



John Mason School
OPPORTUNITY | RESPECT | DETERMINATION

Friday 24th April 2026

Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

This week I have been overwhelmingly impressed with Year 10 as they ploughed through their Pre-Public Exam Week took every opportunity to share everything they have learnt since they started their GCSE courses in September. The attitudes towards their preparation and then their conduct going into their exams has been exemplary and they have set a very high bar for Year 11 and Year 13 whose turn to sit their External Exams is just around the corner. Well done Year 10.

We are excited to be offering 'Coffee and Conversation about Autism' on 11 May at 11:05am and look forward to an opportunity both to learn from Ruth Cox, from OCC Communication and Interaction Service, as well as providing families with the opportunity to share their own experiences. If you haven't already done so, please confirm by emailing jms.inclusion@johnmason.school if you would like to attend.

Leaders across the school have been spending time visiting students in lessons and reviewing their books already this term. This will continue throughout the summer. The information we gather has already helped us to recognise where students learning is at its best in school and share how this is achieved with staff. It is also helping us to highlight the incredible learning skills which so many of our students demonstrate every day and we look forward to celebrating this in the coming weeks and months.

Thank you, for your ongoing support. Have a lovely weekend.

Best wishes,

Alastair West
Headteacher



Year 8 Visit the Oxford Learning Lab at Vertex Pharmaceuticals

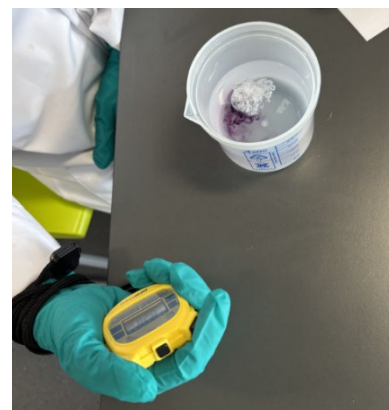
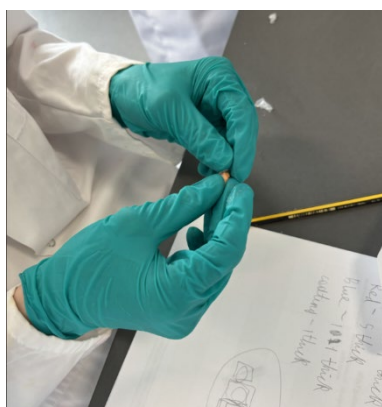
Year 8 students recently enjoyed an exciting opportunity to visit the Oxford Learning Lab at Vertex Pharmaceuticals in Didcot. The aim of the trip was to consolidate topics studied in Year 8 Science lessons, demonstrate how this knowledge is applied in real-world settings, and inspire students by introducing them to potential future careers in science and engineering.

During the visit, students took part in a range of engaging, hands-on activities led by vertex professionals. These activities were designed to support students in applying engineering principles such as ideation, prototyping, and iterative design.

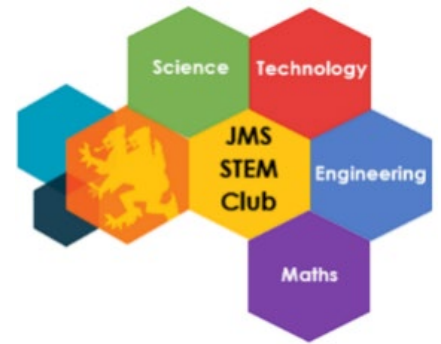
Working in pairs, students were challenged to design and build their own prototype tablet dispenser capable of administering medicines at specific times. This task encouraged them to think creatively, test their ideas, refine their designs, and solve problems collaboratively mirroring the processes used by engineers and scientists in the pharmaceutical industry.

The experience provided students with valuable insight into how scientific knowledge and engineering skills are used to develop real medical solutions. It was an inspiring and enjoyable day, giving many students a new appreciation for how science can impact people's lives and highlighting the exciting career opportunities available in the STEM sector.

We are very grateful to the team at Vertex Pharmaceuticals for hosting such an engaging and educational experience for our students.



STEM Club



On Wednesday 22nd April, our STEM Club marked Earth Day with a creative and meaningful activity, making their very own eco-friendly candles.

This year's theme, *"Our Power, Our Planet,"* encouraged students to think about how individual actions can make a positive impact on the environment. During the session, pupils explored the science behind how candles work, including how wax melts and burns, while also discussing sustainable choices such as using natural materials and reducing waste. Our candles were made from natural soy wax and recycled glass dessert jars.

