

Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2026

## Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

It has been another vibrant and inspiring week at John Mason School, filled with opportunity, achievement and celebration.

The week began with our Year 10 students taking part in their Duke of Edinburgh Expedition over the weekend, with the final groups returning to Abingdon on Monday afternoon. They approached the challenge with resilience and enthusiasm, demonstrating impressive navigation skills and teamwork throughout. I have also been reliably informed that their culinary efforts in the field were outstanding! It was a thoroughly rewarding experience, and we are immensely proud of how they represented themselves and the school.

On Wednesday, our Sports Leaders hosted the Year 7 and 8 Vale Rounders tournament here at JMS. Throughout the summer term, these students have consistently demonstrated leadership of the highest quality, setting the tone, communicating effectively and responding with maturity to any challenges that arise during competition. They are superb role models and excellent ambassadors for our school community. Congratulations also to our Year 7 and Year 8 teams, who performed brilliantly to secure third place overall.

Our Art Beat 2026 exhibition opened yesterday afternoon and will welcome visitors again tomorrow between 9:30am and 12:30pm. This exhibition is a wonderful showcase of the creativity and dedication our students have demonstrated over the past year. It has been a real privilege to see such a breadth of high-quality work on display. Alongside the pieces from our well-known artists, it has been particularly pleasing to discover the emerging talents of many students whose progress has been remarkable. My sincere thanks go to the Visual Arts department for curating such an inspiring exhibition, and to all members of our community who have already visited, or are planning to attend, to support and celebrate our students' achievements.

Meanwhile, whilst many may be distracted by events in distant lands, there is only one true football tournament taking place this summer. The sporting spirit is in full flow on the school field, where Mr Conroy's Year 9 Football House competition is very much taking centre stage at lunchtime. Alongside football, activities such as volleyball, tennis and dance have created a lively, festival-like atmosphere across the school grounds. It is a pleasure to see students enjoying each other's company, staying active and making full use of our excellent facilities.

Looking ahead to next week, as temperatures are expected to rise, we will be taking additional steps to ensure students remain safe and comfortable. Whether students are in lessons, enjoying break and lunchtime activities, or taking part in trips, we would appreciate your support in ensuring they arrive at school with sunscreen already applied, a hat where possible, and, most importantly, a water bottle.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of the school. I hope you have a relaxing and enjoyable weekend.

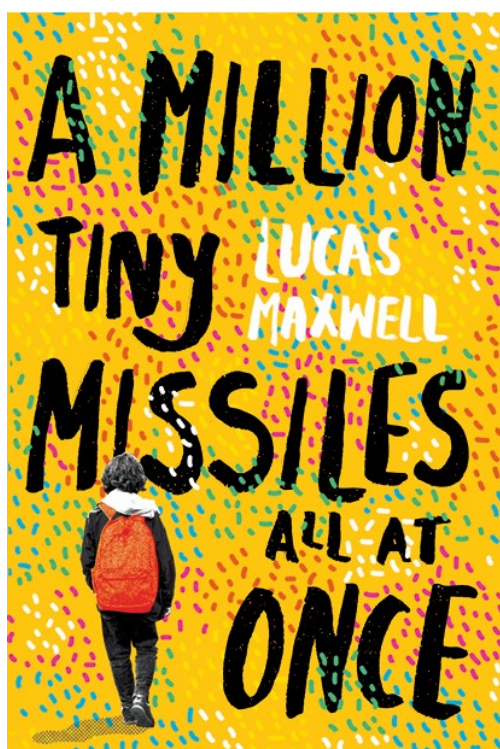
Best wishes,

*Al West.*

Alastair West  
Headteacher

## Whole School News

### Author Talk



We welcomed Lucas Maxwell to John Mason last Thursday and he captivated a Year 9 & 10 audience with his many tales of life growing up in Nova Scotia.

Introducing his debut novel 'A Million Tiny Missiles All At Once' and reading aloud a chapter on winning a small fortune on an arcade machine, Lucas grabbed the attention of our students with humour and honesty and a whole lot of anecdotes.

