



**John Mason School**  
Excellence Through Creativity



**Key Information**

2022-23



## A message from the Head of School

Welcome to our school, it is an exciting place to be. As Head of School, I am very proud to have the opportunity to lead such a special place and to work with our students, parents and community.

At John Mason, we believe that learning should be enjoyable and challenging. This belief, combined with the excellent teaching skills and commitment of our staff and the enthusiasm and hard work of our students, lies at the heart of our success.

We have high expectations of our students and our aim is to enable each of them to achieve success and meet their potential in order to open up a lifetime of opportunities. At the heart of our ethos is the belief that each child is an individual, with a unique set of talents and abilities.

We believe that high standards of academic achievement and consistently high expectations of behaviour provide children with the stable and calm environment in which to learn effectively. All our staff work hard to develop curiosity, a love of learning, resilience and kindness in our students.

We are an inclusive school, catering for all abilities and providing access for all students. Day to day the school is filled with students participating in vibrant music, arts and drama, as well as engaging lessons in science, maths and the humanities among others. As a school, we offer an extensive range of sports, charity events, trips and expeditions, all of which combine to create a caring and highly successful school. Every parent wants the very best for their child; at John Mason, we do too.

Mr Adrian Rees  
Head of School



# Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet which outlines the Key Information you may require. This booklet is helpful whether your child is transitioning from Year 6 primary to secondary school or transferring secondary school as an in-year transfer. We hope we have covered everything you would like to know about our school to help your child have a positive, happy start to their John Mason school journey and we look forward to being there every step of the way with them. Our school website is also a valuable source of information.

## Our School

John Mason School is a mixed secondary academy school for 11-18 year olds, rated 'Good' by Ofsted in May 2019, situated on the Wootton Road in Abingdon. The school became part of the Abingdon Learning Trust in 2018. Each year group has 180 students, and JMF6, our outstanding (Ofsted 2019) 6th form is based on the site. The Head of School, Mr Adrian Rees, took over the Headship in April 2020, and Sarah Brinkley, Executive Headteacher and Director of Secondary Education for Abingdon Learning Trust has taken over the leadership of the secondary phase of learning, to which John Mason School belongs, together with Fitzharrys School and Rush Common Primary School.

## High Quality Teaching & Learning

John Mason School is dedicated to continuous improvement and strives for the very best for all of our students. The Leadership team and Governors are ambitious for the future of the school and this is evident in all the staff do. Teachers and support staff work tirelessly to support students in everything that they do, and are dedicated to student success.

The staff at JMS foster excellent relationships with students, encouraging mutual respect. These relationships support learning and ensure all students have the opportunity to succeed. Lessons at JMS are challenging and engaging, well sequenced and build on previous learning every day. Students are focussed in lessons and are encouraged to be independent learners and to track their own progress through keeping records of what they have learnt, continuously working on, and revising topics to embed them in their long-term learning.

Teachers are supported to research new teaching methods and engage in developmental opportunities on a regular basis. This leads to variation in teaching styles that support student progress.

## School Values

Our commitment is to provide the very best education for all our students. WE believe our school values allow us to achieve this:

**Proud of our creativity**

**Passionate about learning**

**Keen to inspire**

**Valuing ourselves and each other**

**Determined to be the best we can be**

We are proud of these values and our students and staff are encouraged to display them in their actions.

## Ethos

We believe that the ethos of our school is one of mutual respect. As such, our ethos is driven by our values. All members of our school community must show respect for one another by treating each other, as we would wish to be treated. We must work hard at school and in the wider community to show ourselves as model citizens.

# Curriculum

All children have a right to broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. At John Mason School we provide this through ensuring we offer a wide range of academic subjects, alongside the development of essential skills that help students grow to become confident, independent individuals.

## Key Stage 3 (Years 7-8)

All students follow the National Curriculum, which consists of the core subjects of English, Maths and Science together with the foundation subjects of Computing, Drama, Music, PE, Art and Design (including Textiles, 3D design, Food and Nutrition and Graphics), Geography, History and Religious Studies. In KS3 students study a modern foreign language - either Spanish, German, Mandarin or French. Most students have the opportunity to take up a second language in Year 8.

