

# King James's School Newsletter



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## Message from Ms Oakley



Dear parents, carers and students,

### Help create a sustainable future for York and North Yorkshire

The Combined Authority is seeking young people's views on the region's pathway to a sustainable future.

The eight-week public consultation is open until June 10th, and includes a survey for people under 21 to complete.

The Strategy aims to support healthy and thriving communities, transform the economy, and help York and North Yorkshire lead the way to become England's first carbon negative region by 2040.

The consultation is simple to complete, and open to everyone in the region, and can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/4smGEoS>

### Tips to handle exam stress

I know that half term won't have come soon enough for many of our Year 11 students, but I'm also aware that the break from the routine of school during exam season can cause stress for others. I'm also conscious that our Year 10 students will be preparing for their set of Pre Public Examinations which begin on Monday 15th June. The NHS has put together a helpful guide for parents on supporting their children during exam which can be accessed here: [Help your child beat exam stress](#)

And of course, as always, if your child does become worried or concerned, please do not hesitate to contact us at school for support.

### And finally...

I can't quite believe it's May half term next week! The weeks since joining the school in January have flown by and I continue to be impressed by our students, the wealth of opportunities afforded to them and the warm welcome that I have received. Thank you for your on-going support, it is certainly not taken for granted. I hope you have an enjoyable bank holiday weekend, half term and that the sunshine sticks around for us all to enjoy!

Kind regards,

Miriam Oakley  
Headteacher



## The Week Ahead: 1st June 2026

Day	Event	Year	Time	Location
Mon	Start of House Rounders/Softball Week			
Tue	MFL Trip Parents' Meeting		5.30pm	
Wed				
Thur				
Fri	LC3 reports issued to students			

### Young Enterprise

Young Enterprise is a UK based charity that empowers young people to develop their financial capability, employability and entrepreneurial skills. Through their hands-on Company Programme students set up and run a real business for up to an academic year supported by Business Mentors.



Due to the value of Young Enterprise for the students, a local business 'HMCA' most kindly enabled a team via sponsorship and King James's Business Studies Teacher Mrs Porter became their Link Teacher and Young Enterprise Business Adviser Steven Dawson became their Business Mentor.

Consequently, after an application form process Y12 students – Bohdan, Hugo, Beau, Alicia, Lucy, Sophie, Finn, and Ted were selected, and 'Tote-ally' was established. Their business idea was a practical solution to a universal problem - everyone needs bags.

The Y12 students felt it was sad to see how boring and ordinary most bags are, so they decided to change that with their unique customizable bags. They sourced blank 100% cotton bags and non-toxic fabric pens, recycled unwanted cardboard as a design mat within the bag, and produced desired stencils suggested by market research conducted.

On Tuesday 24th March the Y12 Young Enterprise company 'Tote-ally' went to the North Yorkshire Young Enterprise Showcase event at Skipton Building Society Headquarters and were awarded Best Creative Product and Runner up Overall Winning Company. From this event they went on to attend the North-East, Yorkshire and Humber Regional Final at HSBC House in Leeds on the 14th May and were praised here for their sustainable thinking in all their business decisions. This effort resulted in them winning the Sustainability Award at the North-East, Yorkshire and Humber Regional Final.

The group have consistently worked well as a team to present their tote bag product. They have all shared how they feel the programme has helped develop their employability skills and have said they would recommend next year's Y12 students to apply.

If any local businesses would like to assist with the cost to complete the programme or with the mentoring aspect please get in touch with Mrs Porter.



### Gender Space

Gender Space is a service by Barnardo's Positive Identities team which offers a therapeutic social model of support for trans and gender questioning young people, aged 13-18 in Yorkshire. We also support Parents and Carers of trans young people.

We recognise the importance of gender identity being validated and expressed in a safe space, which is what we seek to provide in this service. Our provision is online and is a mixture of therapeutically informed one-to-one and group work support with youth workers and therapists.

Want to know more? We are holding an information session where we'll chat more about Gender Space and you'll have the opportunity to ask any questions.

Wednesday 27th May 2026 [click here to register](#)

**Gender Space**

Providing support for:

- 13-18 year olds
- Trans (inc. NB) and gender questioning young people
- Parents and carers
- People based in Yorkshire

Online group sessions and one-to-one therapeutic support

Want to find out more?  
Visit our website and download a referral form, or pop us an email and our friendly team will get in touch.

[positiveidentities.org.uk](http://positiveidentities.org.uk)  
[positiveidentities@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:positiveidentities@barnardos.org.uk)

BARNARDOS  
POSITIVE IDENTITIES SERVICE

**POSITIVE IDENTITIES SERVICE**  
CELEBRATING DIVERSITY WITH PRIDE

**Safe Zone LGBTQ+ Training & Consultancy**

Plus...  
**Gender and Sexuality 101**  
Primary, Secondary, Mental Health, SRE, Faith, Trans Identity, young people's workshops

Available across the UK  
Get in touch for more information

[positiveidentities@barnardos.org.uk](http://positiveidentities@barnardos.org.uk)  
07923441480

BARNARDOS  
LGBTQ+ Safe Space Award

## Careers

### Lloyds Banking Group - May Half-Term Virtual Work Experience Friday 29th May 1pm-3.45pm

Join Lloyds Banking Group Virtual May Half Term Work Experience for a

fast-paced afternoon of challenges, real-world scenarios and networking with professionals from across the industry. Lloyds Banking Group are one of the largest banks in the UK and offers so many fantastic opportunities to students across the UK. This hands-on experience is designed to help you build the skills employers are looking for within the industry.

