

King James's School Newsletter

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Human Rights Day

Wednesday 10th December is International Human Rights Day and as part of our continued work promoting Respect, Equality, and Diversity, our community will be marking the event again this year.

All students will spend tutor time on Wednesday discussing what Human rights are and why they are important.

Each tutor group will produce a reflection on Human rights which will make a display to further demonstrate our commitment to KJS being a positive and welcoming place for all members of our community; we look forward to sharing the display with you.



Little Shop of Horrors

The cast, crew and band spent last Sunday in school for their first full day rehearsal for the 2026 school production of 'Little Shop of Horrors!' It was a long day, but all of our students were exceptionally professional as always and we are extremely excited for this show! What a buzz already! Look out for tickets on sale after Christmas.



Sankt Nikolaustag

Christmas came early to the Languages department this week as they celebrated the arrival of Sankt Nikolaus.

Traditionally on the 6th December, children clean their shoes and put them by the front door in the hope that Sankt Nikolaus will fill them with sweets and goodies. If the children have not been good, then they can expect Knecht Ruprecht to pay them a visit and he will leave only twigs!

There was German Christmas food for all to try- Stollen (German Xmas cake), Lebkuchen (a type of gingerbread) and Spekulatius (spicy biscuits).

Frohe Weihnachten!!



Careers

Amazing Apprenticeships have a great selection of webinars throughout December and January.

We encourage students and parents to use the link below to explore these opportunities further and book on.

<https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com/workshops-webinars/>

Drama Talent Showcase

Wednesday saw over 50 talented students take to the stage in their 'KJS Christmas Showcase', a performance following the story of pupils at King James's School preparing for a show which doesn't quite go to plan... The event featured a variety of dances, songs, and eccentric characters amongst a wealth of festive cheer.

Thank you to all those who have supported the show including our Drama Department, tech crew and council, parents and families for supporting the rehearsal process and watching the final show, and to our fantastic cast who have truly captured the spirit of the season and done themselves proud.



Battle of Townton visit

Last Tuesday Year 12 and 13 historians were once again treated to a visit from Chris from Our History Explored who gave a fascinating talk about the Battle of Townton in 1461.

Chris explained both the story of the battle and new archeological and historical views on the battle which pupils were able to put into the context of their recent learning in class. Chris brought replica armour and weaponry which pupils were able to handle and try on, and he took some excellent questions from our talented historians.

We look forward to welcoming Chris back next year and thank him for his interest and hard work. Thanks also to Mr Green, Mrs Edgar and Mrs Cermak for coming to support the event and especially to Year 12 and 13 for their interest and enthusiasm on the day.



Football News

This week the U15 & U16 girls had back to back National Cup fixtures.

On Monday, the U16 girls faced Ripon Grammar at home. It was a close game, played to a very high standard. The girls played excellent team football and won the match 3-2. They now progress to the 5th round of the National Cup which is a brilliant achievement. Players of the match were Maddie G & Rosie G.

On Tuesday, the U15 girls travelled to Hartlepool for their fixture. For 6 of the team, it was their 2nd fixture in 2 days! Every member of the team gave 100% and they won 2-0. A fantastic result. Players of the match were Rita H & Issy T. They now face a school from Middlesbrough in the 4th round.

Both teams are undefeated so far this season and continue to make progress in the National, County & Area competitions. Well done girls and good luck.



Assemblies

Human Rights Day is on Wednesday 10th December, when all students from all year groups will have a virtual assembly on Human Rights.

Year 9 and Year 11 have Careers Assemblies next week.

Leeds City College are coming into school to talk to the Year 9 students about Post 16 courses and how they link to the choices students will make with their GCSE option subjects.

Askham Bryan are coming into school to talk to Year 11 about the Post 16 courses they offer, what life is like as a student at Askham Bryan and details on how to make an application.



The Week Ahead: 8th December 2025

Day	Event	Year	Time	Location
Mon				
Tue	Christmas Dinner 1 Year 13 Parents' Evening	7 and 8 13	Lunchtime 4.30-7.30pm	Dining Hall Online
Wed	Christmas Dinner 2 Flu vaccination catch-up	Years 9-13	Lunchtime	Dining Hall
Thur				
Fri				

Learning Cycle 1 Rewards Celebrations

As part of our revamp to the Rewards system, in our assemblies this week we have been celebrating those students who are consistently going above and beyond in meeting our school values of Ready, Respectful and Engaged. These awards have been saved for the end of the Learning Cycle and therefore these students have been consistently achieving in these values for over the last 10 weeks! Students who have received these awards should feel immensely proud of themselves as there are only approximately 70 awarded across each year group of 270 students. These students will have received their certificate in their assemblies, containing a personal message from the member of staff they have received this from, they will also be awarded 10 positive points and a golden star with their name on will be added to their Tutor groups 'Hall of Fame' Amazingly, some students have managed to collect more than one in Learning Cycle One. The challenge is to collect a Ready, Respectful and Engaged one during the year - over our 4 Learning Cycles!