He stayed to chat to many of the students afterwards and left with the message to "never give up" and to keep going despite difficulties and setbacks. Despite over 200 rejections, Lucas Maxwell is now a published author through Chicken House Books and we look forward to his next book and hopefully a return to John Mason in the future.



## PE Dept update June 26

As we approach the end of another fantastic year of sport at JMS, I wanted to take a moment to explain our new approach to assessment.

We recognise that the Physical skill is not the only way that students can engage in sport or exercise. As PE teachers, we want to do all we can to develop students understanding of how to be Healthy and foster lifelong participation in sport and exercise.

As such, our new assessment process 'ME in PE' aims to assess students in 5 different areas, with these scores being used to determine the progress being made across the PE curriculum.

Students are assessed in 'Leading ME, Healthy ME, Physical ME, Thinking ME and Creating ME' which enables all students to showcase their prowess in various roles as well as activity areas. It is not just about how accurately they can serve in badminton for example, but whether they can serve in a variety of ways, analyse their performance and suggest ways to improve, understand the effects that playing is having on their body and mind or even lead a warm up.

This approach, we feel, will develop students passion for sport, not matter what their physical ability, and give a more rounded assessment of their knowledge, skills and understanding.

This is one of the reasons we have focussed on developing our Sports Leaders programme again this year with over 70 young leaders taking the 'Leading ME' to further level. These leaders have ran Primary Sports days and activity events, officiated athletics and cricket and helped inspire younger students.

We are incredibly proud of what they have achieved this year, helping us achieve the Silver School games mark award.

We will be enhancing our 'Sports day' offer this year to include optional 'turn up and play' House competitions in tennis and volleyball the week leading up to sports days. These will be advertised in assemblies so please encourage your child to be part of these and represent their House.

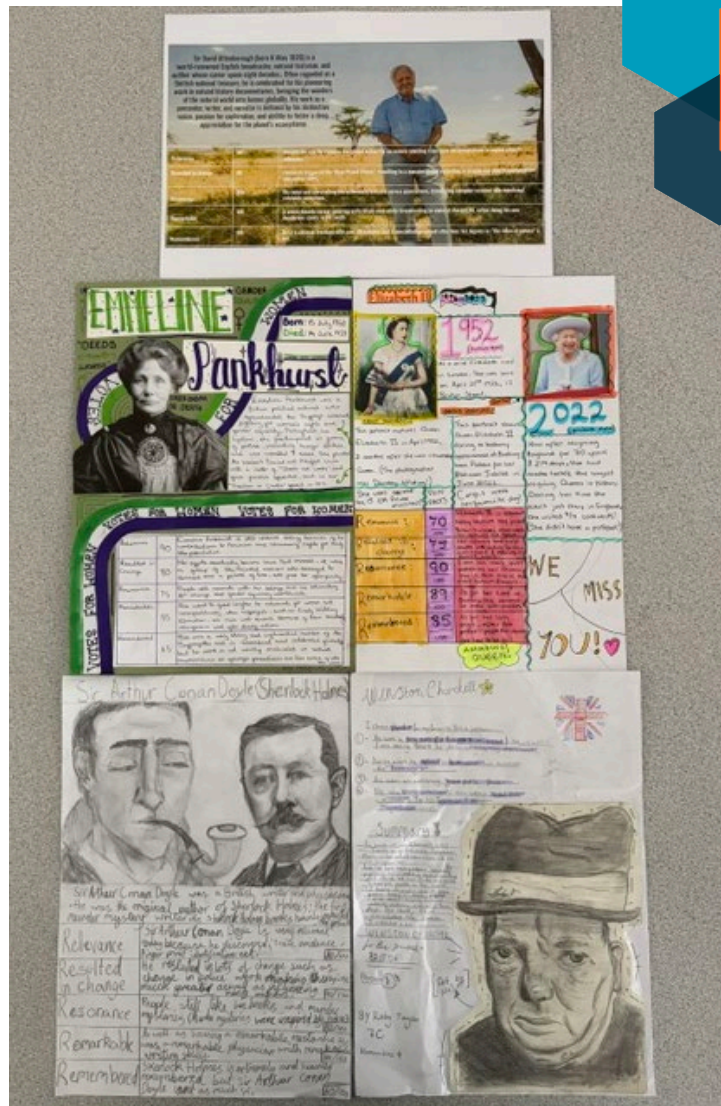
We look forward to sports day and celebrating more success with you all.

