



James Marks Academy Trust

www.jmatherts.co.uk

Friday 14th November 2025

Email Admin@romanfields.herts.sch.uk admin@jamesmarks.herts.sch.uk admin@foresthous.herts.sch.uk

Executive Head's message



Dear Parents and Carers,

This is the last newsletter update I will write for some time. The reason for this is I am officially working part time (as of September 2025) and after 12 years within the Trust, the Trustees have agreed, I can have an UNPAID sabbatical which is due to start next month. I will therefore miss the end of term celebrations, because I will be in Asia and Australia on an extended break.

The decision to go part time has allowed others to step up, from both a leadership and budgetary perspective. In advance of my trip, leaders really have been given the chance to shine; and feedback from our very experienced School Effectiveness Advisor (ex-Head and Ofsted) following his visit just one week ago, demonstrates my faith in my colleagues is well placed.

In italics below in a paragraph (absolutely verbatim) which he sent me following his visits to the JMA, RF and FHEC.

My visits to all three provisions within the trust clearly show that outcomes are consistently strong in each setting. Pupils' attendance and their behaviour and attitudes remain exceptionally strong.

Pupils across all three establishments are continuing to achieve exceptionally well from their low starting points because of consistently strong teaching, a well implemented curriculum and timely thorough ongoing assessments to ensure any gaps in learning are bridged to enable all pupils to make rapid progress. Examination results and sustained destinations from transition over time bear testimony to the impact of exceptional leadership on all aspects of provision and pupil outcomes across the three schools.

Receiving this feedback relating to the efforts of all my wonderful colleagues so close to my impending trip really has been fantastic. I know all three provisions are in great hands.





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Executive Head's message (continued)



Whilst I will miss the schools terribly, I will remain in contact at various intervals throughout my trip so please feel free to contact me should you need to. I will promise to respond within a few days. I will return late in February refreshed and ready to throw myself back into my incredibly rewarding role.

Coincidentally, the start of my trip coincides with Ashley Purser (our SENDco) departure from the Trust after nearly 12 years. I know he will be sorely missed. I also know this isn't a decision he has taken lightly as he moves to be closer to his family in Derbyshire.

The reason for announcing this so publicly is the advert for his replacement is in the press. I also know that in a specialist provision such as ours the departure of our SENDco is of the utmost concern to parents. I therefore want to take the opportunity to share with you that as a result of everything stakeholders (especially parents) say about the Trust, the strongest possible candidates have expressed an interest in applying at this early stage.

So, whilst I know Ash's shoes will be hard to fill, I envisage however that we really will have to choose between a field of excellent practitioners when we appoint our new SENDco.

I want to take the opportunity to wish Ash all the best on behalf of us all and thank him for his contribution over so many years.

It only remains for me to wish you and your family all the very best for Christmas and the New Year. I look forward to seeing you all again early in 2026.

Kind regards Trevor





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Pupil successes at Roman Fields Academy



Stars of the week - 14/11/2025

GOLD - Lili

SILVER - Rosemin

BRONZE - Freya, Lewis

100% ATTENDANCE FOR THE WEEK - Olivia

ROMAN FIELDS SPIRIT AWARD - Rafi





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Pupil successes at James Marks Academy



Stars of the week - 7/11/2025

GOLD - James

SILVER - Luca

BRONZE - Mason S

100% ATTENDANCE FOR THE WEEK - Anna

JAMES MARKS SPIRIT AWARD - Louie



Stars of the week - 14/11/2025

GOLD - Ava

SILVER - Xavier

BRONZE - Ben. R

100% ATTENDANCE FOR THE WEEK - Dylan

JAMES MARKS SPIRIT AWARD - Connie





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Pupil successes at Forest House Education Centre



Stars of the week - 7/11/2025

FOREST HOUSE PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - Ashleigh For always trying your best in lessons

FOREST HOUSE ATTENDANCE AWARD - Daniel For great attendance



Stars of the week - 14/11/2025

FOREST HOUSE PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD - Safwan For making a great start at FHEC.