In Year 7 and 8, students are taught in form groups or other mixed ability groupings, although Maths is taught in ability sets. All students are regularly assessed as well as supported, to ensure that they are in the right set for their ability and potential. In Modern Foreign Languages, students are grouped according to the language they have chosen. PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) is delivered through a course called Character Education.

## Key Stage 4 (Years 9, 10 and 11)

During Key Stage 4, students follow courses in the core subjects of English, English Literature, Mathematics, and Character Education. All students also study Statistics and Science: the majority are entered for 'triple science': separate GCSE exams in Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

In addition, students follow a number of options chosen from a wide range of subjects.

This year the choices include: History; Geography; Psychology; French; German; Spanish; Computer Science; ICT; Film Studies; Music; Performing Arts; Physical Education; Business Studies; Art; Textiles; Graphics, 3D Design, Food and Nutrition and Health and Social Care.

## Key Stage 5 A Level Courses in the Sixth Form

**JMF6-Abingdon** is the sixth form provided by Fitzharrys and John Mason Schools, recently rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted, delivering high quality, post-16 education to young people in the Abingdon area and beyond. Our ambition is for every student to access outstanding learning opportunities, which encourage them to become academically successful, happy, confident and inquiring young people.

## Homework

Homework is a vital part of learning. It allows students to build up their self-reliance and organisation skills. Our vision is that John Mason will be an outstanding learning school. We also aim to produce independent, lifelong learners.

Homework is set on Google Classroom on the RM Unify platform for students to access. Parents and Carers will get a weekly summary of their child's homework.

## Student Outcomes

The past five years have seen the GCSE and A Level results improve year on year, and although 2021 results have been calculated in a different way and cannot be published, we know our students have worked extremely hard and would have shown us they could have continued that upward trajectory.

The results every year reflect a huge amount of hard work and effort on behalf of our staff, students and their families and 2021 is no exception.

## House Points

We believe that learning is rewarding and that students will reap the rewards of their own efforts and hard work. We also believe that students respond to praise and encouragement and that good manners, effort and a positive attitude in lessons, on the sports field, in music or art or any walk of school life, should be acknowledged and celebrated.

These positive achievements will be recognised by staff in the form of verbal praise and/or issuing of a department sticker or stamp in the student's planner. Tutors will regularly monitor students' planners and stickers will contribute to house points. In addition, some faculties send home postcards to celebrate particular success achievements and we have an annual Celebration Evening to present major awards.

Students are assigned to a House (Stert - Red, Ock - Green or Thames - Blue) for sporting events.

## Attendance

Regular attendance is important for students to achieve their potential at school. Rewards are given to students at the end of each full term to celebrate the commitment and determination that comes with 100% attendance.

Those who are regularly absent miss out by falling behind with classwork and homework. Not only do students feel left behind in class they can also feel left out of friendship groups, which change rapidly. This makes them nervous and worried about attending school, so making the attendance issue worse.

John Mason School monitors attendance very closely and our Student Managers are in regular contact with parents, chasing absences and supporting parents and students with any issues affecting attendance.

## Absence

Regular attendance is extremely important but occasionally students will be ill or have appointments to attend. All student absences should be notified via the dedicated school absence telephone line, whether it is sickness or a scheduled appointment during the school day or via your Parentmail account.

## Behaviour

Good learning starts with good behaviour. The whole community at John Mason School benefits from a clear Behaviour for Learning Policy; we want all students to learn effectively within a safe, calm and purposeful environment. Where students do not meet the expected level of behaviour and conduct, staff use a graduated consequences approach. The full Behaviour Policy can be found on our website.

## Mobile Phones

We understand that mobile phones are now a regular part of student life but at John Mason School we have a 'See It, Hear It, lose It' policy. Confiscation of phones will be made if a student is found using their mobile phone during the school day without permission.