Across each year group staff have been asked to nominate students using the following criteria:

Ready Awards - 2 students per form have been nominated by their Form Tutors and have received a certificate with a well done message from their tutor. These students should feel incredibly proud of themselves for their exemplary attendance, punctuality, organisation and attitude to school life. Only 20 students have received these in each year group.

Respectful Awards - 20 students per year group have been nominated by their Year Managers to receive this award for the respectful way in which they conduct themselves around school on a daily basis. Their well done messages have been a joy to read and we want to thank you all for being such great role models for other to follow.

Learning Cycle Rewards Chart 11W2			
	Ready	Respectful	Engaged
LC1	Ready [Student Name]	Respectful [Student Name]	Engaged [Student Name]
LC2			
LC3			

Engaged Awards - 2 students per subject per year have been nominated by our Departments, which has been a very difficult decision to make. These students have been the ones which have stood out for their contributions in class and their consistent approach towards their studies in that subject. In total across all subjects, we have given out 30 Engaged awards across each year group.

Year 10 Rewards Christmas trip

On Thursday evening, over 140 Year 10 students and staff headed to Meadowhall Shopping Centre by coach for this year's Christmas rewards trip. The visit was a chance to celebrate the great start students have made to their GCSEs and LC1, while also giving everyone the opportunity to begin (or finish!) some Christmas shopping.

Students enjoyed a relaxed evening exploring the centre, picking up gifts, and taking in the festive atmosphere. It was a well-deserved reward for their hard work so far this year.

Well done, Year 10! Keep it up as we move into the new term.

Christmas Tree Festival

Our Student Support Group have dressed a tree for the Christmas tree festival at St John's Church. They have chosen the theme 'What does it even meme' and dressed the tree in handmade 6 and 7s! They have had a lot of fun, alongside improving their textiles skills.

If you get the opportunity, we would recommend visiting the festival, there are 95 trees on display from various business, community groups and schools from in and around Knaresborough.

The Festival is open from this Saturday (6th) to 21st December, 12-5pm. Refreshments will be served each weekend as well as mulled wine.



Spotlight on SEND

Press release

Government launches national conversation on SEND

Government acts on commitment to put parents' experiences at the heart of SEND reform through new public engagement campaign.

The government has recently launched a new national conversation focused on improving support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This initiative aims to gather experiences from families, schools, and professionals to help shape future policies and strengthen the SEND system.

Parents and carers are encouraged to take part by sharing their views and experiences. Your input will help ensure that the voices of families are central to any upcoming changes. Click on the link [Government launches national conversation on SEND - GOV.UK](#) for more information. You can also book ticket to specific events using the links below.

[SEND Regional Engagement Event with the DfE - Yorkshire and Humber \(Leeds\) Tickets, Wed, Jan 7, 2026 at 10:00 AM | Eventbrite](#)
[SEND Reform National Conversation - Online Series | Eventbrite](#)

Looking for Festive things to do this Christmas?

Check out
[SEN Friendly Christmas in Yorkshire](#)
[Autism-friendly Christmas events guide for the North East - North East Autism Society](#)



Attendance

100% Two-Week Christmas Challenge Halfway Point...

Winter is always a challenging season for school attendance, and this year we've certainly felt the impact of the many bugs making their way around our school community. We completely understand, when a student is unwell, the best place for them to rest and recover is at home. We truly appreciate your support in sending them back to school as soon as they are feeling well enough to return.

Our school nurse shared that Monday was her busiest day yet, sending home more students than on any other day in her six years here, and if you know our nurse, you'll know she never makes that decision lightly.

Thankfully, many students have managed to stay fighting fit and are still in the running for our 100% Attendance Christmas Challenge. With just one week to go, the gifts are being wrapped and tucked into Santa's sack, all ready for the final week's assemblies.

Good luck to everyone still in the running, and ho ho ho...

	Whole School	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
24th -28th Nov	92.0%	95%	93.6%	88.6%	90.3%	92.5%	93.6%	92.8%

The Big Ho-Ho-Ho

100% Attendance Challenge

If you achieve 100% attendance from Monday 1st December to Friday 12th December, you'll be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win a Christmas Present.