FOREST HOUSE ATTENDANCE AWARD - Alessio for working hard and good attendance





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Dates for the diary

Friday 28th November - Occasional day
(school closed)

Friday 12th December - Roman Fields
Christmas jumper day

Friday 19th December - last day of
school before we break for Christmas

Monday 22nd December till Friday 2nd
January 2026 - Christmas break

Monday 5th January - INSET DAY
(staff only)

**Tuesday 6th January - Pupils back to
school**

Monday 16th February till Friday 20th
February - Half term

Friday 27th March - Last day of school
before we break for Easter



Become a Star Reader!



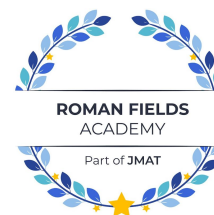
Here at Roman Fields, we understand and value the importance of reading. Reading - in whatever form you choose to engage in - fills you with knowledge. It improves your comprehension and analytical abilities. Furthermore, it stimulates the memory and broadens your imagination.

Therefore, each week, Roman Fields will be championing a *Star Reader*. You can be rewarded for your reading in any lesson, but you will also have the opportunity to demonstrate it in a specific session on your timetable. In these lessons, your teacher will be looking opportunities to award you points for your engagement in reading

Each week, the pupil with the most points awarded will receive a Star Reader certificate and a voucher.



Star reader of the week at Roman Fields Academy



14/11/2025

Cara





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Roman Fields - Armistice Day

Tuesday 11th November was a special day to commemorate those servicemen and women who made great sacrifices for the world during WWI and WWII. It was especially poignant for Mary to share the story of her father with the pupils. Raymond Beech was a rear gunner in Bomber Command. The way the pupils listened and responded was incredible and a real testimony to the thoughtfulness and empathy of our amazing young people. It was such a privilege to share his story.



**In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.**

**We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we
lie,
In Flanders fields.**

**Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies
grow
In Flanders fields.**



Lewis did an outstanding job reading 'In Flanders Fields'



