

Heads Up!

Parenting on Purpose: Are you doing too much for your child?

Dear Parents and Carers

This weeks' thorny issue stems from an article I read online by Amy Carney, a woman who has stopped doing several things for her teenagers, in order to encourage them to be more independent. It's an interesting issue; we would of course, do anything for our children, but perhaps as they get older it is time for us to step back and allow them to take control of some of the simpler things? Easier said than done.

The article suggests that we should stop doing several things:

1. Waking your child up in the morning

This is a tricky one for me; I feel as if I need to be in control of this aspect of our lives, but the reality is that I am teaching my children to be utterly reliant on me for something they could completely control themselves. I am working on this one, as Carney comments, 'our goal is to raise well-functioning adults here.' Good point, well made.

2. Making their breakfast and packed lunch

When my children were younger I would spend hours filling packed lunch boxes with a balanced lunch that would be appealing and ensure my children were not hungry, but also deemed healthy enough by school and affordable with 3 of the ever-growing angels. As teenagers they are utterly capable of creating lunch themselves, I know what is in the house, they are welcome to it; good enough for me, I've given that up – and as for breakfast – it's been years!

3. Filling out their paperwork

Are you a school bag rummager, wearily pulling out creased permission letters from the detritus of backpacks, only to find them stuck with left over lunch and leaked ink? I am that woman. Even though we have a largely electronic system, I still search out the slip and complete it. But, if my children want to attend the trip or activity, will they make this happen? Most likely. Perhaps this is a risk I could try and take? Watch this space.

4. Delivering forgotten items to school

Not an option in The Brinkley house – we are already here, but we do often have parents arriving with PE kit, cooking ingredients and homework; what if you didn't? Would it make you cruel? Or would your child learn from the consequence issued by the school and pack their bag better next time? I suspect the latter; be brave, which links to the next:

5. Making their failure to plan your emergency

When your child hasn't remembered something and calls you in emergency – how do you react? What if you simply stated, 'Well you will have to serve the detention, see you this evening, have a good day.' I think we can help here by reinforcing the need for packing bags the night before.

6. Doing all of their laundry

I don't suppose this is realistic, in our house the washing gets done; do I pick it off floors rather than waiting for it to reach the laundry basket? Occasionally, even though I hate myself for it! The reality is that if you don't wash the favourite item once – it miraculously makes its way to the basket next time and as Carney reiterates, 'Every once in a while a child needs a healthy reminder that I do not work for them.'

7. Emailing and calling teachers or coaches

I found Carney's view of this interesting; she states, 'There is no way we, as parents, are going to question a coach or email a teacher about something that should be between authority figure and our child.' What she suggests is that the child should learn to discuss with the adult and ask for our help at a certain point. This is perhaps counter-intuitive; we want to protect our children, but there is an important point here, that children need to be able to conduct themselves respectfully and listen to the authority figure. This relationship is key as we go through life and one that needs to be modelled by parents – no one wants their child to be the one who is not able to accept criticism or advice from the adults they work with.

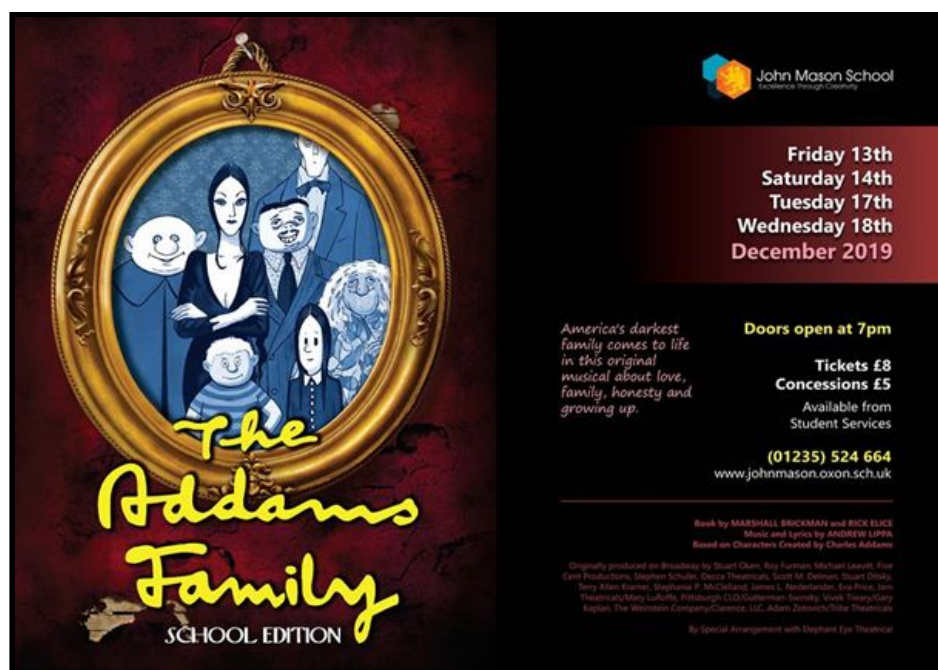
8. Meddling in their academic learning

Carney's final point is about homework; don't do it for your children. This seems fairly straight forward, but also, I think there is a balance to be struck here. The product of good homework is better progress over time. Homework should test or consolidate learning, and it absolutely needs doing – it is the way in which our teachers know what the child can do on their own. The parental role here is to ensure there is a quiet space, some designated part of the home and then an interest in school overall.