The children thoroughly enjoyed the hands-on experience of designing and creating their candles, selecting dyes and scents and learning about safer, environmentally conscious alternatives to traditional products. It was a fantastic opportunity to combine scientific learning with creativity, all while reflecting on how we can care for our planet.



Whole School News

LRC Book Fair – Help Us Earn Free Books!

Students are welcome to come in and look at the books on sale during their English lessons (with permission) or at break times. Books can be paid for online using the QR code and selecting John Mason and collected the next day from the LRC.



To browse books at home, go to www.bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/bookcases. Book vouchers can also be purchased as an alternative way to pay.

Parents are invited to view and order books on-line at www.bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/pay and selecting John Mason from the drop-down menu. Orders can be made between 7th-27th April, and the books can be collected from the LRC.

Please support JMS by purchasing a book for your child. Every book bought earns rewards for the library. Many thanks and happy reading!

SCHOLASTIC

LRC BOOK FAIR

NEW and TRENDING?

Your **NEXT FAVOURITE READ** is waiting

OVER 200 BOOKS TO CHOOSE FROM

The **BOOK FAIR** is here on: **April 21st – 27th** **GO ALL IN.**

Order and pay for books from 7th – 27th April

Scan the QR code to pay online!

- Select **John Mason** from the drop-down menu. Follow the online payment link.
- Order using the **Wish List** (Collect a form from the LRC)

OX14 Learning Partnership Weekly Update

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

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 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 brochures. To the right of the image, 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' with a curved line above it, and the text 'Learning Partnership' and 'Challenge, Inspire, Support' below it.

**FIND YOUR
FUTURE**

**ABINGDON
FUTURES FAIR**

7 May 4pm- 6pm

Speak to 25 UK universities and get information on

- Courses
- Entry requirements
- Application processes
- Student experience

Plus find out about other post-18 options.
For all local students in Years 11 to 13.
Free to attend, book your place now!

Hosted in the Pavilion at Abingdon School, entry from Park Road OX14 1DE. No onsite parking.

Scan to book



OX14
Learning Partnership
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.

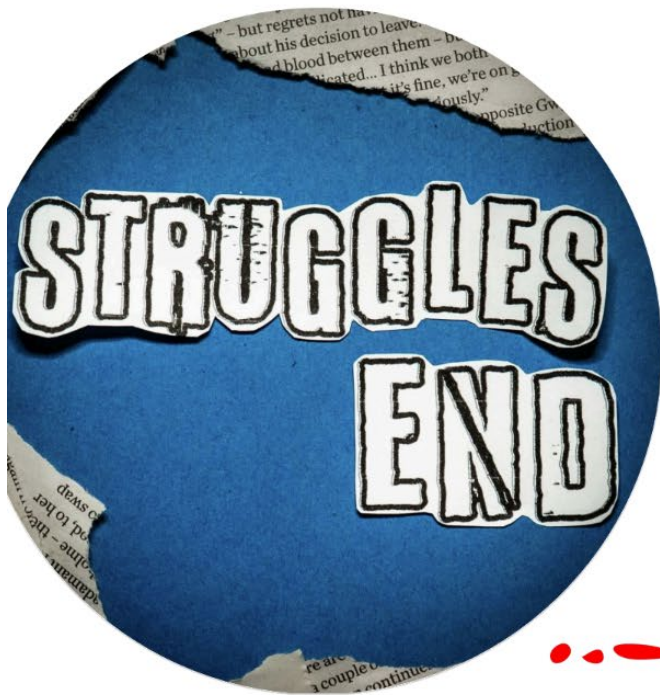
Who should come?

