

Friday 19th September 2025

Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

Year 13 spent the first half of the week on the River Wye completing their Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition. I am told they showed great resilience despite the challenging weather conditions. The weather conditions haven't always been much better in Abingdon and this is a great opportunity to ask you to ensure children have a good quality coat to keep them dry and warm at break and lunchtime as we move into the autumn months. Please remember that hooded jumpers are not allowed.

For those not quite ready for DofE Gold, you will have noticed that MCAS is packed with a wide range of opportunities. The uptake in our clubs and societies has been fantastic this week and as well as thanking the teachers who make these events a reality, I'd like to thank all of our students who have stepped outside their comfort zone already this term and tried something new. If your child hasn't joined a club already, then please look at the list of opportunities with them and encourage them to have a go. You never know where it might lead!

Earlier this week we celebrate National TA Day. Our fantastic team of Teaching Assistants work closely with a number of our students and make a real difference in supporting them to access all the fantastic educational opportunities available to them. We are incredibly grateful to our team for the brilliant work that they do.

Next week we will be taking School Photos for our Year 7, 9 and 11 on Friday 26th September. We will have an extra careful eye on uniform, and I'd like to thank you for everything you have done over the last three weeks to make our job easier here. Every day we get the chance to say "good morning" to student after student as they walk in the gate, and uniform has never looked smarter. Thank you for helping to make our jobs so much easier and ensuring such a positive start to the school day.

Best wishes.



Alastair West
Headteacher

Curriculum News

The Diamond League is an exciting way for students to challenge themselves and celebrate success in science.

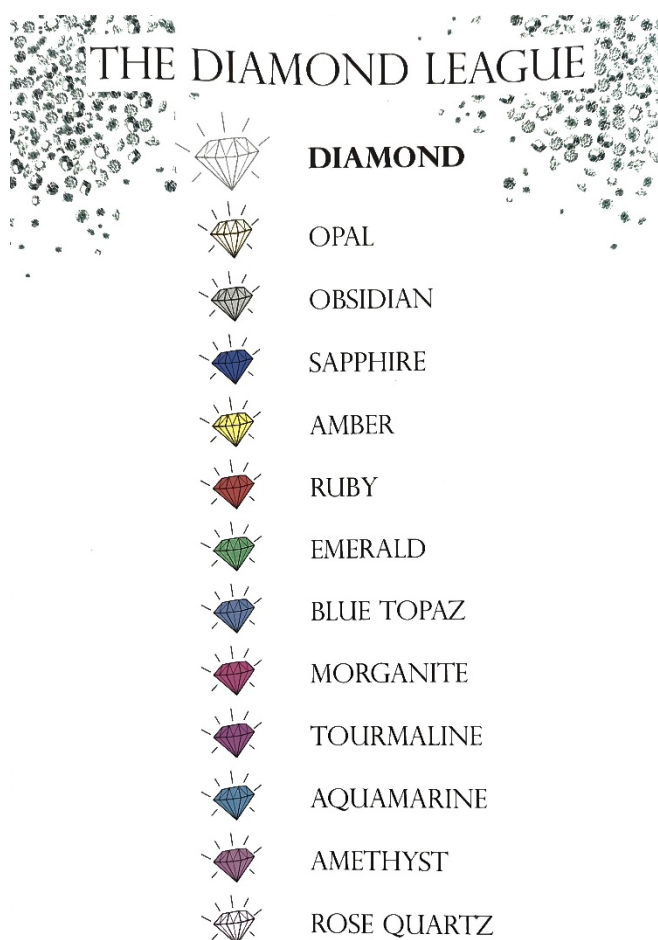
At the beginning of a unit assessment, students complete a short quiz based on core questions in biology, chemistry, and physics. These core questions are practiced at the beginning of each lesson and through homework set each week. Scoring 75% or above qualifies them, showing they have a strong understanding of the essential knowledge for that subject. Students who go the extra mile and achieve 100% on their second attempt secure a place in the prestigious Diamond League.

To recognise and encourage progress, certificates are awarded not only for achieving 75% or higher but also for students who show significant improvement by boosting their score by at least 25% between attempts.

This system is designed to help students strengthen their scientific knowledge, build confidence, and store more information in their long-term memory. Most importantly, it creates a fun and rewarding way to celebrate every step of their learning journey in science.

Look out for the first round of Diamond league certificates as they will be making their way to Year 7 and 11 soon!

Mrs Stephanie Johnson
Assistant Director of Science



You can find out more about what your child will be studying this term in each subject here:
[Subjects - John Mason School](#)



Pastoral News – Year 9

It has been an amazing start to the new academic year for the current year 9s.

We have had fantastic celebration assemblies where I've handed out certificates of achievement and acknowledged our tutees of the week with postcards that were sent home by the tutor team. The students have settled into the daily routine applying themselves with commitment to the school's values of Opportunity, Respect and Determination.

We have had a few assemblies where students have been notified about the upcoming clubs e.g flight club, games club, boxing club, 6 a side football club, crochet and knitting and finally boardgames club. These incredible opportunities are being offered by the year 9 team.

Students have also been delighted to hear about the proposed school trip to Thorpe Park in 2026 for our focussed and determined students to avail of.

We have also had volunteers to regenerate our school bins in an artistic way with spray paint and stencils to improve the school environment and encourage students to keep our site clean.

All in all, it has been a busy but fulfilling time as the new progress lead for year 9. I hope every student is looking forward to an enjoyable year and has set their sights on taking part in one of our amazing clubs.

Great start year 9! Onwards and upwards.

Mr. Conroy
Progress Lead Year 9

Whole School News

Can you help?

iHola!

The Modern Foreign Languages Department is looking for Spanish-speaking parent/carer/other adult volunteers to help our Spanish GCSE and A Level students with their speaking practice.

If you are interested, please email abalaguer@johnmason.school

Extra-curricular clubs:

We have had a fantastic start to the term with many students attending our sports clubs at lunch times and after school.

We have seen nearly 40 students at netball, 40 students at Year 7 and Year 8 boys football and 20 Y11 boys at basketball.

If you would like to join the clubs, please see the list displayed in PE or ask your PE teacher for more information.

We start our fixtures next week with girls football, girls cross country, netball and boys football.

Thank you for your support

M Davies

Director of PE

Upcoming Important Dates:

Monday 22 nd September	Buffini - Author Talk at Larkmead
Friday 26 th September	School Photographs: years 7, 9, 11
Saturday 27 th September	Koln Trip (Year 8)
Wednesday 1 st October	Year 11 PIE
Tuesday 7 th October	Berlin PIE
Wednesday 8 th October	Year 8 PIE & Welsh Farm
Thursday 9 th October	Open Evening and School closes at 1.10pm Opens again at 5-8pm
Friday 10 th October	Inset Day

For a complete list of upcoming events please view the school calendar on our website here:

[Calendar - John Mason School](#)

Term dates for the academic year are on our website here:

[Term Dates - John Mason School](#)