



John Mason School
OPPORTUNITY | RESPECT | DETERMINATION

Friday 1st May 2026

Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

It was a great pleasure to join Lindsay Powell from Tribela and Ruth Hawkins from Boardman, Hawkins & Osborne LLP on the judging panel for our Year 9 Barclays LifeSkills Enterprise Project Finals. The six finalist teams demonstrated impressive creativity and imagination, excellent teamwork and presentation skills, and real-world insight into the challenges new businesses face when raising capital and developing profitable business plans.

A huge congratulations goes to our winning team, Get Better, whose proposal included the design of an app to support individuals experiencing significant mental health challenges to gradually return to work by building confidence in manageable steps.

Year 9 clearly has a wealth of budding entrepreneurs ready to follow in the footsteps of our Year 10 students. We were incredibly proud of our Made in Oxfordshire 'Dragon's Den' competition winners, who won the Oxfordshire round this week with professionalism and flair. We wish them the best of luck in the national final.

Year 10 students have enjoyed completing their end-of-year examinations and are now beginning to receive detailed feedback from their teachers, highlighting both areas of strength and any gaps to address over the summer as preparation for Year 11 begins. With the exam hall set up, Year 8 and Year 9 also had their first experience of sitting formal English and Maths exams this week. Both year groups approached what can be a daunting process with maturity and focus. This was followed by Year 7 and Year 8 voluntary UK Maths Challenge on Wednesday, while Year 12 have begun their end-of-year examinations.

High-stakes examinations such as GCSEs and A Levels inevitably have limitations, and we work hard to ensure that teachers also draw on a wide range of classroom assessments (written, verbal and observational) to inform meaningful feedback and support student progress. However, as examinations remain a reality, we hope that this week has provided valuable practice and helped students to become more confident and familiar with exam routines.

Finally, I would like to introduce our refreshed [Facebook page](#), where you will find regular updates on activities taking place in and around the school. If you use Facebook, we would love you to follow and share our posts to help spread news of our incredible students and the fantastic achievements they continue to earn.

Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support. I hope you have a lovely bank holiday weekend.

Best wishes,

Alastair West
Headteacher



Maths Challenge



Following the Senior and Intermediate Maths Challenges earlier in the year, it was finally the turn of Year 7 and Year 8 students to take part in the Junior Maths Challenge. A total of 93 students from across the two year groups volunteered to tackle 25 mathematical problems, designed to test their logic, reasoning, and creativity.

This is a national competition, and we will find out how well our students have performed in a few weeks' time. Hopefully, some will qualify for the next round!

Well done to everyone who took part today.

Ms Atkey
Director of Mathematics

Modern Languages Department Update

We are delighted to share an update on the fantastic work taking place across the Modern Languages department this term. It has been and still is a busy and productive period, with students across all year groups developing their confidence and skills in languages.

Year 7

Our Year 7 students have been focusing on learning how to talk about school subjects and describe their teachers. They have made an excellent start to their language-learning journey and are working hard in preparation for their end-of-year assessment in Term 6.

Year 8

Year 8 students are currently midway through their end-of-year assessments. Many have also completed their first ever recorded speaking exams—a significant milestone. While some students understandably felt nervous and others would benefit from further preparation, the overall experience has been extremely positive. Encouragingly, students are already much more confident after completing this first speaking assessment, and many have said they enjoyed the experience.

Year 9

Our Year 9 cohort continues to work hard across both language pathways:

- First language groups have begun preparing for their speaking assessments this term while continuing their in-class learning. Their end-of-year assessments will take place in Term 6.
- Second language groups have been focusing on using a range of three tenses in their work. We have seen some truly impressive writing, with students demonstrating increasing accuracy and sophistication.

Year 10

Year 10 students have recently completed their mock examinations and are now receiving their results. The key focus at this stage is acting on feedback, which is crucial for continued progress. Students will also complete their full mock speaking exams in June, as this component was not included in their recent mocks. Further details will be shared at the upcoming Parents' Evening.

Year 11

We are incredibly proud of our Year 11 students, who have just completed their speaking exams this week. They have approached this challenge with maturity and determination, and the vast majority have performed exceptionally well. We look forward to seeing their continued success in the upcoming summer examinations.

Year 13

Our Year 13 students have also recently completed their speaking exams—an especially demanding component of the A-level course. They have risen to the challenge admirably, and we are very proud of their hard work and commitment.

