



Your Child, Your School, Your Voice

Heads Up!

Dear Parents and Carers

The end of term is a great time in school; lots of festive edged learning taking place, coupled with the musical extravaganza – the Addams Family – what an extraordinary display of talent, creativity and humour. It was visually stunning and such a glorious romp about family and love. Thank you to those of you who came along to join in and support your children – it was magical.

There is often a lot of negativity surrounding the commercialism of the modern Christmas, a flurry of urgent buying for loved ones who are more than happy with our company rather than our gifts. But that doesn't mean we don't enjoy the presents too! Have you ever seen a programme called 'Back in Time for Christmas' on BBC2? It is a programme where a willing family of volunteers experience Christmas in different decades – clothes, food, entertainment and traditions. I was particularly struck, as the family themselves were, by the 1940s version, where, bound by wartime rations, the mother had saved up butter and sugar rations to make her Christmas pudding, and the centre piece of the family dinner was a stuffed Ox heart (offal was not rationed in wartime so it seems).

The children's reactions to this antithesis to modern festivities were brilliant; on receiving their stockings in the morning (actual woollen socks) they emptied out satsumas and walnuts with big smiles, remarking that, 'These must have been quite a treat when they didn't even anything else.' They then went on to exchange gifts, which had to be handmade by the children themselves, and spinners, decorations and rather disgusting carrot fudge appeared. The family showed nothing but grace and humour, thanking each other with genuine affection for their efforts and grimacing after tasting the wartime confectionery made with carrots, gelatine and orange squash, (vegetarians didn't stand a chance!)

I don't hark back to wartime celebrations or the austerity of the age, but perhaps it reminds me that above all else, in the bubble of last minute shopping, staff parties, Amazon last order dates and Christmas jumper wearing, being together is quite the best thing there is; simple as that. Laughing together, making memories, wrapping ourselves in family and friends? To steal a well known advertising slogan; priceless.

This Christmas I hope that you enjoy the time with those that make you happy, stay safe and that your table is filled with something other than offal.

Thankyou for your support this term – I look forward to seeing you in 2020.

Sarah Brinkley

Christmas Dinner

Christmas dinner was a big hit again on the 11th December with over 350 students taking part. The Catering Team did a fantastic job preparing all the meals and the students enjoyed sitting down to a meal with their friends.



Foodbank Collection

We were overwhelmed with the kindness and generosity shown by our students and school community during the Food Bank Collection. We collected nearly 700 items, including gifts, Christmas puddings, tinned goods, pasta and many many more items that will help the Food Bank reach more families this Christmas. Since this time last year the Food Bank have had over 835 referrals, providing food to over 1100 adults and 600 children. they have given out over 28,000 items!



We ran the food bank challenge as a House challenge and as you can see the scores were very tight. Ock were the overall winners and some of 7OKJA posed for a picture with all the donations alongside two of our Heads of House before our site team kindly dropped it down to Christ Church on Northcourt Road. Thank you to everyone who donated, it will really make a difference to many families this Christmas.



Charter Day

It is a tradition and John Mason Culture to celebrate the contribution 'Sir John Mason', who our school is named after, made towards Abingdon gaining its first Charter.

Students learnt about the history of Sir John Mason and the town of Abingdon. Under his patronage and influence, he helped put Abingdon into a position of power and prestige that lasted well beyond his lifetime.

In November 1556 (which is why Charter Day is held in November), Queen Mary Tudor granted Abingdon it's first of many Charters which made it a free Borough with the right to self-govern. This was the first step towards local government.

The November Charter granted Abingdon the right to: hold weekly markets; hold Abingdon Street Fairs; run Abingdon Fishery (which is why local people can still fish the Thames in Abingdon free!); select a Town Mayor, Town Council, and later an MP; Create by-laws.

Year 7 visited various civic buildings in Abingdon, including St. Helens Church, The Unicorn Theatre, the Alms Houses, Abingdon Museum, as well as the Abbey grounds. Various local experts shared their knowledge and helped students understand how the Charter came about and its importance to the present day. Students are now completing an independent project linked to Their Charter Day experience. After Christmas, the Mayor, Louise Brown (Town Council Administrative Assistant) and Jackie (Abingdon Town Archivist) will look at students completed work and will present a number of awards.

