John Mason School
OPPORTUNITY | RESPECT | DETERMINATION

Friday 20th November 2026

Parent Bulletin

Dear Families,

As we reach the end of Anti-Bullying Week, I would like to reflect on this year's theme, "Break the Silence." Throughout the week, students have explored the importance of speaking up, seeking support and looking out for one another. Whether it is a student reporting concerns, a friend offering support or an adult stepping in to help, breaking the silence is often the first step towards making things better. Thank you to all students and staff who have contributed to these important conversations.

It is also a good opportunity to recognise how hard students are working at the moment. Across all year groups, we have seen record Attitudes to Learning scores, supported by lesson visits which continue to demonstrate calm, purposeful classrooms where students are engaged, compliant and keen to succeed. There is a real sense of focus across the school, and students deserve considerable credit for their efforts.

This week also saw the publication of the government's major review into opportunities for young people. Whilst we often focus on success in assessments, GCSEs and A Levels, it is a timely reminder that education is ultimately about preparing young people for fulfilling and successful adult lives. With that in mind, I would encourage families to attend the following events, which provide opportunities to reflect on progress and think ahead to future pathways:

- 26 November, 5:00pm – 7:00pm: Sixth Form Open Evening
- 3 December, 5:30pm – 7:30pm: Year 9 Options Evening
- 10 December, 4:30pm – 7:00pm: Year 11 Parents' Evening

I would also like to thank the growing number of parents who are becoming involved with the John Mason Association (JMA). The JMA plays an increasingly important role in supporting school events and enriching our community. Whether you can offer regular support or just an hour of your time, every contribution makes a difference.

We are currently seeking volunteers to support forthcoming events, including those listed above. If you are able to help, please complete the JMA Event Volunteers form: JMA - Event Volunteers – Fill in form. If you attend one of our upcoming events, please do take the opportunity to say hello to members of the JMA team.

Finally, please save the date for our annual Christmas Concert on 17 December, 6:00pm – 8:00pm at Trinity Church. This is always a wonderful celebration of the term and a chance to enjoy performances from our talented students. The JMA will once again be supporting the event, and further details, including ticket information, will follow shortly.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and partnership with the school. I hope you have a restful weekend.

Best wishes



Alastair West
Headteacher

Upcoming Important Dates:	
Thursday 26th November	JMF6 Open Evening 5-7pm
Thursday 3rd December	Year 9 Options Evening 5.30 – 7.30pm
Thursday 10th December	Year 11 Parents Evening 4.30-7.00pm
Thursday 17th December	Christmas Concert
Friday 18th December	School closes at 1.05pm
Monday 21st December – Friday 1st January	Christmas Holidays
Monday 4th January	Inset day – No students
Tuesday 5th January	All students return to 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

Year 7 Students Become Forensic Scientists at Vertex Pharmaceuticals

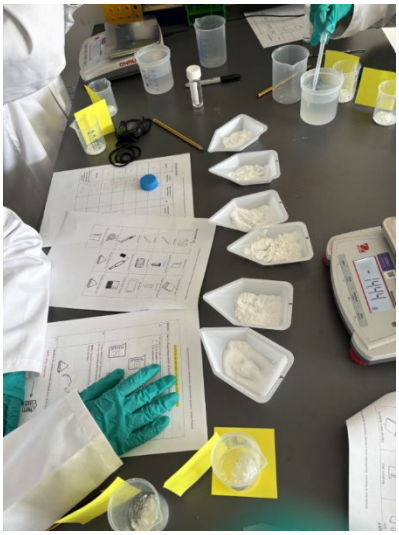
Our Year 7 students recently enjoyed an exciting educational visit to the Oxford Learning Lab at Vertex Pharmaceuticals in Didcot. The visit gave students the opportunity to put their scientific knowledge and skills into practice through an engaging forensic science investigation.

The challenge was to identify an unknown substance using a forensic approach. Students worked scientifically to investigate the evidence, taking accurate measurements, recording their observations and analysing their results to help them reach a conclusion.

