

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026

## Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

As is always the case at this time of year, it has been a busy and positive week in school. A huge thank you to all friends of JMS who volunteered their time to support the Year 11 mock interview day. The year group was full of energy, with students practising their answers together during break and lunch in the courtyard. For many, this was their first experience of sitting in front of an unfamiliar adult and speaking about their strengths and ambitions, so a few nerves were completely understandable. A particular thank you to Ms Gibson and her team for ensuring the event ran so smoothly, and to our Year 11 students for approaching the day with maturity, effort and enthusiasm. They made the very most of this valuable opportunity.

I am also delighted to share news from the cross-country County Championships earlier this week. The whole school is incredibly proud of our runners, and especially Jasmine and Kyla, who have now qualified to represent Oxfordshire in the English Schools Cross Country Championships in their respective age groups. This is a fantastic achievement and a testament to their dedication and talent. We wish them the very best of luck and send our warmest congratulations as they prepare to represent their county on the national stage.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks once again to the members of the JMA for the outstanding support they continue to provide. In recent months, they have donated funds to support a wide range of clubs, including knitting and crochet, mindfulness art and colouring, games console club, flight club (darts), and board games. They have also provided additional resources for the MFL department and contributed to developing the strategy to upgrade the lighting in Performing Arts. We are incredibly fortunate to still have such a committed Parent Teacher Association at a time when so many secondary schools no longer do. As students grow up and move on, many long-serving members naturally step back, and so we are keen to build a strong succession plan to ensure this invaluable organisation continues to thrive.

If you could spare an hour or two once a term and would be willing to find out more about supporting the JMA, we would be grateful. Please complete this short [form](#) if you would like to meet with a JMA representative and myself to explore what the role might involve.

I hope you have a wonderful weekend.



Alastair West  
Headteacher

## Curriculum News

### Performing Arts Focus

It has been an exciting week in Performing Arts. Our Year 10 GCSE and Year 12 A Level Drama students visited the Bristol Old Vic Theatre to see *Lost Atoms*, a dynamic production by Frantic Assembly. This trip offered students a valuable chance to experience the work of a renowned professional theatre company in the oldest continuously operating theatre in England.



Meanwhile, rehearsals for our upcoming school production, *Arabian Nights*, are in full swing. Students across the cast and creative teams—whether performing on stage, working behind the scenes, choreographing, or composing—are demonstrating outstanding enthusiasm and dedication. The show will feature six stories, each brought to life through a different theatrical style, promising a vibrant and imaginative evening of storytelling.

We look forward to sharing the production with you in March. Tickets will be available after the February half term, and we hope many of you will join us to celebrate the students' hard work and creativity.

Mrs Finnie  
Director of Performing Arts



## Pastoral News

### PE Charity Run Dates

#### JMS PE Dept Charity run dates:

Charity runs will take place in your PE lesson on the date listed below. You will need your PE kit as usual. More information on sponsorship to follow.

4 <sup>th</sup> Feb: BWed:1	8X
BWed:2	11J
BWed:4	7Y
5 <sup>th</sup> Feb: BThu:1	7X
BThu:4	8Y
6 <sup>th</sup> Feb: BFri:1	9P
BFri:2	10K
BFri:3	10J
BFri:4	9Q
BFri:5	11K



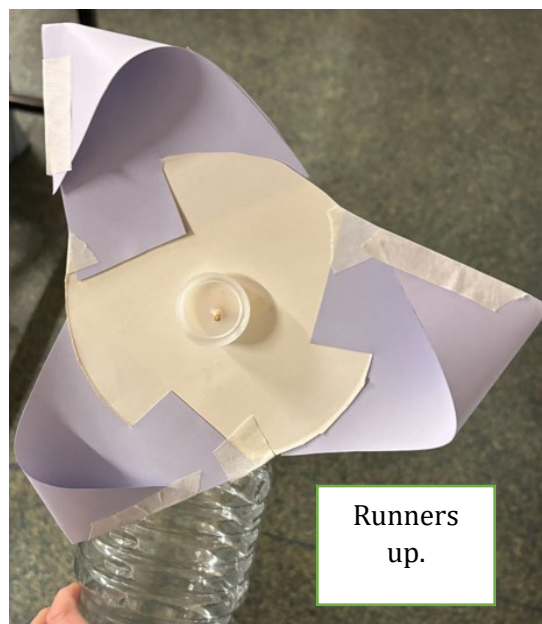
## STEM Club

This week we have been inspired by the windy weather to develop our own wind turbines.

The students were set a challenge to engineer a wind turbine and build a prototype. At the end, they presented their wind turbines for testing. Each turbine was tested in front of a fan to see how it worked. The winning team was a pair of year 8 students who engineered a very clever blade structure to provide a large surface area for the wind, making their turbine spin effortlessly.