Some of our student quotes about Charter Day:

"I really enjoyed looking out over Abingdon from the top of the Town Hall – even though it was a little scary too!"

"I never knew about the Alms Houses before Charter Day"

"it was cool finding out about the fairs and the history of them"

"I liked learning all about Sir John Mason and what he did" Darius

"I liked visiting the Alms Houses it was interesting listening to someone who lived there" Kanisha

"I liked seeing the 600-year-old paintings on the ceiling of St Helen's Church" Megan

"I liked the fair exhibition in the museum, looking at the old pictures and finding out about the fairs" Chloe W

"It was amazing going on the roof of Abingdon museum and being able to see Abingdon from above" Anabelle
"I learnt a lot about the history of Abingdon, and I especially liked looking at all the old artefacts in the museum" Theo
"I liked looking at all the old dinosaurs bones in the museum" Finlay P



Set Design Club

For 5 weeks in October/November a small group of creative Wizards set to work to help build props and scenery for the school production.

They released their inner-yearning to really be studying at Hogwarts by creating a spectacular 'Potions' cart for Grandma Addams as well as enjoying some Halloween treats at the Club and some appropriate spooky music to create the right atmosphere!

Amongst the creative creations were a papier mache pumpkin, bottles of Swamp Slime, Toad's Warts and Eel's eyes (plus a few more unmentionables!) and huge cardboard volumes of Spells and the History of Magic were constructed. The finished article (pictured) looked really convincing and eye-catching. A small team of dedicated Year 9's continued to support the development of the stage set by helping paint the gothic staircase.

Students learnt about the difference between 'fine art' and 'stage art' which needs to be bigger, bolder and more exaggerated in every capacity.



Congratulations and thanks go to:

Zoe Oliver
Naomi Wray
Olivia Chappelle
Darius Tipter
Charlie Riordan
Finley Perkins
Ana Tipter

For their hard work and enthusiasm.

Ms Pennington



The Addams Family Production

On Thursday 12th December, year 5 and 6 students from local primary schools came to see the Addams Family production at John Mason School. It was fabulous to have a hall full of children who behaved impeccably and were enthralled by the show. Some of the comments we received were :

Thank you so much for inviting Drayton CP School to your production today - it was amazing!

Here are some thoughts from the children:

"I am inspired by this amazing performance"

"I felt like I was watching professional actors"

"Hilarious"

"It was incredible and faultless"

"Tremendous performance - 5 stars!"

"The cast were amazing!"

"I was absolutely blown away by the talent and enjoyed every minute"

"The best school production I've ever seen"

Good luck with the rest of the performances and we would love to be able to return next year!

I wanted to send an email to thank you and the school for a fantastic performance of the Addams Family yesterday. The children all loved the play and we were made to feel very welcome. The snacks and the drinks were very much appreciated too and it was clear that you had all gone to a lot of effort. I recorded some of the thoughts of some of the children:

'I thought that the play was actually amazing!'

'The acting, the lighting, the singing and the music was the best that I have ever heard.'

'My favourite part was when Lukas' mum fell onto the table'

'Absolutely amazing acting - I loved it'

'The play was awesome. They all did their best. Well done to John Mason school'

Thanks again for inviting us,

Lynsey Day | Deputy Headteacher | Carswell Primary School

Team JMS Challenge

For those of you that remember the Three Peaks Challenge taken on by some of the staff at JMS, we have continued to try to do a challenge a month, including the Eynsham 10k that took place in November. Staff bravely signed up to run the 'fast and flat' course and the rain held off for us. There were a few first time 10kers and a few PBs on the day and everyone loved the race. Future challenges will include more sedate pursuits such as learning to knit and crochet!



6th Form Website

Our joint 6th Form have their own website - [JMF6](#). Here you can find out what our 6th Formers have been up to and have a look at all the exciting things that happen when you move into 6th Form.

Year 11 Food Exam Assessments

Year 11 Food exam assessments are well under way. They started back in September, faced with the prospect of making many batches of scones, to decide which the best chemical raising agent is to be used. Whilst this sounds like fun, 105+ batches of scones later, and I think we were all over the sight of them!! They tried out the standard baking powder, adding varying amounts. Some tried bicarbonate of soda, some made their own mixture of baking powder after researching the ingredients and some even tried out yeast. This first assessment is worth 15% of their final grade and utilises their food science knowledge



The next part of their exam assessment is where the skills come in. The students have all been given the choice between 2 tasks; research, prepare and cook 3 healthy dishes suitable for a family on a budget or research, prepare and cook 3 dishes suitable for a Valentine's menu in a local hotel. They all have 12 hours of lesson time allocated, in order to plan and research, using the internet, recipe books, surveys and practical lessons when they need to evaluate their research. This part of the assessment culminates in a 3 hour practical exam at the end of the spring term and is worth 35% of their final grade.