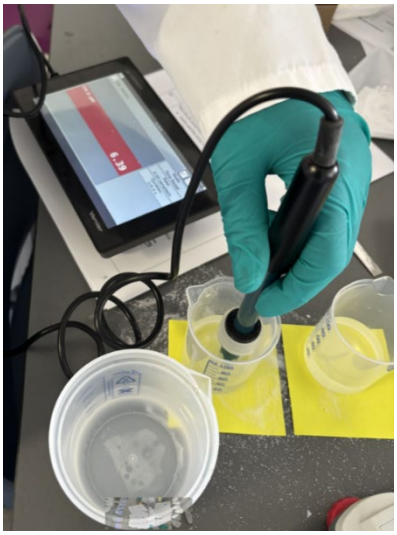
The activity provided a fantastic opportunity to develop and apply the skills students have been learning as part of their Year 7 Working Scientifically unit. In particular, students were able to strengthen their confidence in collecting and interpreting scientific data, making careful measurements and drawing conclusions from their findings.

It was a valuable experience that brought science to life, helping students understand how scientific skills are used in real-world investigations. The visit also provided an excellent foundation for their continued learning as they prepare to move into Year 8 science.

A big thank you to the team at Vertex Pharmaceuticals for providing such an enjoyable and worthwhile learning experience for our students!







JMS Sports Leaders

Our Year 9 and 10 Sports Leaders have been busy preparing to support next week's KS1 Multi-Sports Festival. Working brilliantly as a team, they have been planning activities, developing their leadership skills, and getting everything ready for a fantastic event.

We are incredibly proud of their enthusiasm and commitment, and they are looking forward to welcoming local primary schools to John Mason School next week.









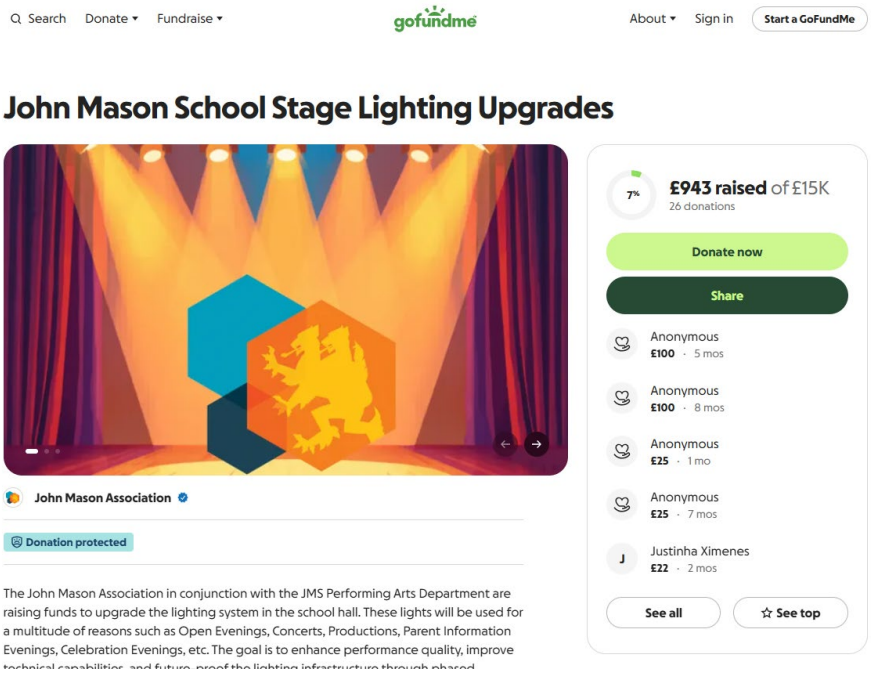
U16 Girls' Football Team

Our U16 Girls' Football Team put in a fantastic display of skill, teamwork and determination in their County Cup fixture this week.

Goals from Jasmine and Ruby kept the game finely balanced, but despite a tremendous effort, the team were narrowly beaten 3-2 away from home.

The girls represented the school brilliantly and should be proud of their performance.
Well done, team!

JMA fundraiser update



Thank you very much to everyone who has already donated, we are very grateful for your support.

We are looking to raise £15,000 in total, split into three phases, so each £5000 raised can contribute to usable upgrades to lights, infrastructure, and then control and more advanced effects.

