

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025

## Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

This afternoon we said farewell to the first set of Year 10s heading off on their practice Bronze Duke of Edinburgh expedition. The students, and staff, have been building towards this moment for months now. With rucksacks packed, and a real buzz of excitement they set off into the wilderness of Oxfordshire. I can't wait to hear their stories of adventure on Monday morning.

Whilst Year 11 and 13 are very much in exam mode, other year groups have been involved in lots of extra activities this week. Year 8 continue to plan for their trips to the Welsh Farm, Year 9 have taken part in SupportedED and we have had visitors into school from the Oxford Botanical Gardens. There's always a huge amount going on and I'd like to thank staff for the work they are doing in making sure there are always a wide range of extra-curricular activities for students to get involved in.

It's clear that extra-curricular often meets out of school as well. Talking to students on the field and in the courtyard during breaks this week I am aware that many will be taking part in a range of sporting events representing local clubs this weekend. It sounds like there will be plenty of examples of JMS students against JMS students and so it is inevitable that not everyone can win but I would like to wish everyone the best of luck in whatever sporting endeavour they are participating in.

Have a great weekend.



Alastair West  
Headteacher

# School News

## Stem Club

STEM Club welcomed Lauren from Oxford Botanical Gardens this week to learn about carnivorous plants. Lauren discussed the concerns behind the continuing loss of plant species across the world. The club learnt about plant blindness, which is a human tendency to ignore plant species. Lauren brought different species of carnivorous plants for the club to look at as well as Pitcher Plants that the club were allowed to dissect and observe internal structures.



We would like to say a big thank you to Lauren for this fascinating session.



On May 13th, 125 Year 9 students from the OX14 Learning Partnership Schools participated in a dedicated wellbeing event, SupportED. The event featured five wellbeing workshops and a keynote address by Jamie Denyer, the Grief Preacher. Students also heard from the Peer Support Leads, Sixth form students who have been trained to support younger students with their wellbeing.

This collaborative initiative brought students together to learn about and prioritise their mental and emotional health. The workshops covered topics based on the NHS' 5 Ways to Wellbeing such as yoga and being present, mindful crafts, keeping active, making healthy connections and the importance of giving. The sessions offered practical strategies for supporting wellbeing and the interactive format allowed for active participation and collaboration.

Keynote speaker Jamie Denyer, an expert in youth wellbeing, shared his powerful story providing inspiring insights and emphasising the importance of mental health. His address reassured students that seeking support is a sign of strength.

Bringing together students from different schools fostered peer learning and helped normalise mental health discussions. This collaborative effort supports the partnership's core aim and recognition of supporting wellbeing, empowering these Year 9 students with valuable life skills and strategies.

Feedback from the students has been positive, one student said 'The inspirational speeches were amazing, lots of lessons were learned.' and another stated 'It was a brilliant event, very useful. Jamie was fantastic and inspiring.'

Thank you to all involved in the planning and running of the event and to the staff and students who attended the event.



**Year 9 Students Focus on Wellbeing at SupportED Event**



## Girlguiding

Hannah, in Year 13, has been selected from hundreds of applicant across the country to be an advocate for Girlguiding. Pictured below, you can see Hannah on BBC Breakfast news, being interviewed on the benefits of being a member of the Girlguiding community, showing young women how to build their confidence, make friends and learn new things and helping them to believe that they can do anything they put their minds too. This appearance on the BBC comes after multiple visits to Parliament to interview politicians on empowering women's voices. What a fantastic advocate for Girlguiding and our community!



## **Important Dates:**

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May – Sorrento Parent Information Event

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May – Year 10 Parent's Evening

Other important dates can be found on our website calendar:

<https://www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk/events/calendar/>

Term dates for the academic year are on our website:

<https://www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk/events/term-dates/>

Term dates for the next academic year are now on the website:

[Term Dates 2025-26](#)