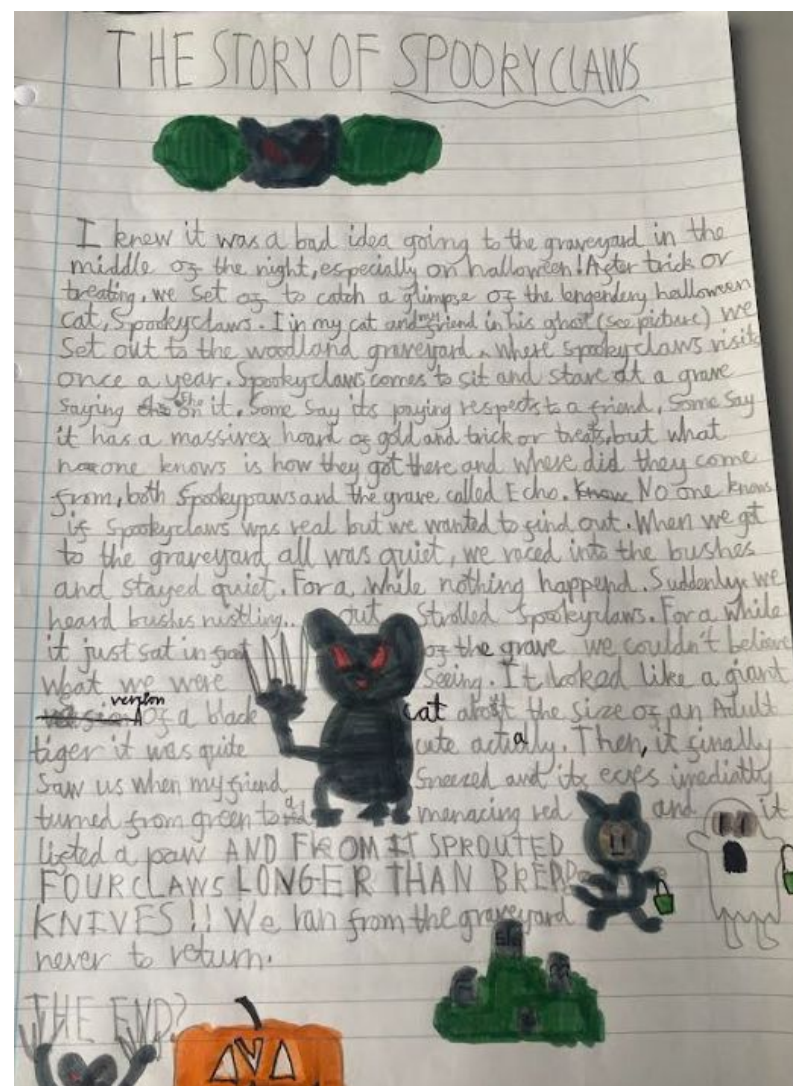
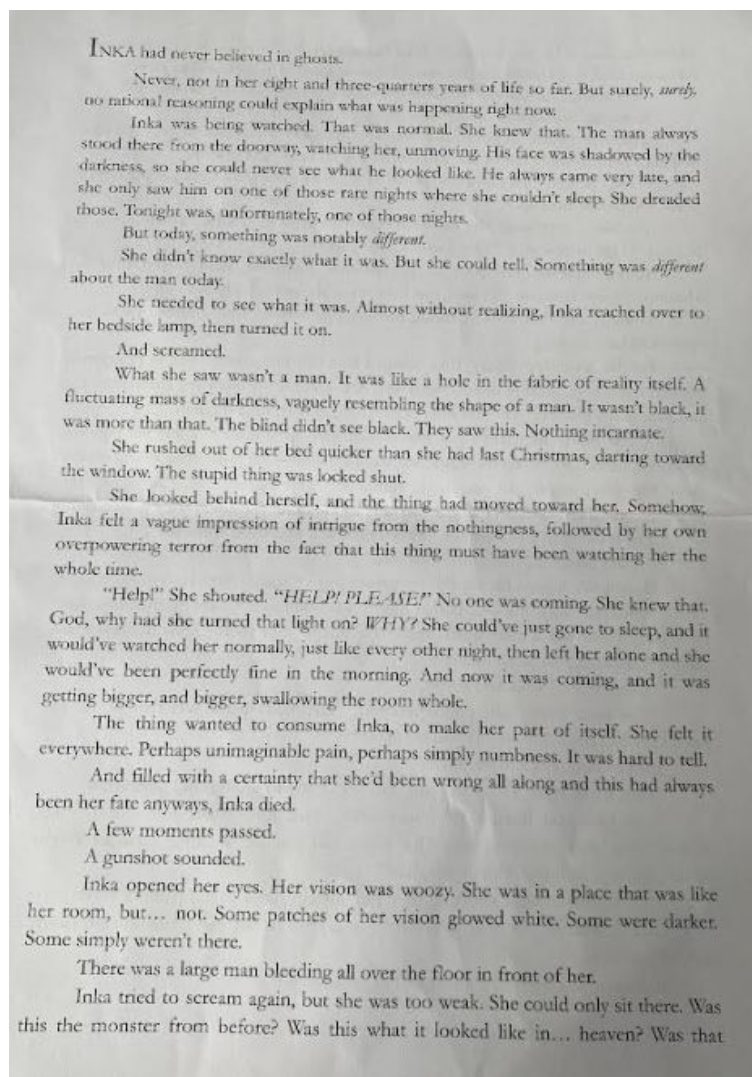
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James Marks Academy - Halloween story competition

We are delighted to announce the Halloween spooky story competition winner and runner-up. Congratulations to Jacob W, who takes first place for his untitled supernatural piece. His use of suspense, figurative language and command of grammar have resulted in a chilling masterpiece. Our runner-up is Anna H's entry, 'The Story of Spookyclaws', which impressed with its fast-pace, fantastic vocabulary choices and creepy illustrations! Well done both