- 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](#)

Local Live Music Event

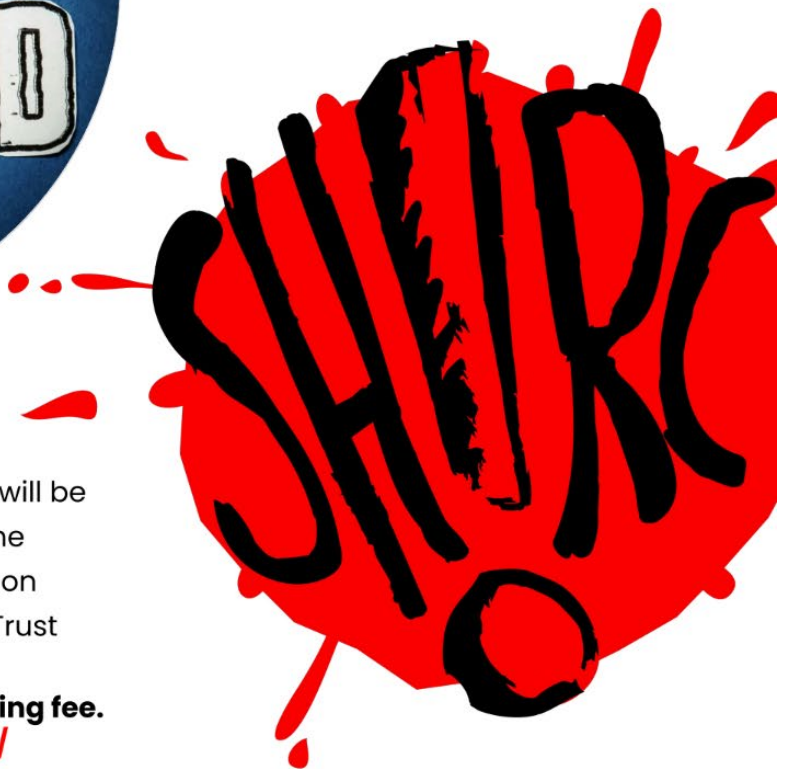


@struggles_end
@shirc.official



All money raised will be
donated to the The
Friends of Abingdon
Abbey Buildings Trust

Tickets £3.30 with booking fee.
<https://wegottickets.com/f/17260/>



Struggles End and Shirc

Presented by Music at the Unicorn

The Unicorn Theatre - Abingdon

Wednesday 6th May Door time: 7:30pm, start time: 8:00pm

We're proud to celebrate the musical talent of our students! Shirc, a band made up of John Mason School students, are performing at a local live music event in Abingdon alongside Struggles End. Please see poster above for more details

<https://wegottickets.com/f/17260/>

Get Active - May Half Term Flyer

There is a brand-new holiday camp this May half term at Leys Leisure Centre that families might be interested to learn about.

Offering soft play, swimming, tag X plus many more activities! Discounts currently available and our introductory offer. Please see details in flyer below.

LEVEL UP THEIR HALF TERM

A BRAND NEW HOLIDAY CAMP EXPERIENCE
AT LEYS POOLS & LEISURE CENTRE
PEGASUS RD, OXFORD, OX4 6JL

EXCLUSIVE INTRODUCTORY RATE
£30 PER DAY
THIS MAY HALF TERM
ONLY

25 MIN DRIVE FROM DIDCOT

THIS IS NOT YOUR USUAL HOLIDAY CAMP!

- TAG-X
- SWIMMING SESSIONS (AGES 8+)
- SOFT PLAY ZONES

CLICK TO BOOK

www.getactivesports.com/active-camps 01344 860 868 info@getactivesports.com

LEYS POOLE LEISURE CAMP

WHAT'S WAITING AT LEYS POOLS CAMP

Opening Times
26th May - 29th May 2026
Tue - Fri: 8am to 6pm

FREE £3 PARKING

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CAMP

- TAG X ARENA**
An interactive game where they run, tap glowing targets, and compete for points.
- SOFT PLAY & ACTIVITY ZONES**
Slides, inflatables, and obstacle zones built for movement, play, and energy.
- SWIMMING SESSIONS**
For ages 8+, supervised swimming sessions at the leisure centre.
- SPORTS HALL GAMES**
Football, basketball, tennis, pickleball, and more in our sports hall.

SIMPLE PRICING

Full Day (8am - 6pm)
£45 per day
£180 for 5 days (SAVE £45)

Half Day (8am - 3:30pm)
£36 per day
£144 for 5 days (SAVE £36)

MAY HALF TERM ONLY
£30 PER DAY

EXTRA SAVINGS

- 10% Siblings
- 5% NHS/Armed Forces
- 10% Leys Leisure Members

CLICK TO BOOK

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 your place by emailing:
jms.inclusion@johnmason.school

LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE
JOHN MASON SCHOOL

Upcoming Important Dates:	
Tuesday 28 th - Thursday 30 th April	Year 12 A-Level Art Exam
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](#)

The next academic year dates are also on our website now.