We would like to thank you for your continued support. As always, please encourage your child to regularly revise vocabulary and practise speaking at home, as these are key to success in language learning.

Mrs Rowe
Director of Modern Foreign Languages

Barclays LifeSkills Enterprise Project Finals

Wednesday 29th April saw our first Barclays LifeSkills Enterprise Project Finals!

Our Year 9 students have been working hard in their Personal Development lessons to design innovative ideas that could help people get back into work, or create technology to make everyday household tasks easier.

We had 6 fantastic teams in the final:

- ◆ PureLine
- ◆ Laundrino
- ◆ Finderbot
- ◆ Javis
- ◆ Get Better – The App
- ◆ Smarter Sort



Each team confidently presented their ideas to our judging panel and peers, before answering questions at the end of their pitches. The standard of competition was incredibly high, and every group performed brilliantly under pressure.

🕒 Results:

- 🥉 3rd Place – Smarter Sort (Recycling)
- 🥈 2nd Place – PureLine (Dental Care)
- 🥇 1st Place – Get Better – The App, designed to help people with mental health challenges gradually return to work by building confidence.

A huge thank you to our judging panel:

- 👏 Mr West, Headteacher
- 👏 Lindsay Powell from Tribela
- 👏 Ruth Hawkins from Boardman, Hawkins & Osbourne LLP

Well done to all involved – what an inspiring showcase of creativity, teamwork and enterprise!
#BarclaysLifeSkills #Enterprise #StudentSuccess #CareersEducation #Teamwork

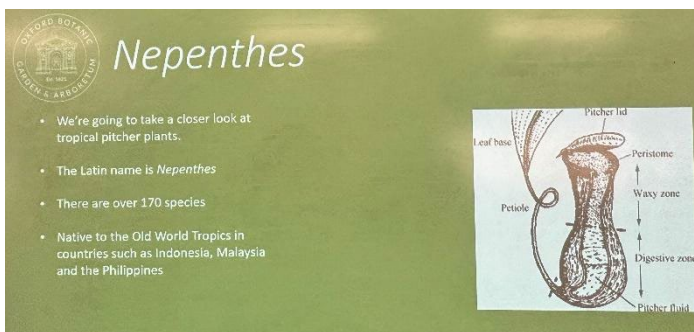
STEM Club

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.



Whole School News

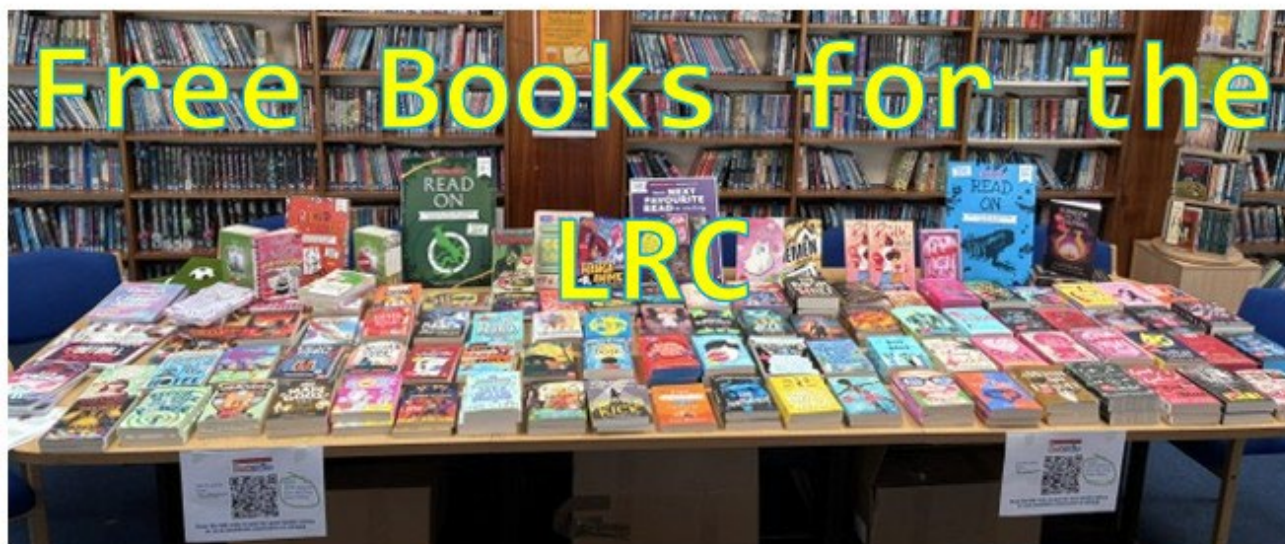
Book Fair Success

The LRC book fair was a great success. Thank you to all the students who came along to browse the books and support the library. With your purchases, we earned £100 worth of rewards to spend on books. They will be on the shelves very soon. There are also some fantastic new graphic novels to enjoy. Come in and take a look!