I am not sure I am ready to do all of these things, but I do agree that there is a time for us to step back and ensure our children begin to manage themselves and their responsibilities. What we want from our students at John Mason is bags packed ready for learning – with all equipment, including pens and pencils; deadlines met and children who have the growing ability to make the right decision for themselves. So, if some of this has struck a chord with you, set yourself a secret goal and see how your child responds; they might just surprise you.

That's all from me, have a good half term week.

Sarah Brinkley



Anthony Nolan Talk and Recruitment Day in the 6th Form

On 18th October the team from Anthony Nolan visited JMS for the second time to talk to 6th form students and staff about the importance of stem cell donors. They also ran a recruitment event for anyone who was eligible who wanted to sign up to the register. Miss Uzzell was responsible for organising these events and was also the driving force behind a staff 3 peaks challenge back in May where a team of JMS staff took on Ben Nevis, Scafell and Snowdon in 24 hours. Four of the team were delighted to present the final cheque from the fundraising campaign to Anthony Nolan staff on this day. We have also presented our cheques to Melanie's Ward at the JR and The Abingdon Bridge over the last couple of months and we cannot thank parents and carers enough for their donations. They will truly make a difference to a lot of people. In total 119 students and staff from JMS have signed up to be on the Stem Cell Register.



6th formers and staff on our recruitment day



Presentation of the cheque by some of the 3 peaks team to Anthony Nolan

Football Report from the Year 7 and 8 Girls Football Team

On Tuesday 15th October, John Mason Year 7 and 8 girls football team played a match against Lord Williams. We won 5-4 and we are very proud of how the game went and hope we can keep it up for future matches. It was a very tough game but the amount of goals we scored was very lucky. We had three strikers who were Alexis, Reighly and Keely. Reighly scored 1 fantastic goal and Alexis scored 4. We finished the match by shaking hands and congratulated them and then went home. It was a fantastic afternoon and we can't wait for the next match.



The Vale of White Horse Cross Country Championships

On a wet and windy day the Key Stage 3 Cross Country teams travelled to Buscot Park, Faringdon for the district championships. Arriving in the splendid grounds of the home of Lord Faringdon the teams strolled the undulating course in order to get to know the tricky underfoot conditions before the races took place. Warming up and fuelling up on Haribo and Lucozade the athletes were ready for the off. All the runners represented the school well, with the team results were as follows: Year 7 Girls 5th Place, Year 7 Boys 3rd Place, Y8/9 Girls 5th Place, Y8/9 Boys 6th Place. A special mention must go to Year 7 student Sam Orlando who finished 1st in the Year 7 boys race becoming the Vale Champion and securing a place at the county final. Well done to all who took part.



Year 7 Boys and Year 7 Girls



Year 8/9 Girls and Year 8/9 Boys

The Vale of White Horse Year 9 Rugby Tournament

The JMS Year 9 Rugby Team travelled to Larkmead school to compete in the district year 9 rugby tournament. The boys started their tournament with a match against Abingdon and got off to a good start scoring early tries to run out convincing winners. The second game was against Faringdon, and overconfidence from the first game led to a humbling defeat for the 'orange army', nevertheless the team progressed to the semi-final for a match against pool winners Mathew Arnold, in a stoic defensive performance Team JMS battled hard and ended the match 0-0. This led to drop goals being needed to resolve the deadlock. After 6 missed attempts by both sides Harvey Whiting finally sailed one between the sticks to set up a re-match in the final against Faringdon. The performance could not have been more different, tackles were flying in everywhere and every ounce of energy was being spent. A rare missed tackle left an opportunity for Faringdon that they were able to take meaning JMS finished as runners up losing in the final 0-5.



Knitting & Stitching Show Trip - Oct 2019

As part of the A 'Level Art Textiles course we run a day trip to the Knitting & Stitching Show at the Alexander Palace in London. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to research new and established textile artists, and experience artists work in the flesh. They can also speak to the artists themselves about how they have developed their work. Students undertake drawings from life and photographing interesting pieces that link directly to their current projects. After spending time in the Textile Galleries, they then visited areas including; the Fashion shows, Graduate showcase and watching technique workshops. Lastly there is a little bit of time left to wander through the extensive Textile crafts shopping zone, buying trims and fabrics for their work as well as picking up a few early Christmas gifts. This year we were able to open the trip up to GCSE Textile students as well and below are a few quotes about how they found the experience.

'I would definitely recommend this trip because it has given me inspiration and ideas on how to improve my work and final pieces. Also I liked how we could talk to the artists and find out the meanings behind their artwork and how they made them.'