John Mason School

We're taking part in Race for Life Schools as part of our Cross Country Scheme of work to improve our fitness and raise money to beat cancer sooner.

Cancer is happening right now, which is why we're taking part in a Race for Life Schools to raise money and save lives.

1 in 2 people will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. Every single pound you donate makes a difference to Cancer Research UK's ground breaking work, so please sponsor us now.

The Cross Country scheme of work will run from Jan 6th – Feb 10th involving Years 7, 8, 9 & 10. During the scheme of work students will learn ways to improve their fitness in preparation for the Race for Life. On the final session, students will run a House competition combined with the Race for Life! Year 11, 6th form and Staff will also be invited to participate.

Sponsor forms, Back signs and Medals will be available for every student participating in the race.

<https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/john-mason-school>

Questions to Miss Uzzell, PE Faculty

Proud partner



German Cookie Baking Competition

The year 7 German students have had optional homework to bake cookies and bring them in for everyone to try. There has been some fabulous baking taking place and here are a couple of the entries:



Round up of Sport at John Mason School

What an amazing two terms it has been for the year 7 boys, competing in a number of Vale and County competitions.

Year 7 Cross Country

They started off by becoming VALE CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONS, winning the Vale Cross Country team event and Sam Orlando finished first out of all the boys in the Vale which was a remarkable achievement. This then qualified them to run in the County Cross Country Finals at Radley College with all the best runners from Oxfordshire. It was a cold afternoon and the boys were eager to go. They dug deep, put up a great performance against some very good runners, and managed to win the whole event to become COUNTY CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONS. Well done Chaps.



Year 7 Indoor Athletics

The indoor athletics, which is held at King Alfreds, is always a good event for John Mason School. The team was selected from PE lessons and from trials that the students attended at lunchtimes. The events at this athletics competition are very gruelling and our students dug deep to become VALE INDOOR ATHLETICS CHAMPIONS.



Year 7 Indoor Football

The boys also completed a number of trials to qualify for the indoor football team which would play in the Vale Competition. The boys played superbly throughout the tournament showing great quality and fitness. In the final, they would meet Matthew Arnold School who would go 1-0 up, but the boys did not give up and scored just before the final whistle to take the game into extra time. The boys then scored in a golden goal situation and won the tournament becoming VALE INDOOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS. The boys therefore qualify for the regional finals, which will be held in January in Southampton.



Year 7 Rugby Tournament

The boys played at the Oxfordshire rugby tournament, which involved a number of schools all around Oxfordshire. They played really well in their group, only drawing one game and winning the rest. Well done chaps.



Year 8 boys Indoor Athletics

The year 8 boys had a few injury issues when it came to the indoor athletics championships, but two boys stepped in and what a difference they made to the team. The team as a whole worked well together, encouraging and supporting each other after each race. The results were announced and the boys came second in the Vale, which qualifies them for the County Finals next year. Well done a great team effort.

Year 8 Sports Leaders

These are the sports leaders from Year 8 who marshalled the County Cross Country finals the other day. They did a wonderful job in very cold conditions. They did the school proud.



JMSGIRLCAN

This term has been a successful time for girls sport at John Mason School. We have had large numbers of girls attending extra-curricular activities which has led to representing the school at a variety of different sports.

Girls Football

This year we have been able to have both Under 16's team and Under 13's teams.

The Under 16's were the first to have a run around in the Cup against Henry Box. After a hard fought match the girls came away with an unlucky loss.

The Under 13's, under the coaching of Miss Evans, had a great win in the first round of the cup against Lord Williams, showing a great team effort to secure the win. The next round led to a home match against Cherwell who were stronger than us on the day.

Under 12's took part in an indoor 5-a-side tournament at King Alfred's, where the girls played extremely well to come away with 5th place.