**Friday 29th May 2026, 1pm-3.45pm**  
**Online live-streamed via YouTube**  
**Open to all students in school/college**  
**Sign up [here](#)**



## Knarborough Youth Council Competition – Design a Bollard

Knarborough Youth Council members are currently working in partnership with the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP). They have launched a creative competition for children and young people under 18.

### The Challenge

Design a bollard cover that will be displayed across Knarborough during Alcohol Awareness Week this July. This is your chance to get creative, have your work seen by the community, and make a meaningful impact.

### Why take part?

- Showcase your creativity
- Have your artwork displayed publicly
- Win voucher prizes
- Help promote healthy lifestyle choices

### Design Inspiration:

Use your creativity to inspire others and raise awareness. Your design could influence attitudes and help make a real difference among young people.

Your artwork could play an important role in highlighting the importance of making healthy choices and reducing underage drinking – helping to positively shape our community.

### How to Enter:

Please see the entry form and design template at the end of the newsletter for full details.

### Closing date for Entries is Friday 5th June 2026

Please email all entries to [Knarboroughyouthcouncil@inspireyouth.uk](mailto:Knarboroughyouthcouncil@inspireyouth.uk). Alternatively, you can drop them off at Inspire Youth Yorkshire Community Hub or Yorkshire Create to be passed on.

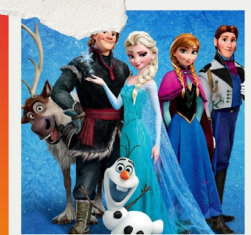


## Year 8 Art Club

Year 8 have been looking at Pop Art in art lessons, in a graphics project looking at how words and images can be used together. Here are some brilliant examples of the research they have been doing.



**KJS HOUSE  
DRAMA 2026**  
29th & 30th June 6pm S1



Tickets £5 - available outside the library at lunchtimes!

## Attendance Matters: Working Together for Every Child

Over recent years, education has changed significantly and so the expectations placed upon schools and families regarding attendance. Nationally, school attendance levels have declined since the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Department for Education (DfE) is now placing a much stronger focus on improving attendance across all schools.

Research continues to show a clear link between attendance and student outcomes. Attendance below 95% can begin to affect academic progress, GCSE results, social development, routines, wellbeing, and access to support within school. At a time when mental health concerns among young people are also rising nationally, maintaining consistent routines and regular school attendance has never been more important.

As a school, we are required to follow updates government guidance and expectations. This means we are now:

- Issuing penalty notices for holidays taken during term time
- Monitoring persistent absence more closely
- Involving the Local Education Authority in attendance meetings where appropriate
- Requesting medical evidence when attendance falls below 90% - which is when absence is deemed as having a significant impact on learning
- Using the Fast-Track attendance process where concerns continue and improvements are not made, which may ultimately result in prosecution

We fully understand that every family's circumstances are different, and our priority will always be to work supportively and proactively with parents and carers. Families can help by:

- Avoiding holidays and day trips during term time
- Contacting pastoral teams early if your child begins to struggle with attending school, so support can be put in place quickly
- Referring to NHS guidelines when deciding whether your child is too unwell to attend school
- Monitoring attendance regularly through MCAS

An attendance figure of 96% or above is considered the expected standard as a school which equates to approximately 8 days of absence across the school year.

Currently:

- 49.3% of our students are attending at or above the expected 96% threshold
- 32.5% of students are between 88-95% attendance, where relatively small improvements could make a substantial difference
- 22.8% of students are below 90% attendance which is classified by the government as "persistently absent" and requires close monitoring and intervention

As we close out this half term, we ask you to consider any small changes you can make during the following seven weeks after the break. Small changes can have a huge impact. Avoiding unnecessary absences, checking NHS guidance before reporting illness, and maintain strong communication with school can all help improve attendance and ensure students receive the full benefit of their education.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to give every student the best possible opportunities to succeed.

	Whole School	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
11th-15th May	88.47%	95.04%	90.41%	86.87%	87.96%	81.97%	93.68%	Study leave

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

## KJS Studio Production

"Winging It!" is two nights of completely, 100% improvised performance comedy. We have no idea what will happen. Our students will create a show based on your suggestions. There is no script, no safety net. It will be fun, it will be chaotic and it can never be the same show twice!

The Studio Production will take place on 16th & 17th June 2026 in the Balcony at 6pm. Tickets are available from the Drama office at lunchtime on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. £5 each or £8 if you get a ticket for both nights! Get yours before it sells out!