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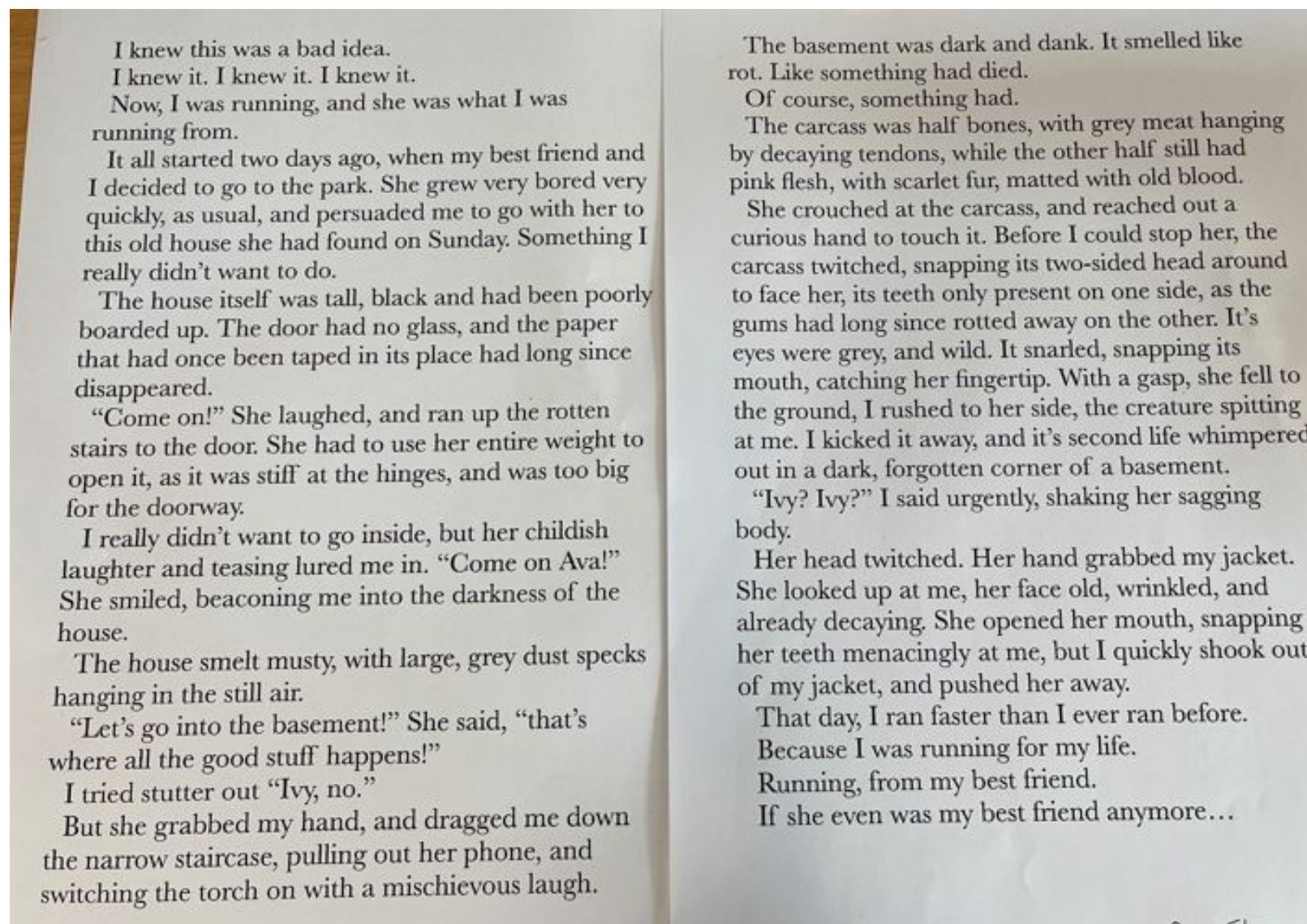
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Roman Fields - Halloween story competition

Tony was very impressed with all of the entries to the story competition. There were some very spooky and imaginative stories and some clever plot twists. It was very hard choosing the best stories.

In 3rd place Isabel
In 2nd place Olivia



The winner particularly impressed with expressive language and clever pacing to build tension....
In 1st place Flo, well done everyone 🌟



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James Marks Academy - new Humanities teacher - Hayley Knights.

Kia ora and hello from Hayley!



I've been working in secondary education for over 20 years, with experience across both the UK and New Zealand. Over that time, I've held a range of roles — from serving on school and professional boards to working as a Specialist Classroom Teacher — and I'm a proud member of the Humanities team. At JMA, I'll be teaching Geography, History, and Science. You can follow along with our learning journeys on Google Classroom — there's always something interesting happening!