Girls football training is on a Tuesday afterschool



U13 Team



U16 Team



Indoor Team

Netball

Year 7's have recently played their first competitive matches against Fitzharry and Larkmead. The girls played very well and showed great potential for the up-coming Vale tournament.

Year 8's played last year's County Champions Fitzharrys at home. The girls worked extremely hard and have shown commitment to improving their playing by regularly attending after school training, which is run by Leah & Erin our two A'Level students.

Year 9's have competed in their Vale competition at Matthew Arnold's school. Having to play 7 other teams the girls played really well and improved match by match. The teams finished 4th & 6th overall.

Year 11 had a lot to live up to, last years Vale Champions, were they able to regain their title again this year? The competition was strong and it came down to the final match against King Alfred's to decide the Champions. In quite short matches the game was goal for goal for the majority of time but the girls held their nerve with some great circle play at both ends of the court to ensure that the girls regained their title undefeated in the Vale competition and we wish them luck in April in the County Finals.

Netball training for Years 7 & 8 is Wednesday afterschool, Year 9 + Tuesday afterschool.



U11 Netball Team

Indoor Athletics

Recently a team of 5 year 7's and a team of 6 year 8's competed in the Sportshall athletics. This was a tough competition with strong opponents from the other 4 schools present. For the Year 7's this was their first experience of such a competition but each of the girls gave their all to each of the track and field events they competed in, finishing in 4th place overall in Vale.

Most of the Year 8 team had competed in the competition last year as Year 7 so had a better understanding of the events. They again performed extremely well and only just missed out on a top two finish.



U7 Indoor Athletics Team



Y8 Indoor Athletics Team

Year 7 and 8 Winter Ball

Beat the post Christmas winter blues with the Year 7 & 8 Winter Ball. All students in Year 7 and Year 8 are warmly invited to our Winter Ball on Friday 17th January. Students may arrive from 7:00pm and will need collecting from 8:30pm. Tickets are £6 and include a hot dog, pizza and fruit punch, as well as a printed photo from the photobooth.

There will be a disco, games, face painting and a cash tuck shop. Payment can be made via parentmail in the New Year. We will send out a parentmail when tickets go on sale.



The National Saturday Club FURNITURE at City of Oxford College is now recruiting Club members (aged 13–16) for the 11th January 2020 start.

National Saturday Club FURNITURE gives young people in years 8,9,10 and 11 the unique opportunity to study the process of designing and making furniture at City of Oxford College's renowned centre of excellence, the Rycotewood Furniture Centre, every Saturday morning for 12 weeks, free of charge.

The course will be taught by Harriet Speed, founder of This Girl Makes, with the aim to provide young people with a safe space to build their self-esteem and confidence by exploring their identity and talents.

Harriet Speed graduated from Rycotewood Furniture Centre with a first class honours degree in Furniture Design and Make in August 2018. She has since worked as a Design Engineer for Ercol Furniture, in addition to managing projects and delivering workshops as part of This Girl Makes.

The National Saturday Club is a UK-wide network run by the Saturday Club Trust, supported by Arts Council England and the Department for Education. In 2018/19 there were 78 Saturday Clubs across the UK and 1,600 young people took part: <http://saturday-club.org/film/10-year-anniversary-2019/>

INTERESTED IN
ART & DESIGN?

NATIONAL SATURDAY CLUB



JOIN THE CLUB

It's **FREE** and 13-16 year olds of all abilities are welcome

At FURNITURE Saturday Club you will:

- Build confidence in making, with specialist using professional hand tools
- Learn new design skills
- Discover your talents and realise creative potential
- Create your own unique range of furniture to enjoy
- Be part of a new creative and supportive group
- Find out more about local clubs and centres in your locality

YOUR LOCAL CLUB

Rycotewood Furniture Centre
CITY OF OXFORD COLLEGE
Oxpens Road, Oxford, OX1 1BA.

Instagram: @thisgirlmakes
Facebook: /thisgirlmakes
Twitter: @thisgirlmakes
YouTube: /thisgirlmakes



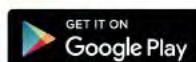
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John Mason School via

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/jmaabingdon/>

when you do your
Christmas shopping

Find us on [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)
or download the App:



Shop at over **4,000** online stores:



School Calendar

Just a reminder that all school events including parents' evenings, non-school uniform days and term dates are available on the school calendar on our website.

The link is: [John Mason School Calendar](#)