Mr Davies

Director of PE

## Curriculum News

### History Update:



Over the past fortnight students have been taking part in a competition to decide who JMS believes is the greatest Britain. Lots of students have completed posters with many now on display in the History department.

Having reviewed the results John Masons verdict was, 3rd place Queen Elizabeth II, 2nd Winston Churchill, however with by far the most votes the Greatest Briton of all time was voted to be Sir. David Attenborough for his eight decade long career in television that continues after reaching a century of years on the blue planet!

In lesson, Year 7 now have a local focus with an in-depth study of Oxfordshire, Year 8 are moving on to a study of the journey of democracy through time, starting with the Normans all the way until the voting age was lower to a universal 18 in 1969. Year 9 end KS3 with a study into the urban environment of Notting Hill. Exploring the issues of Housing, how a new multicultural community was formed in the area and the tensions that rose to the Race Riots of 1958. Year 10 end the year looking at the Golden Age of the Weimar Republic.

Mr S Payne



The  
**Carnegies**

Proud to support  
The National Year  
of Reading 2026.

**GO  
ALL  
IN.**

The Carnegies Medal for writing is a prestigious book prize, which is awarded annually to the writer of an outstanding book for children or young people.



The Carnegies Shadowing scheme is a national activity in which John Mason School has been taking part. In collaboration with our OX14 partner schools, an amazing group of year 7 and 8 students took part in a range of literary opportunities: They enjoyed reading, reviewing and rating the 8 shortlisted books. In addition to the Reading Tea at Fitzharrys and the Quiz at Larkmead, students celebrated the Carnegies at the Forum hosted by St. Helens and St Katharine's school on Friday. They enjoyed drama workshops, presenting themes from the books and voting for their favourites as well as some delicious cake. We are proud to share the news of several prize winners!



Arietty, Year 7: Artwork



Sophia, Year 8: Quiz winner

Ivo (Y8); Tom and Eva (Y7): Winners for the Best Reviews



Philippa, Year 8: Review Runner-up

# HELP US WIN £1,000 FOR OUR LIBRARY

Nominate us and you could win a £100 gift card!  
[nationalbooktokens.com/schools-prize](https://nationalbooktokens.com/schools-prize)

A vibrant yellow and orange graphic for the National Book Tokens Schools Prize. It features a smiling girl and boy reading books. A QR code is present with the text 'SCAN ME' and an arrow. The National Book Tokens logo is in the center, with 'In association with Read for Good' below it. A stack of colorful books is in the foreground. The text 'GO ALL IN.' is on the right, and '#rebuildthelibrary' is at the bottom. The National Year of Reading 2026 logo is in the bottom right corner.

NATIONAL BOOK tokens  
In association with  
Read for Good  
GO ALL IN.  
National Year of Reading 2026  
#rebuildthelibrary

The annual prize draw is back to give five schools across the UK and Ireland the chance to **win £1,000/€1,000 in National Book Tokens** and fill their shelves with new and inspiring books.

Nominate the school using the [form link](#), and if yours is one of the five winning entries, you'll also **win a £100/€120 National Book Token to spend in your favourite bookshop.**

## Outgrown Uniform Collection

Please bring in any outgrown good quality uniform that we can offer to the next Year 7's due to start this September.

We currently have plenty of shirts and trousers but would greatly appreciate donations of JMS white polo shirts, House PE shirts, and jumpers.