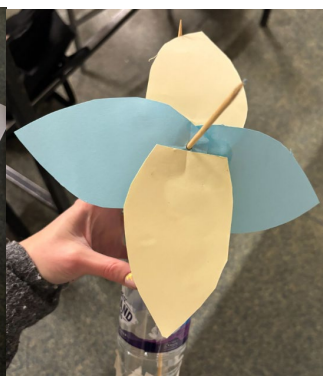
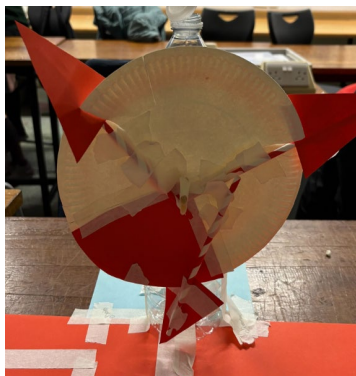


Winning design



Runners up.

Other designs:



## Whole School News

### Abingdon Learning Trust AGM

The Abingdon Learning Trust Annual General Meeting will take place via teams.

**Date: Tuesday 27 January 2026**

**Time: 5.30pm - 7pm**

**Location: Online via Microsoft Teams**



The AGM will follow the agenda, including:

- Election of the Chair for the meeting
- Welcome, apologies and confirmation of quorum
- Approval of previous minutes and matters arising
- Receipt of the **2024-25 Audited Accounts** and **Annual Report**, including performance against the Trust's charitable objectives
- Report on the **Quality of Governance**
- **CEO Report**
- Stakeholder **Q&A session** - questions may be emailed in advance to [jjohnson@abingdonlearningtrust.org](mailto:jjohnson@abingdonlearningtrust.org)
- Trustee appointments, resignations and term updates
- Member/Trustee resignations
- Confirmation of the next meeting on **Tuesday 12 May at 5.30pm**
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#### Joining the meeting

If you would like to attend the AGM, please contact Jane Johnson, Head of Governance, to receive the Teams meeting link:

[jjohnson@abingdonlearningtrust.org](mailto:jjohnson@abingdonlearningtrust.org)

#### Uniform Sale

We will be holding another pre-loved uniform sale after the February half-term. If you have any unwanted branded items, please do send them in to help us prepare for the next event.

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!

## Free Workshop

If you are finding the navigation of the teenage years difficult, please join our workshop and find some new approaches and strategies to help you and your family. The course is run by Lisa Knight from Abingdon and Witney College and will be a positive opportunity to meet with others, share the challenges and find some solutions. We look forward to seeing you.

Mrs Amos  
Head of Inclusion

**Abingdon  
& Witney  
College**

**Oxfordshire  
Adult  
Learning**

A FACULTY OF ABINGDON & WITNEY COLLEGE

### **FREE Workshop!** Improving Parent/Teen Relationships

#### **Where?**

John Mason School

#### **When?**

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> February 1:30 - 3:00pm

#### **Cost?**

FREE and open to John Mason parents and carers

**Come along and connect with other parents, share experiences, and find support in improving your relationships with your teens.**

#### **The session content includes:**

- Recognising changes in teen behaviour
- Connecting with your teen - check-ins
- Developing communication techniques
- Considering boundaries as a way to support



To book a place click the below link or scan the QR code and complete the Google Form  
**Booking Form for Parent/Teen Workshop**



For more information please contact the course tutor  
Lisa Knight: [lisa.knight@abingdon-witney.ac.uk](mailto:lisa.knight@abingdon-witney.ac.uk)





### **OX14 Learning Partnership Weekly Update**

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

### **‘Applying for Medicine, Veterinary Medicine & Dentistry’ event.**

The event is open to students in years 10-12 and will take place at St Helen and St Katharine on Wednesday 4 March from 6pm – 8pm.

The formal element of the evening will begin at 6pm in YPH, starting with a keynote speech from Dr Alice Gore (former SHSK student, qualified in 2025) followed by a talk from Cardiff University on the admissions process for Dentistry and Medicine. Students will then be split into groups for subject-specific talks.

If your students would like to attend, please direct them to complete the electronic response form [here](#).

If you or your students have any questions, please email [ddarcy@shsk.org.uk](mailto:ddarcy@shsk.org.uk)



**Applying for  
Medicine,  
Veterinary  
Medicine &  
Dentistry**

**6pm Wednesday 4 March at  
St Helen and St Katharine**

- Keynote speaker Dr Alice Gore
- Cardiff University Admissions
- Subject-specific talks
- Question and answer

Register via QR



 **ST HELEN &  
ST KATHARINE**

<b>Upcoming Important Dates:</b>	
Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> January	HPV Vaccinations
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Ski Trip PIE Evening
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 11 Pre-public exams
Week 16 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> February	Half Term
Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 10 Art Pre-public Exam
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 10 3D Pre-public Exam
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 9 Parents Evening
Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 10 Textiles Pre-public Exam

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](#)