We are excited to be hosting our annual Careers Fair on Thursday 22nd October 2026 4pm - 6pm. The event is designed to inspire and inform our Key Stage 4 and 5 students about the wide range of career paths available to them.

The Careers Fair will include:

- Exhibitor stands for businesses to showcase their sectors and roles.
- Post 16 and Post 18 Provider stands to share and inform about the range of qualifications on offer.
- Opportunities for Q&A and networking with students, parents and school staff.

If you would like to be a part of our Careers Fair, please complete the form using the link below:

[KJS Careers Fair October 2026](#)



Girls Football News

As we near the end of the football season, we would like to share some successes from the Girl's Football teams.

The Year 7 girls made it through to the County Cup semi final, losing out to Harrogate Grammar this week. The girls have developed well and the signs are very encouraging for next year.

The Year 8 girls have had a superb season reaching the 5th round of the National Schools cup, the semi final of the Area Cup and the final of the County Cup in just over a weeks time. In addition, Caty and Honour have represented the Harrogate Area School team.

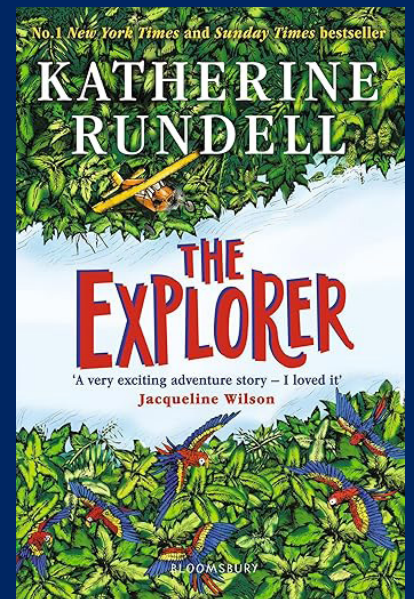
The Year 9 girls have reached the final of the Area Cup and are very excited to play this game in the next couple of weeks.

All in all a super successful season with a consistently high turnout at training every week, well done girls. Mr Churchill has found it a real pleasure coaching all of you this year!



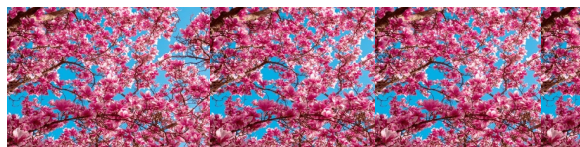
Student Support News

Our Student Support Group has been researching Amazonian ceramics as part of their project based on the book *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell. They have been looking closely at the designs, patterns, and markings used in traditional pottery, and having a go at making their own. We love all the individual styles!



William Akroyd Scholarship Essay Competition

In November 2025, six of our Year 13 students wrote a timed essay to apply for the William Akroyd Scholarship. They faced stiff competition, mainly from schools in the private sector, and despite none of them being shortlisted for interviews, two students, Abi Bland and James Flint, did receive an honourable mention. This means they wrote an excellent essay and were very close to being shortlisted. We are very proud of them.



MVP Recognition

This week, the Year 11 team—Mr Atkinson, Miss Jarrett and Mr Phillips—hosted a special break time celebration for our final MVP recognition of the year. Each student was carefully selected for their individual achievements, demonstrating our core values of being ready, respectful and engaged. We have been proud to celebrate so many students throughout the year, and this final group is no exception. With the sun shining, we swapped our usual hot chocolate for refreshing milkshakes, which went down a treat! Students shared that it was just the perfect pick-me-up as they prepare to head into exam season.



Attendance

We are often asked why we put such a strong emphasis on attendance, and whether we recognise the pressure that this can place on our students. These are important questions, and ones we take seriously.

At the start of every academic year, we speak with students in assemblies and with parents at our Expectations Evenings about the importance of attending school regularly. This focus is not arbitrary. Years of evidence, including research from the Department for Education, clearly demonstrate the powerful link between good attendance and strong GCSE outcomes. More importantly, our responsibility extends beyond exam results. We are here to help prepare young people for life.

Academic success is only one part of the picture. With the right attitude, resilience, and work ethic, every student can go on to succeed. Regular attendance plays a key role in developing these qualities.

When students leave school and enter the workplace, they will be expected to show up consistently, arrive on time, meet deadlines, and work alongside a wide range of people. These expectations are not optional, they are the foundations of employability. School is where these habits are formed, and where students begin to understand which is required of them in the wider world.

We are mindful that we do not want to place unnecessary pressure on our students. However, we also have a duty to be honest and clear about the realities they will face. While consequences in school may sometimes feel challenging, those in the workplace are often immediate and far less flexible. By setting high expectations now, we are equipping students with the tools they need for the future.

That said, our approach is not simply about rewarding perfect attendance. We believe in encouraging progress and recognising effort. Throughout the year, we provide multiple opportunities for students to focus on improving their attendance and be rewarded for doing so.

Next week, we launch our 100% 2-week Spring Attendance Challenge. This initiative gives every student a fresh start and equal opportunity, with one student from each year group winning a prize. Students with authorised absences, such as medical appointments (excluding illness), will also be included.

We also make a point of recognising those who show improvement over time. Whether through positive phone calls home, well done cards, or a simple word of encouragement from staff, we celebrate the steps students take in the right direction. Your support is vital. The encouragement you provide at home helps reinforce these expectations and lays the groundwork for lifelong habits. We are truly grateful for the role you play in this partnership.

Enjoy the Bank Holiday weekend.

	Whole School	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
20th-24th April 2026	91.4%	95.2%	93.9%	86.6%	88.8%	92.3%	94%	89.76%

100% SPRING 2-WEEK ATTENDANCE CHALLENGE

Complete the challenge for your name to be entered into the draw.



FROM TUESDAY 5TH MAY - FRIDAY 15TH MAY

ATTENDANCE MATTERS



KING JAMES'S SCHOOL

EXETER DEVON EX1 1AA

A thrilling mystery and adventure packed with wild action-filled moments that you won't be able to put down. The story follows a cat named Rusty who meets a group of wild cats and makes the brave decision to join their clan.

I would rate this book 5/5 stars.
(Recommended reading age – KS3)

Millie L (Y7)

This is such a creative novel, blending the darkness of the unknown with fear and the fragility of humanity. Through Kathy's fragmented and distorted memories, both unsettling and nostalgic, it poses a profound question: what does it truly mean to be human?

I would rate this book 4/5 stars.
(Recommended reading age – KS4+)

Olivia Y12

Artificial intelligence safety tips for parents

Learn more about artificial intelligence (AI) content and tools, and discover ways to help your children stay safe.

[Artificial intelligence safety tips for parents | NSPCC - Click HERE for more information](#)