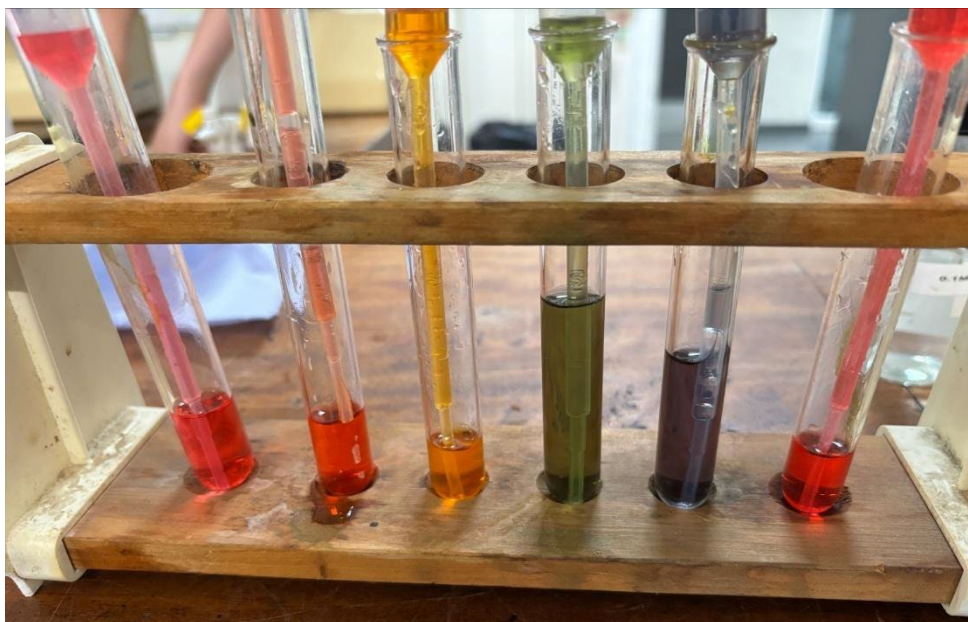
Thank you for your continued support it will help families just starting with JMS.

## STEM Club

This week in STEM club we were celebrating Pride Month by making pH rainbows.

Students were given Hydrochloric acid, Sodium Hydroxide and pH universal indicator. They were set the challenge to make as many different colours as possible, by mixing the acid and alkali. Strong acid mixed with universal indicator turns red and strong alkali mixed with universal indicator turns purple. Mixing the same quantity of acids and alkali creates a neutral solution, which turns the universal indicator green.

Once they were happy with their colours, they chose a laminated picture and coloured it in by using a pipette to add drops of the different colours they had made. Some students even made a rainbow in one test tube and ombre orange!

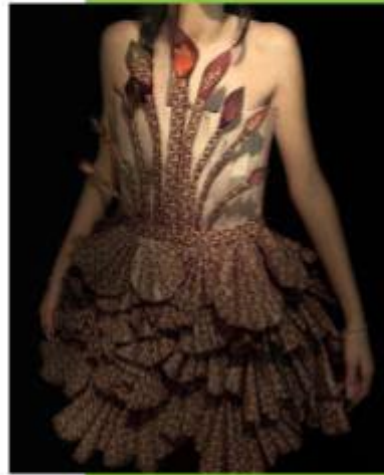




**John Mason School**  
OPPORTUNITY | RESPECT | DETERMINATION

# GCSE & A' LEVEL

Art, Graphics, 3D Design & Textiles



# ART BEAT 2026

EXHIBITION

## Open Viewings

Thursday 18th June 3.30pm-7pm  
Saturday 20th June 9.30am-12.30pm

**06 Gallery & Visual Arts Faculty**



*Be inspired by the creativity of young minds*

## OX14 Learning Partnership Weekly Update

Please find the weekly update for [OX14 LP update linked here](#) for your information. Website calendar linked here: <https://www.ox14lp.org.uk/events/>.

<b>Upcoming Important Dates:</b>	
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> June 3.30-7pm & Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup> June 9.30-12.30pm	Art Beat Open Viewings
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> July	Summer Concert
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July	School closes at 1.05pm - End of Summer Term
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July	Inset Day – Staff Training
Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July – 31 <sup>st</sup> August	Summer Holidays
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> -Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September	Inset Days – No students
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September	Start of term for Year's 7, 11 and 12
Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> September	All Students back in school

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](#)

Facebook page link here: [Facebook page](#)