## Opportunities! Sixth Form & beyond

Bespoke opportunities for Years 12 & 13 updated weekly from KJS Sixth Form Knaresborough:

[https://wakelet.com/wake/hO\\_PLuy0Xrky73rMfYrlr](https://wakelet.com/wake/hO_PLuy0Xrky73rMfYrlr)



# Leeds Book Awards

The Leeds Book Awards celebrate the very best in newly published children’s literature, championing diversity in authorship, characters and genre. Our Year 7 book club, The Regal Readers, who meet weekly, have enthusiastically embraced the challenge, reading and reviewing the shortlisted titles since January.

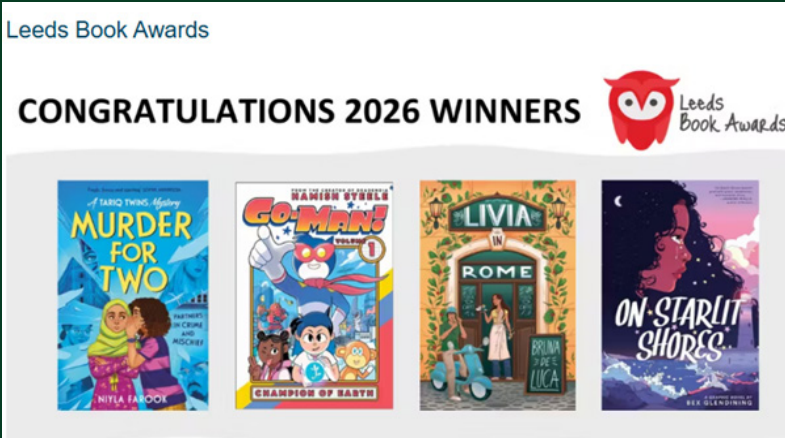
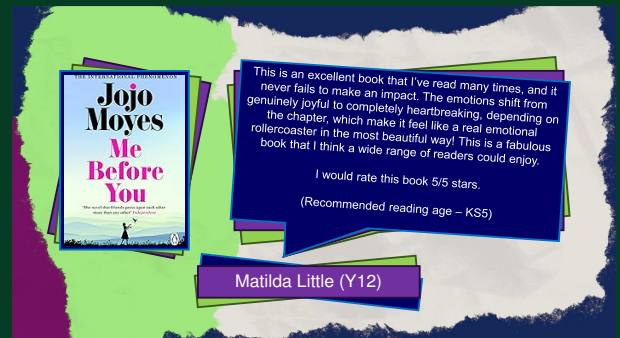
On 19 May, The Regal Readers joined hundreds of students at Leeds City Museum for the eagerly anticipated announcement of the award winners and the chance to meet the authors at a truly spectacular event. With twelve outstanding shortlisted books spanning Middle Grade to Teen, the excitement and buzz throughout the day were unforgettable.

Here are some reflections from our students about their experience of the event:

“The actual ceremony was really fun and interesting, and it was so nice to see all the authors in person. The authors were very kind, asking us how we were and whether we had enjoyed the book. They all wrote lovely messages and signed our books and planners. Overall, it was just a great experience. I really appreciate Mrs Bryden, Mr Bryden and Mrs White for making this trip possible.” (Ellie H, Y7)

“A poet called Ruth Awolola performed three poems, and it was very exciting when the winners were revealed, especially because my favourite book from each category won.” (Cassie R, Y7)

“An amazing experience! I loved meeting the authors, and I now have a token to remember the trip by: an autograph in my favourite book from the shortlisted titles. It was so exciting waiting for the announcement of who had won each award-stunning!” (Eden S, Y7)



You can watch the livestream of the Leeds Book Awards here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIrXKewEypQ>





# YEAR 11 WELL Done

FOR HOW YOU HAVE CONDUCTED  
YOURSELVES OVER THE FIRST PART  
OF THE GCSE EXAM PERIOD. ♥

A number of exams  
**completed!**  
You should be  
proud of yourselves! ♥



Keep working hard over half term but also  
make sure to take time to **rest** and **recharge**  
ready to return for the rest of the exams  
and our leavers celebrations! ♥

**Best wishes,** <  
Year 11 team -  
Miss Jarrett, Mr Phillips & Mr Atkinson ♥



## Design a bollard Cover Competition

Open to anyone under 18 years old to design a Bollard cover to be displayed across Knaresborough as part of Alcohol Awareness Week in July. Please use the template overleaf or work towards the same shape. Published designs will win a voucher. Please ensure you complete your details below so we can get in touch.

Members are working with the Community Alcohol Partnership to raise awareness to Alcohol as part of one of their campaigns, and we'd love to see what you come up with.

**Closing date for Entries is 5<sup>th</sup> June 2026**, You can hand it into school, Inspire Youth Yorkshire or Yorkshire Create or send via email to [youthcouncil@inspireyouth.uk](mailto:youthcouncil@inspireyouth.uk) to be in with a chance for your design to be published. Designs can be digital or by hand.

We can't wait to see your designs!

Please complete the Entry Details

**Name:**

**Age:**

**School:**

**Contact Number (for your adult):**

**Contact Email (for your adult):**

The contact details will only be used in relation to the competition and the details will be destroyed once the chosen designs are published.