Throughout my career, I've worked in a variety of educational settings, and my commitment to differentiation and accessibility has shaped my passion for creating equitable learning experiences for all students.

Recently, my labradoodle Barlow and I relocated from Wellington back to the UK to be closer to family. After coming from a school of over 2,200 students, I'm excited to embrace new adventures and a smaller community here in Hertfordshire.

As a geographer, I love exploring the world — I've visited more than 30 countries and can never resist discovering new cultures and cuisines. If you're ever planning a trip to New Zealand and need a top cheese scone recommendation, get in touch! Some of my favourite destinations include Vietnam, Spain, and Rotorua — a small city in New Zealand's central North Island where you can *see, taste, and feel* the geography all at once. It's truly epic!



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Roman Fields - Fancy dress competition

Everyone looked spooktacular dressing up for Halloween.

They all looked so fabulous that everyone won a treat.

A massive thank you again to Aline, Jo and pupils for all their Hard work with the halloween sale they made a wonderful £35.

The pupils have not picked a charity to donate to yet but once we know we will let you know.



Thank you so much to everyone for your help and support.





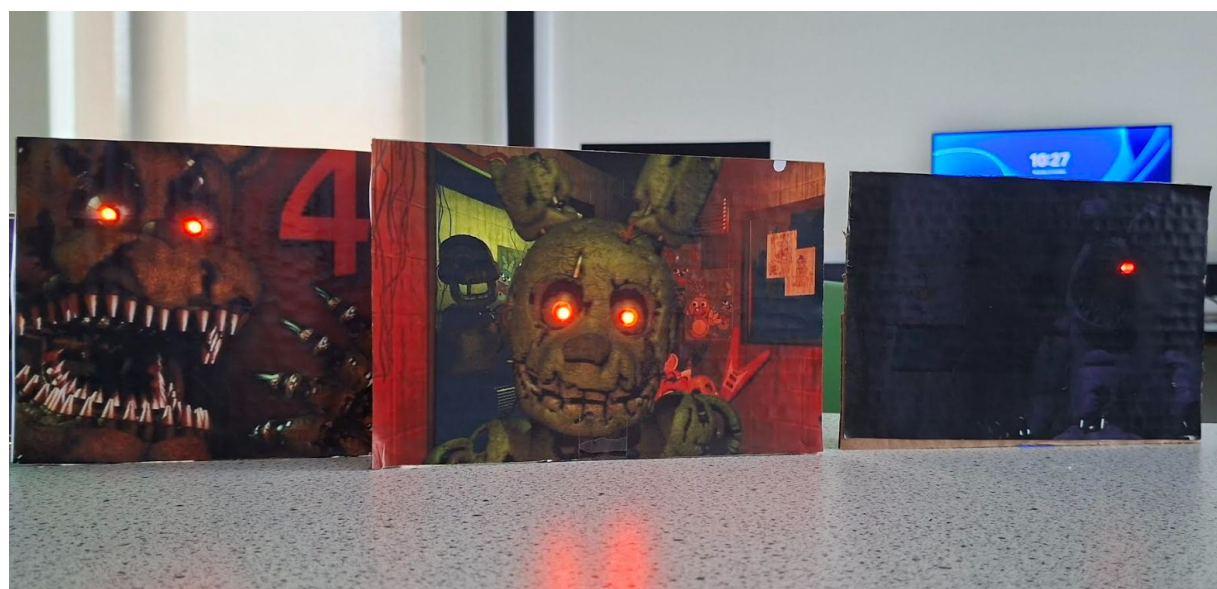
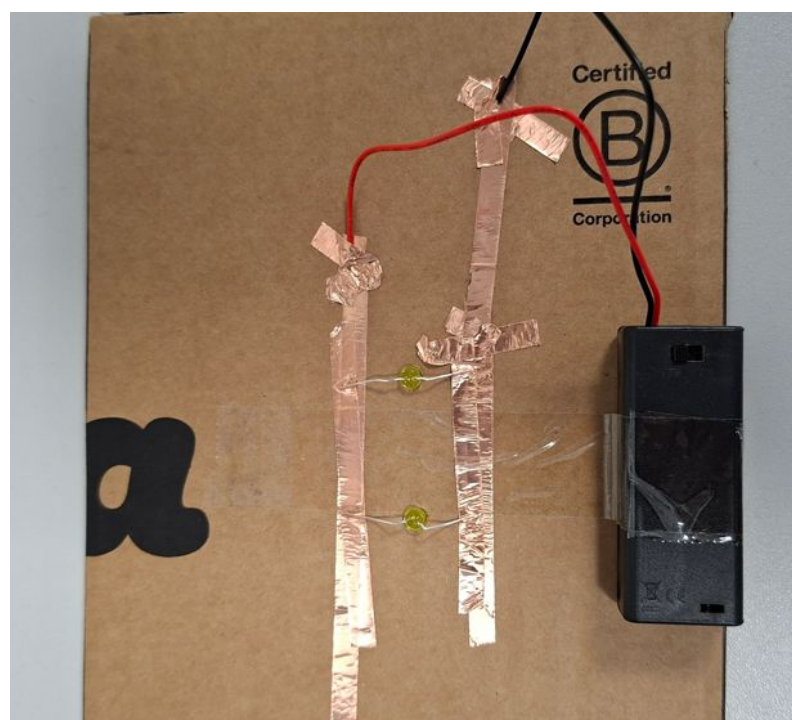
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James Marks Academy - ICT lessons