Celebrating Year 7's Reading Success

This term, our Year 7 students have shown remarkable dedication to reading and we were thrilled to congratulate them on their outstanding achievements in a special celebration assembly this week. Focussing on reading as a journey with challenges along the way, Mrs Fletcher-Markin began the assembly by asking 270 students to stand and chant the alphabet with a counting swap – A-1/B-2/C-3/D-4 etc. This task proved to be much more difficult than anticipated and everyone faced the challenge admirably.

In Accelerated Reader lessons, Year 7 has embraced every opportunity to explore new genres, discover inspiring authors, and challenge themselves with ambitious reading goals. The following students have excelled in their dedication, enthusiasm and commitment to reading and our Acting Headteacher Mr McIntosh was delighted to present them with the following trophies and certificates:



Star Readers (for effort and progress in reading):

Isobel A, Charlotte B, Amie G, Angel-May L, Millie L, Sienna M, Thomann P, Eden S, Thomas S and Tiff W.

Commitment to Reading:

Evie C, Olivia R and Joe S.

Resilience in Reading:

Sienna B and Rose O.

Outstanding Achievement:

Angel-May L (has read 670,382 words!).

100% prize draw (students who have achieved full marks in their book quizzes):

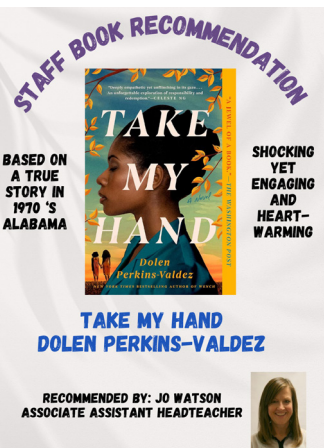
Summer F, Jack M, Edward P, Olivia R, Lillie S and Thomas S.

House Trophy (most words read):

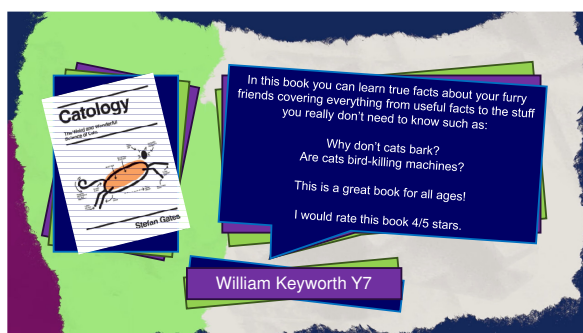
Nidderdale

We are proud of every Year 7 reader and excited to see where their reading journeys take them next.

This week's Staff Reading Recommendation



This Week's Student Book Reviews



Festive Highlights

On 1st December, with all our book-themed decorations in place, we were ready for the magical moment of switching on the Christmas lights. Thank you to all our students who have helped to transform the library into a wonderful festive hub.



Please note that the staff recommended reads are for KS5 students and adults.

Community Christmas Events

Knaresborough Christmas Market

Saturday 6th December, 10am-5pm
Sunday 7th December, 10am – 4.30pm, followed by fireworks.
Stalls, games and FREE entertainment throughout the day.
FREE Park & Ride at GSPK (HG5 8LF).



The Kiosk at Conyngham Hall, Knaresborough

Saturday 13th December, 11am – 3pm
Festive food & drink, crafts & activities, tombola, stalls.
A very special visit from Santa and Knaresborough Silver Band performing at 12pm.
Also open Boxing Day 9am – 12pm for hot sandwiches and drinks.



Festivities in School

Christmas Dinner

Next week, all students will be able to enjoy a delicious Christmas dinner served at lunchtime; Years 7 and 8 will be on Tuesday 9th December and Years 8-13 on Wednesday 10th December.



Winter Concert

Our Winter Concert takes place on Tuesday 16th December, at 7.00pm in S1. Tickets can be bought on the door, £4 for adults, children are free.



There will be a range of performances from Concert Band, Brass Band, Choir, Handbells, Ukulele group plus solo performances. The concert will finish with an audience sing along to get everyone in the festive spirit.

Reverse Advent Challenge

Throughout December we are encouraging all students and staff to get involved with the Reverse Advent Calendar Challenge. Tutor groups are aiming to collect 24 items that can be donated to the local food banks before Friday 19th December. If every tutor group takes part, we could collect over 1,000 essential items! What an incredible difference that will make to local families who need support over the winter.



Christmas Jumper Day

On Friday 19th December, we will have our annual Christmas Jumper Day.



Students are encouraged to wear their Christmas jumpers alongside any other Christmassy accessories, such as hats etc. This is not compulsory, but it would be brilliant to see as many students as possible getting into the festive spirit! House points will be awarded to those who participate.

End of term

On Friday 19th December, lessons will take place as normal Period 1, 2 and 3 and school finishes for the Christmas break at 12.30pm.