**A huge thank you to all the
parents and students who
purchased books from the fair.**

We earned £100 to spend on



OX14 Learning Partnership Weekly Update

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

The poster features a dark background with a purple-to-orange gradient. At the top left, the text 'FIND YOUR FUTURE' is written in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, 'ABINGDON FUTURES FAIR' is written in a larger, white, bold, sans-serif font. Underneath the title, the date and time '7 May 4pm- 6pm' are displayed in white. A circular inset image on the left shows a group of students in a school setting, some looking at a book. To the right of the inset, the text 'Speak to 25 UK universities and get information on' is followed by a bulleted list: 'Courses', 'Entry requirements', 'Application processes', and 'Student experience'. Below the list, it says 'Plus find out about other post-18 options. For all local students in Years 11 to 13. Free to attend, book your place now!'. Further down, it states 'Hosted in the Pavilion at Abingdon School, entry from Park Road OX14 1DE. No onsite parking.' At the bottom left, there is a QR code with the text 'Scan to book' above it. At the bottom right, the OX14 Learning Partnership logo is shown, featuring a stylized 'OX14' and the tagline 'Challenge, Inspire, Support'.

The Abingdon Futures Fair is back again with an impressive range of UK universities. Aimed at current Year 12s and open to all local students in Years 11 to 13 (and their parents), come along and speak to university representatives about their courses, admissions and student experience to inform your choices on what to do next.

Who should come?

- Year 13s who are undecided about university study or starting careers;
- Year 12s who are exploring universities and courses;
- Year 11s who are looking for inspiration and guidance;
- Parents and guardians of students aged 16 to 18.

Free entry and open to students from all local schools. Please note there is no onsite parking for this event. [Book here](#)



ATTENTION PARENTS!

BRAND NEW CLASSES LAUNCHING NOW IN ABINGDON!

**RADLEY VILLAGE HALL | GOOSEACRE | RADLEY |
ABINGDON | OXFORDSHIRE | OX14 3BL**

AWARD
WINNING
PROGRAMS
(AS SEEN ON
TV)

MONDAY

MINIS 3 - 6 YEARS / 17:00 - 17:45

JUNIORS 7 - 11 YEARS / 18:00 - 18:50

TEENS 12 + YEARS / 19:40 - 20:30

BOOK YOUR FREE TRIAL NOW!

Our award winning MINIS dance programme is specifically designed to support children aged 3 to 6 in developing confidence, coordination, listening skills, and self control. Through fun, structured movement and music, children learn discipline, respect, and positive behaviour while building a strong foundation for learning and self expression.

Our JUNIORS dance programme works hand in hand with a child's school life, providing many benefits both physically and mentally. Through focused and consistent training, students are taught the value of dedication, teamwork, and perseverance, learning that with effort and commitment, worthwhile goals are achievable.

Our TEENZ dance programme is designed to support older children and teenagers in building confidence, discipline, and self belief. Students develop creativity, fitness, and resilience while learning how to express themselves positively, work as part of a team, and challenge themselves in a supportive environment.

WWW.MFDANCE.CO.UK



FREE TRIAL | FREE UNIFORM | MONEY BACK GUARANTEED

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION about AUTISM

**MONDAY
11TH MAY
11:05 -12:05**

**Join Ruth Cox of OCC's
Communication and
Interaction Service to talk
about how your child's
autistic tendencies affect
family life and what you
can do.
Have your questions
answered.
Share your worries.**

Confirm you place by emailing:
jms.inclusion@johnmason.school

LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE
JOHN MASON SCHOOL

Upcoming Important Dates:	
Wednesday 29 th April – Wed 6 th May	Year 12 Trial Exams
Monday 4 th May	Bank Holiday - School Closed
Monday 11 th May	Coffee and Conversation about Autism
Thursday 21 st May	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Monday 25 th – Friday 29 th May	Half Term

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](#)