The Electronics pupils have created some halloween themed projects, with eyes that light up using LEDs.





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James Marks Academy - Visit to Knife Angel

Prior to half term the PSHE department led a number of trips to visit the Knife Angel, in Welwyn Garden City.

The Knife Angel is a 27ft tall metal statue predominantly made from knives which were either confiscated by the police, or handed in via knife amnesty around the country.

Constructed in 2018 the Knife Angel has been touring the country to help highlight knife crime in the UK and to support in educating people on the dangers of knife crime.

A very moving statue, some of the knives contained in the structure had names of the victims of Knife Crime engraved on the knives.

We were lucky enough to receive talks on our visits from Police, Medics and Knife crime experts.

The structure created some pertinent and meaningful conversations and questions from our students, all of whom behaved maturely and sensitively.

Thank you to Sarah for suggesting and organising the trips, and for all staff who led or assisted on the trips.





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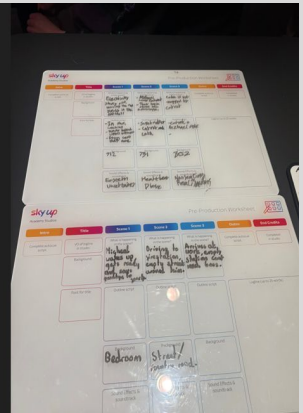
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Roman Fields and Forest House - Sky trip

Sky Studios Elstree, home to major productions such as Wicked, Paddington in Peru, Jurassic World: Rebirth and Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy, hosted the Year 11s from both Roman Fields and Forest House earlier this week. Before the young people visited, those taking Film Studies GCSE worked with Emma and Neil to create outlines of films including core characters and three key scenes. On the day the two mixed-school groups each created and produced a mini film with these scenes as a guide, allowing the young people to take on roles such as actor, director, producer, editor as well as wardrobe stylist. The pupils also learnt about the various careers associated with film and TV and to think about what their preferred styles of thinking and working are and how they relate to specific roles.

Please log on to the national careers website for further information on job roles across many industries as well as salary information.

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>





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Roman Fields - Careers and transition - Work experience for Year 10s and 11s - Futures For All

Please see below information from a company which we are using for in-person and virtual work experience.

<https://finder.futuresforall.org/>

Please can you and your young person visit the website and look at the variety of opportunities and see if any are of interest to your young person. Please note that this is NOT compulsory and if your child is already doing work experience as part of their timetable, or has already completed something through this company, then this opportunity is not available to them. That said, we do encourage all pupils to have a go and the DfE is keen that all pupils are given the opportunity to try something.

If you find something of interest, please can you apply and then let Jan and Debra know.