# The School Day

We run a two-week timetable at John Mason School. When your child starts at school they will be given a student planner which has a year planner showing the Week As and Bs. Their school planner is very useful and students should look after it. They are issued with a new one at the beginning of each school year.

## Punctuality

The school day starts promptly at 8.30am. Each student must be seated in their form room by 8.30am ready for the register to be taken by their form tutor. Detentions are in place for students who are late.

## Our school timings are:

- 8.20 - Arrive at school**
- 8.30 - Registration (Tutor Room)
- 8.45 - Period 1**
- 9.45 - Period 2
- 10.45 - Break Time**
- 11.10 - Period 3
- 12.10 - Period 4**
- 1.05pm - Lunch break
- 1.45pm - Afternoon Reg (DEAR time)**
- 2.10pm - Period 5
- 3.10pm - Home Time**

## Break & Lunchtimes

Each year group is allocated a social space within their year group area. A space to go during break and lunch to meet other students, stay warm and dry in the winter and to obtain support from their Head of Year and Student Manager.

## The Diner

The Diner is the in-house catering provision and serves a selection of hot and cold food at break and lunchtime. All menus are designed to the government nutritional standards with full allergen details.

Menus are run on a three-week cycle. Meals are freshly prepared on site using Hedges as our local butcher.

The Diner uses a biometric fingerprint system so that students can pay for purchases without the need to carry cash and parents can see at a glance if their account requires topping up and what their child purchased.

## Travelling to School

Members of staff are on duty at the main gate to oversee students at the beginning and the end of the school day.

Most students are able to walk or use a bicycle to get to and from school but some students may need school transport. Secondary school children are eligible for free home to school transport where they attend their nearest available school if that school is over three miles from their home address. However, transport can also be provided where the distance to the nearest available school is less than three miles and the route is currently listed as dangerous by the council. **Full information on school transport is available at [Oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://Oxfordshire.gov.uk) website.**

John Mason School has bike sheds for students to put their bikes and scooters in and these are locked during the day. Cycle helmets should be worn by those cycling to school.

## Lockers

Lockers are really useful for keeping your personal belongings safe, such as cycle helmet, heavy books, and for storing your PE kit between lessons. **Secure Lockers** are available to rent on a yearly subscription.

**Visit: [www.locker.rentals](http://www.locker.rentals) - enter the school name and press 'start booking', follow the simple steps to secure your locker or call 0330 311 1003.**

# School Uniform

At John Mason School we believe that wearing school uniform gives a sense of belonging to our students. Our uniform supplier is **Price and Buckland** and all **JMS badged and house uniform can be ordered on line. (starred below)** [www.pbuniform-online.co.uk/johnmason](http://www.pbuniform-online.co.uk/johnmason)

Our full uniform policy including the rules on jewellery, make up, hair and nails can be found on our website.

Students who are not in the correct uniform are not allowed to access the main school and will be isolated until the situation is rectified.

## Standard School Uniform

**Plain white collared shirt** buttoned to the neck  
(A plain white T-shirt may be worn underneath the shirt)

**\*School Tie**

(must be knotted & hide top button).

**\*JMS School Jumper**

(worn at all times except when given permission by a member of staff)

**Black formal, tailored trousers**

(strictly no logos, jeans, tracksuits, cargoes or combats)

**Plain Formal Knee Length Black Skirt**

(skirt styles are strictly A-line, pleated or skater and should not be tight-fitting)

**Plain grey, white or black socks**

(no above knee length)

**Black/Natural Tights**

**Plain black low heeled shoes or plain black trainers** with laces (no logos, coloured laces, coloured soles)

## Optional Summer Uniform

(Terms 5 & 6 only)

**\*JMS branded white polo shirt**

**No Jumper required**

**No tie required**

**Black Tailored Shorts** (suitable length)

## PE Uniform

**\*Rugby Top in house colour**

**Black shorts**

**Black tracksuit bottoms**

(tracksuit not to be worn for rugby)