Eliza Harper Yr10

'I think that the knitting and stitching show was a good trip because the pieces of work were really inspiring, and it also showed me the different ways that one theme can be presented.'

Zara Chaudri Yr10

'I would definitely recommend this trip for other textile students. It's inspiring to see where you could be and just how much there is to learn in textiles. I tend to forget it isn't just the few techniques we've learnt but there's so much more you can do. It really is like stepping into another world.'

Aaliyah Fiori Yr10



French Exchange

In early October we were pleased to welcome eight French students from Lycée Mézéray in Argentan, which is twinned with Abingdon, to John Mason School. They stayed in the homes of students in years 9, 10 and 12 and came into school to see how we learn in England. They were particularly impressed with our uniform and most of them said that they would like to wear it at their school, where there is no uniform.

As well as taking part in some lessons, the group went on a guided tour of Abingdon and got to meet the Mayor. They also visited Oxford for a guided tour of some of the University buildings and colleges and a trip to Oxford Castle. On Thursday they went to London and spent time at the Tower of London before walking through Westminster to Buckingham Palace. They then had some time shopping on Oxford Street and discovered fish and chips and really enjoyed it, although they weren't all keen on the vinegar.

In the evenings and at the weekend, our students and their families spent time with their French partners, showing them around and getting to know each other. We had a lovely meal together at Pizza Express and it was great to see how well everybody got on, there were conversations in French and English and lots of laughter.

Here are some comments from John Mason students:

"Not only did the exchange give me the opportunity to greatly improve my French, but I made amazing friendships that I will hopefully keep for life. Highlights for me included visiting Abingdon with French and English students from different year groups and spending free time trying to chat in various languages!"

"It was good because he liked the things I like. We played Mario on my Nintendo Switch and enjoyed days out together. I'm looking forward to seeing him again in January."

"I really enjoyed my partner staying here. We had a lot of fun together, playing on the Nintendo Wii, going shopping and eating out. I had many conversations with her about her family, her pets and the French exchange."

Our group of 8 students from JMS will be spending a week in Argentan in January, staying with our new friends and their families, visiting some of their lessons at school and going on day trips together.

We will be running another French exchange next year for students currently in year 8, 9 and 11. Look out for details in the new year.

Mr Walker, MFL Faculty





Year 7 'Be Me Day': Thursday 3rd October 2019

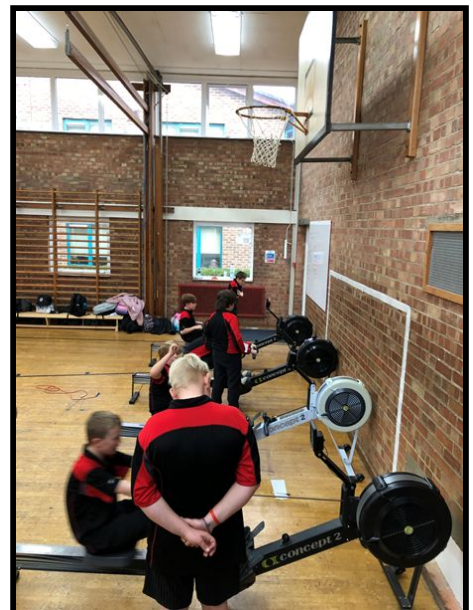
All Year 7 students were involved in the first JMS 'Be Me Day' at the start of October. The day is an extension of our character education provision and was designed to enable students to explore how different subjects at JMS contribute to our local and global community and culture. It helped to raise awareness of different cultures and influences.

The day was organised into six workshops delivered by specialist JMS staff.

Students covered:

- Designing a 'House app' to explore how to use technology responsibly
- Rowing or running the length of your House river
- Creating art from the local environment
- Exploring the history of maths and the influence of culture
- The changing nature of communication
- British Values in our community

Throughout the day, our House competition was encouraged and students had the chance to achieve House points for their House.



Results from the sports competition are as follows:

1st: Thames: 38.55 miles

2nd: Stert: 37.8 miles

3rd: Ock: 30.3 miles

Year 8 take part in the next Be Me Day which will focus on different careers and takes place in January.



A big thank you to everyone who Wore it Pink on Friday 18th October. We raised over £500 which will be sent to the Charity.

Our 6th Form Open Evening is on Thursday 7th November, Year 11 students are encouraged to come along and find out more.

A promotional poster for the 6th Form Open Evening at John Masons School. The poster features a collage of images: students working on a laptop, students in a canoe on a river, and a group of students smiling. The text includes 'An outstanding 6th Form', 'JMF6', 'Pursuing excellence', 'Confident and articulate learners', 'Aspirational and ambitious', 'Results in the top 20% nationally', 'Join us An outstanding 6th Form', and the website 'jmf6.johnmasonschoo.org'.

Competition Winner!

Charlotte Wigginton entered a competition when staying with her grandparents in Colyton, Devon, in the summer.

She was the joint winner and her art work has been reproduced and is now on the wall of the town library. It was unveiled recently.

She was inspired by the zentangle work she had done at school in Y8.

Congratulations Charlotte



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](#)