Can you help us reach £1000 by Christmas?

The John Mason Association in conjunction with the JMS Performing Arts Department are raising funds to upgrade the lighting system in the school hall. These lights will be used for a multitude of reasons such as Open Evenings, Concerts, Productions, Parent Information Evenings and Celebration Evenings.



The goal is to enhance performance quality, improve technical capabilities, and future-proof the lighting infrastructure through phased investment. The current lights in the hall are very old and condemned so cannot be used.

https://www.gofundme.com/f/john-mason-school-stage-lighting-upgrades.

Donations through this portal allows the JMA to also collect Gift Aid if you are UK taxpayer. Please tick the box and allow us to collect Gift Aid from your donation as it is worth 25% more to us with Gift Aid!

Any amount that you can donate will be hugely appreciated.
Thank you.

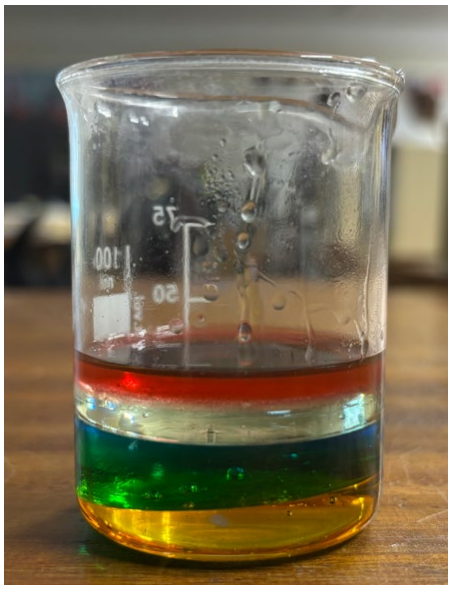
STEM Club

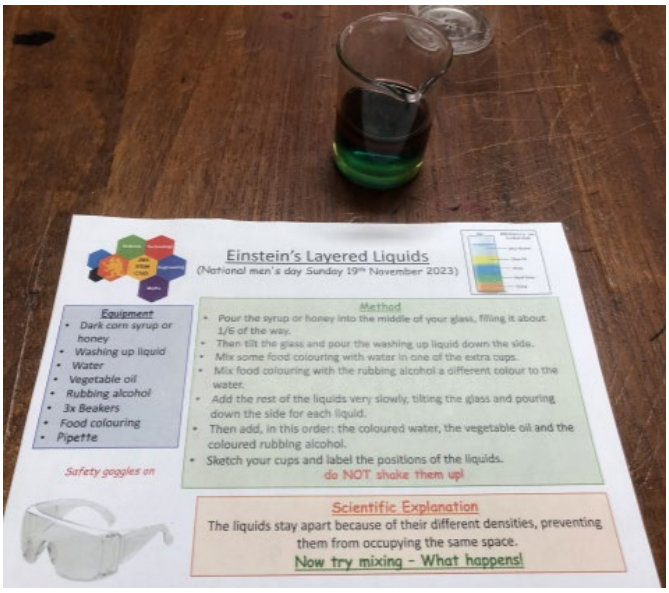
This week, STEM Club celebrated National Men's Day by getting hands-on with a colourful science experiment: Einstein's Layered Liquids!

Students explored the science of density by carefully adding a range of different liquids into a beaker. The challenge was to add each liquid in the correct order and carefully enough to keep the liquids separate, creating a beautiful rainbow of colourful layers.

Once their layered liquids were complete, students had the opportunity to experiment further by dropping different objects into their beakers to see what happened and how the objects behaved in liquids of different densities.

Everyone had a fantastic time investigating, making predictions and comparing their finished creations. It was a great opportunity to explore the science of density in a fun, practical and colourful way!









Community News

OX14 LP

Please find the weekly OX14 Update linked here for your information. The events calendar can be accessed on the website: https://www.ox14lp.org.uk/events/

Please could we also draw your attention to the Atom Society Lecture series. These lectures are held locally and include talks from a range of Scientists and experts in their field. Membership is free for under 18s. We are also looking forward to the upcoming Atom festival with a series of interesting and enjoyable events. Find out more here