**\*Polo Shirt in House Colour**

**\*Orange JMS socks**

**Rugby Boots & Football Boots**

**Shin pads**

**Trainers** (no plimsoles)

**\*GCSE PE Sports Top** (ordered separately in year 9 if studying GCSE)

## Outline Guidance

**Plain outer coat** - strictly no hoodies. Coats mustn't have large writing on them. No denim jackets.

**Hats/Caps** - may only be worn for specific events during summer or winter.

**Hair** - natural colour, no extreme hairstyles.

**Make-up** - may only be worn in year 10 and above.

**Nail varnish** is NOT permitted.

**Jewellery** - in the interests of safety jewellery must be kept to a minimum and not exceed the following:

**Watch** - permitted and recommended for all students

**Earrings** - one plain pair of studs may be worn (one in each ear lobe).

No other jewellery or body piercing is allowed.

All jewellery is to be removed when taking part in PE.

## Equipment

We recommend that you have the following items before you join us in September:

**Strong school bag**

**Pens** - (a good supply including blue, black and green)

**HB and 2B pencils**

**Pencil Sharpener**

**30cm ruler**

**Soft eraser** (correction fluid is not allowed)

**Coloured pencils** (no marker pens)

**Mathematics Set** - including protractor, compass

**Scientific Calculator**

(recommended model: Casio FX-83GTX)

**Reading book of your choice** (for every day)

# Keeping in Touch

We believe in forming strong communication links with our parent and carer community and we may do this in a variety of ways. Our main communication route is via **Parentmail PMX**. For parents, this means you can easily pick up school messages on your smartphone.

**Emails and text messages:** PMX is a fast and effective way for the school to get reminders and urgent messages to the appropriate parents/carers. We can send messages to one parent/carers or the whole school, and can create new groups if they will be useful, such as for specific school trips.

**Cashless catering:** All our students use the cashless system when buying from the Diner and you can access PMX at home to pay money directly into your child's lunch account.

**Paying for school trips:** You can use PMX at home to pay for school trips.

You will be able to register when we send you an email or text registration. You just follow the simple steps.

# Pastoral Care

We understand how important it is for parents and carers to be able to have contact with a member of staff if they are worried or experiencing any issues with their child, and for them to know that their child is well cared for in school. Form Tutors, Student Managers, Head of Key Stages and other staff are all contactable if needed:

**Form Tutors** have the most day to day contact with students and should be the first point of contact for students or parents with any worries.

**Student Managers** are available throughout the school day to support students and parents with any issues affecting students' well-being or progress at school. Each year group has a Student Manager assigned to them who works closely with the Head of Year.

The **School Counsellor** offers students regular sessions to talk over any problems or issues they have. All discussions are confidential unless child protection guidelines are brought into force. Students are referred to this service.

The **School Health Nurse** is based in school and is available daily for advice and support on any health issues.

# Wellbeing

John Mason School is committed to providing a healthy and caring environment that promotes and supports positive mental health for our students, staff and stakeholders. Positive mental health is vital to what we do at school; it underpins the crucial work carried out to support students and their families. By considering student and staff wellbeing in all aspects of school life, a positive, healthy environment can be created that improves student engagement, performance and achievement which in turn gives everyone an opportunity to develop and achieve their full potential. This year we are working incredibly hard to achieve the Wellbeing Award for Schools.

# Safeguarding

We recognise our moral, ethical and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. We are fully committed to ensuring that consistent and effective safeguarding procedures are in place to support families, young people and staff at school.



# Progress

Students, parents and carers receive regular updates on how their child is doing via 3 Progress Checks each academic year. These Progress Checks show how a child is performing in each of their subjects. Parents and carers also get the opportunity to speak to their child's teachers at Parents' Evening. Each year group has one scheduled Parents' Evening per year. If parents and carers are concerned about their child's progress, they can make contact via email with the teacher at any time throughout the year.

# Support & Challenge

## Star Academy

Star Academy is our provision for children in receipt of Pupil Premium. Pupil Premium was introduced to improve educational outcomes for our most disadvantaged students. At John Mason we are committed to ensuring Pupil Premium students have the same high aspirations and opportunities to enable them to reach their potential. We have a dedicated member of staff who as Student Support Manager works with all eligible students.

