



# HEADLINES

Christmas Edition December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for all your support this term as we have operated as normal a JMS schedule as possible with our now familiar covid companion. As ever the highlights have mostly been provided by our students and staff who make JMS the remarkable place it is. Have a peaceful, happy and healthy Christmas, and we look forward to 2022.

## **OX14 Partnership**

November 2021 saw the launch of the eagerly awaited OX14 Partnership. This marks the collaboration of six Abingdon private and state schools, as we endeavour to share knowledge, experience, and resources in order that all Abingdon students have access to a wealth of positive experiences. Whilst not an exhaustive list, such opportunities already include the Peer Support Lead Programme, Gloucester Rugby Coaching, The Study Higher Programme, Easy A Maths mentoring and numerous wellbeing events and webinars for both students and parents. We very much look forward to seeing what the OX14 Partnership will present our students with in 2022.

## **Faraday Maths Challenge**

Two teams of six Year 8 students visited Queen Anne's School in Caversham, to take part in The Faraday Challenge.

This year, the challenge was supported by Healthcare companies to encourage young people interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects to improve their teamwork and collaboration skills, and compete to build an electronic device to support patients and their families in hospitals. The development phase included budgeting, research and testing, and the final design was presented to a panel.

The students were exemplary in terms of both their behaviour and their teamwork, and came away with a host of strategies about how to plan, develop and communicate their technological ideas – something they all hope to do in the future!

## **Food Bank Donations**

Thank you to everyone who donated food to the Abingdon Foodbank. The response was again overwhelming. We started our collection earlier this year and made the delivery to the Foodbank at the beginning of December to allow them to sort all the donations in time for Christmas. They are helping more families than ever this year and your support and generosity is greatly appreciated.

## **Crisp packet collection**

We had an amazing response to our crisp packet collection. We were collecting these to send to 'The Iron Man'. He is an ex-homeless man who makes survival blankets for the homeless by ironing crisp packets together. We started this off as a house challenge. The response was so amazing we stopped counting after 1,000 crisp packets!

## Charity Non Uniform Days

We have had two non-uniform days and the Christmas Jumper day this term. The total so far for Wear it Pink on 22nd October is £682.77. We are awaiting the totals for Children in need and Christmas Jumper Day. Thank you so much for your generosity and support.

## LRC News (From Mr Holme)

We've had an excellent two terms in the LRC with many activities taking place. The Year 7 Reading Programme during DEAR time has been very successful – it's such a delight to see students reading along with their designated TA.

All the reading initiatives that we have at John Mason have resulted in some really good improvements in Reading Ages on Accelerated Reader, so well done to all those students who have improved their results. Postcards have been sent home!

One of the fun features on Accelerated Reader is the Word Count which keeps a running score of how many words each student has read. We use this for our various competitions and it gives me great pleasure to announce that 7AAS are this Xmas Word Count winners with a magnificent total of 13 million words read! Chocs on the way.

Individually we have seven Year 7 students who have reached a million+ words. Well done to:

Rona, Catherine, Rosi, Jasper, Maisie, Penelope, and Oliver

With added congratulations to Rona who has reached 2 million words.

Reading is at the heart of everything we do at John Mason and it's a real pleasure to see so many devoted readers enjoying the books that we have in the LRC.

We're gearing up for Carnegie Shadowing in March next year. Hopefully all the Abingdon Schools will be able to meet in person for our various joint activities during next year.

Finally I passed a milestone birthday in November and I treated the lunchtime students to a cultural all my yesterdays – things I used to watch, listen to and read when I was their age back in the late Sixties. So if you are getting pestered to watch/stream 'Joe 90' or 'Captain Scarlet', please accept my apologies!

## GCSE Options (From Mrs Rogers)

It is that time of year when we start preparing our year 8 students for the options process. This is when the students get to make key choices about some of the subjects that they will study for the next 3 years. As with many of our usual activities this year, we cannot run this process in the traditional way, but we are excited to announce that we will be releasing virtual materials which you can watch and refer back to at your leisure. The videos will give you all of the information you need to support your child in making these all important decisions.

During the second week of January we will be releasing the options booklet on the website. This will outline for you the process we will undertake, the courses we offer and the details of how each subject operates. On January 13<sup>th</sup> we will be releasing the virtual materials which will include a presentation by me, as our curriculum lead, along with individual videos from each subject outlining their course, as well as students talking about the options they took. This is a great opportunity to sit with your child to understand together the possibilities they are considering and to select their subjects.

---

## Sports

It has been a busy time in the PE Department this half term. We have been running basketball, cricket and badminton clubs at lunchtimes which are always full. After school we have had netball, girls' football, Year 9 football and rugby, all of which have had record numbers attending each week.

Year 10 netball recently played KA's in an exciting and very close match, unfortunately just missing out on the win 16-20.

Year 11 basketball also hosted KA's in another very close game, with KA's just taking the win 54-60.

Girls' football has really taken off this year with Years 7, 8 and 9 teams entered into the South Oxon League. Year 7 played their first triangular fixture with Icknield (drew) and Lord Bills (Lost). The Year 8 and 9 team played both Langtree and DGS last week.

On Friday lunchtimes the 6<sup>th</sup> form have been playing inter-form netball league. This has been well supported with a great atmosphere. Well done to a number of tutors who have also joined in and represented their forms on the court.

We have a number of clubs and fixtures already booked in for the New Year, so keep your eyes open for more information.

## Staffing

There are a number of staff changes:

We are saying farewell to Mrs Fitzgerald, Mrs Reagan and to Mr Goddard. Mrs Fitzgerald is retiring after 24 years in our catering team, Mrs Reagan is joining a different school and Mr Goddard has been promoted to Site Manager at Rush Common School. We are also saying a temporary farewell to Mrs Scott who is going on maternity leave.

We have appointed Mr Wileman, Ms Waller, Ms King and Mrs Wilson. Mr Wileman will be joining our Leadership team and taking over as Director of Key Stage 3 from Mr Tinsley. Mr Tinsley remains with us a teacher of PE and Economics and I am sure you will join us in thanking him for all his incredible work over the years. Ms Waller is joining our Social Sciences faculty, Ms King our Humanities faculty and Mrs Wilson our Visual Arts Faculty.

Best wishes



Adrian Rees  
Head of School

---