Once you've applied for a work experience opportunity, your application will go through two review stages:

- 1) Awaiting educator review – Your selected educator (Jan and Debra) will approve your application for the chosen placement (subject to it appearing correct etc).
- 2) Awaiting employer review – Once approved by your educator, your application will be sent to the employer, who will make their final selection.

Once you hear back we will confirm that your child can do any virtual WEX in school as part of the school day.

Please note as these placements are typically 4-6 hours for a three day period, your child will miss some of their core lessons but as it is only a short time period, this is acceptable.

Please come back to Jan or Debra if you have any queries and remember to look at the opportunities every couple of weeks as new ones get uploaded regularly.



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Roman Fields - Christmas Donations for our Hamper

Aline and the pupils every year do a fabulous job of putting some Christmas hampers together to be raffled off at the end of term Christmas awards.

All the money raised will be going to a local charity chosen by our enterprise pupils.

We would be grateful for any unwanted gifts or Christmas treats you would like to donate. Please could the donations be brought to the office by Monday 8th December.

Raffle tickets will be sold for 50p each from Monday 24th November from reception in the mornings and at lunch times.

As always, thank you for your support!

Kindest regards,
Aline and the enterprise team!





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Roman Fields - Christmas Jumper Day Friday 12th December

Christmas Jumper day



Friday 12th December

Please come to school dressed in your festive Christmas jumper.

Any Voluntary donations are welcome to the office, all money raised goes to charity.

Thank you so much.





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Meet father christmas church farm Ardeley

Selected dates in December

Festive Farm Entry includes
Christmas Activity Pack * Festive Woodland
Walk the farm & see the farm animals

Meet Father Christmas
Father Christmas in his outside grotto
(includes a quality toy)
Meet the Elves
Write a letter to Father Christmas
Write a wish for the Wish Tree
Bag up reindeer food & carrot to take home to Rudolph

Additional Activities
Santa Paws – bring your beloved pooches to meet
Father Christmas include treat & toy
Harvest your Own Christmas Tree
Festive Tractor & Trailer Ride
Feed the farm animals

Book online www.churchfarmardeley.co.uk

*This is an outdoor event so plenty of
fresh air. Wrap up warm & wear wellies!*

CHURCH FARM, ARDELEY
A Free Range Experience

Christmas fun at Church Farm - Ardeley

Church farm are running lots of
Festive fun activities on selected dates
in December.

If you are interested then please visit
their website for more details-

[https://www.churchfarmardeley.co.u
k/plan-a-visit/what-s-on/half-term-hal
loween](https://www.churchfarmardeley.co.uk/plan-a-visit/what-s-on/half-term-hal-loween)

Address -

Church Farm, Ardeley, Stevenage SG2
7AH



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Supporting Links - online course



Supporting links are now taking bookings for their HCC funded courses starting in January.

6-Weeks	Location	ID	Dates 2026	Day	Time
Talking Additional Needs	Online	797	6th Jan to 10th Feb	Tue	8.00-9.30pm
Talking Additional Needs	Online	796	3rd Feb to 17th Mar	Tue	9.45-11.15am
Talking Families	Online	799	8th Jan to 12th Feb	Thu	8.00-9.30pm
Talking Families	Online	798	5th Feb to 19th Mar	Thu	9.45-11.15am
Talking Families	Online	800	5th Feb to 19th Mar	Thu	8.00-9.30pm
Talking Anxiety in Families	Online	801	4th Feb to 18th Mar	Wed	9.45-11.30am
Talking Teens	Online	804	5th Jan to 9th Feb	Mon	7.45-9.15pm
Talking Teens	St Albans	802	4th Feb to 18th Mar	Wed	7.00-9.00pm
Talking Teens	Online	803	5th Feb to 19th Mar	Thu	7.45-9.15pm
Talking Anger in Teens	Online	805	6th Jan to 10th Feb	Tue	7.45-9.30pm
Talking Dads	Online	806	7th Jan to 11th Feb	Wed	7.45-9.15pm
Talking Dads	Online	807	2nd Feb to 16th Mar	Mon	7.45-9.15pm

If you are interested in booking please phone **07512 709556**

Or email bookings@supportinglinks.co.uk

These are all funded by Herts County Council so are FREE for parents to attend.