## Inclusion (SEND Provision)

Some students will need extra support to enable them to reach their full potential. For other students, sustained support will be needed throughout their time at school. It is the role of the Inclusion Unit to ensure that all students identified as having a particular need are given the best possible support to enable them to achieve their potential. The Inclusion Unit, led by the SENCo, identifies students who need extra support and ensures that those students are given the best chance to

succeed, both in class and through the wider school community. We do this by sharing information on how best a student learns and by providing tailored intervention packages to help those students to close any gaps in progress with their peers. We advise teachers on best inclusive practice, providing teachers with detailed knowledge on the specific needs of each student on the SEND register.

## Stretch, Challenge and Super-Curricular

Different students will be excited about different areas of the curriculum and it is these passions which can go on to form life-long interests and even careers. It is a key principle of good teaching that students should feel challenged in all their subjects and this is a responsibility all of our teachers take very seriously. We also offer an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and trips to inspire students' passions for learning.

We are also committed to ensuring that our students leave JMS equipped to excel. Throughout their time in school we work with our partner colleges (Trinity College, Oxford and Peterhouse, Cambridge), we offer a range of visits, talks and sessions designed to raise aspirations and encourage students to aim as high as possible for their future beyond school. The HPQ transition project at the end of year 11, the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award and the EPQ in JMF6 are all designed to ensure that our students have the academic credentials to apply for the country's top universities and apprenticeships if they so desire.

Beyond this we are particularly proud of our prestigious Symposium offer. This enables students from all key stages to access lectures and seminars led by external speakers from industry and academia. Students also complete an independent research project and present on this to parents and guests at one of our partner universities in the summer term. This both gives them a valuable foretaste of studying at the highest levels, but also gives them a chance to explore areas of academic interest that go far beyond the national curriculum.

# Our School Community

## Duke of Edinburgh Awards

John Mason is committed to supporting all students in KS4 achieving and engaging with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. This is a nationally recognised award that challenges students to take part in activities in four areas; Volunteering, Skills, Physical and Expedition. The award tests resilience and resourcefulness and completion of the award is very favourably viewed by employers and college admissions tutors. These skills also are invaluable in meeting the demands of GCSE and A Level exams.

## LRC

Our Learning Resource Centre at John Mason School has a dedicated member of staff who has an extensive knowledge and love of literature. Students may have library lessons in the LRC and may use it to borrow books, read, complete homework using the computers or study in a quiet space. As a school we are passionate about students reading books and we are incredibly proud of our Read-Aloud Programme where trained tutors read to students during every afternoon registration period, allowing student to experience some of the best and most exciting works of literature during their time a school and helping to foster a love of reading in our students.

## Welsh Farm

**Troedrhigellifawr**, the Welsh Farm, was bought by the John Mason Association in 1969 for £1500, originally a dairy farm, it is now our very own outward bound centre in the remote valley of Pumpsaint in West Wales. It is surrounded by forested hills and sheep farms.

The farm is used primarily for year 8 social trips, each tutor group will visit during year 8 for a 4 day adventure. The trips are designed to promote independence in our students, encouraging them

to take care of themselves, cooking, cleaning and most importantly teaching them to work as part of a team and step out of their comfort zones. The farm is also used by faculties for star gazing trips; DofE; revision weekends or just for tutor group bonding trips.

For many of the pupils the farm trips are a real highlight of their school calendar.

## The O6 Gallery

Our own O6 Gallery is a professional space to exhibit art and design work and showcases our students' accomplishments as well as occasionally offering exhibition space for local artists and groups and ex-JMS Art and Design post graduates.

## Sport

All students have the opportunity to access many different sports through their PE lessons at John Mason School and there are also a wide variety of clubs at lunch and after school for students to choose from. Student have the opportunity to compete in different events if they are part of the team and all students are encouraged to take part in our annual Sports Day.

## JMA

The **John Mason Association** (JMA) is another name for the friends of John Mason School or John Mason PTA. The JMA is run by a committee of parents and staff in order to foster good links between home and school, to provide encouragement and support in all areas of school life, and to fundraise towards these aims. They raise funds to enrich students' time at John Mason School but also support the school in many other ways and provide extra pairs of hands when needed.



## Quality – Opportunity – Collaboration – Ambition – Community

**Abingdon Learning Trust** is a family of schools rooted in local communities. Our vision is a bold one:

**'To nurture curiosity and fuel a passion for learning – shaping confident individuals and resilient communities, stronger together and ambitious for the future.'**

But what does this mean for the staff and students at John Mason School?

For our students it is opportunity rich education; the chance to experience new things – in sport, music, science, languages, computing and the arts; through trips and visits delivered by authors, engineers, university lecturers, employers, actors, musicians, politicians – authentic learning experiences. We endeavour to make the connection between what children are learning and the potential it has to change their lives in the future. These opportunities should raise aspirations and show our students that if we work together, they can achieve whatever they set their minds to. This mindset is essential in the classroom when learning gets hard, growing the essential skills of grit, resilience and enquiry.

For our staff this vision means that their professional development is paramount; if our teachers are reflective in approach and provided with the time and support to continue training, then our students will achieve more. As a Trust our decisions are rooted in evidence, led by our Director of Research and Innovation, and we encourage our staff to be actively involved in research at local and national level.

I am extremely proud of the ethos and community at John Mason School, shaped by Abingdon Learning Trust. We believe in the power of young people to change the world; they just have to be shown how.

Sarah Brinkley  
Executive Headteacher, Director of Secondary Education  
Abingdon Learning Trust



# Admissions

For further information on the admissions process please visit our school website at:

[www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk/joining-us/admissions](http://www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk/joining-us/admissions)



**John Mason School**  
Excellence Through Creativity

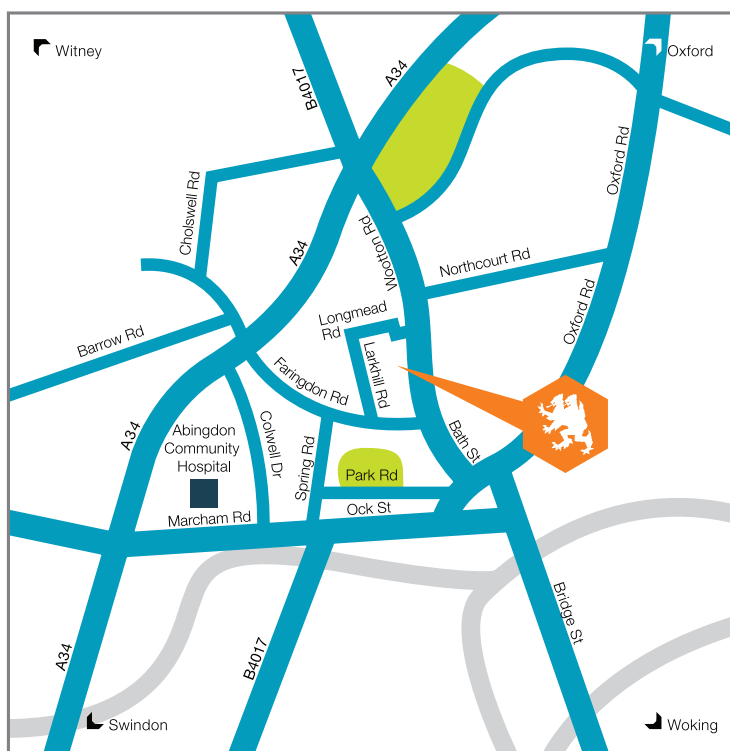
Wootton Road, Abingdon,  
Oxfordshire, OX14 1JB

**T: (01235) 524 664**

F: (01235) 520 711

[www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk)

 [@johnmasonschoo1](https://twitter.com/johnmasonschoo1)



**Registered Office:** Rush Common School  
Hundred Way, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 2AW

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