

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2026

## Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

Rehearsals for this year's school production are reaching a real crescendo – not only in terms of musical and dramatic excellence, but also in the excitement they are generating among staff and students alike. Hearing rehearsals taking place after school and at weekends has offered a tantalising preview of what is in store next Wednesday and Thursday. If you have not yet secured your tickets, please do make sure you don't miss out. A booking link can be found within this bulletin.

This winter has been packed full of PE fixtures. Following in the girls' footsteps, our boys' football teams have recently had the opportunity to test themselves against local opposition. They have shown great determination and resilience in a series of challenging matches and while results did not go their way on this occasion, the manner in which they represented our school community was excellent.

Looking ahead, we wish Jasmine and Kyla the very best of luck at the 2026 English Schools Cross Country Championships in Liverpool at the end of next week. These students are once again stepping up from representing their school and athletics clubs to representing their county – a significant achievement, and one we are very proud of. We look forward to hearing how they get on.

In recent weeks, I have been meeting with a small group of Year 7 students on Friday mornings to find out how they have settled into life at JMS. We discussed what they value most about the school, as well as what they would do if they were Headteacher for the day. It has been wonderful to hear how much they are enjoying the wide range of subjects and clubs on offer – and I can confirm that the canteen received very positive feedback!

I have also been impressed by their thoughtful suggestions, including a desire for more bins to help keep the school site tidy and additional outdoor seating areas. They reflected on their learning too, highlighting how much they value active learning opportunities before moving on to more traditional approaches. This feedback is helping us to better understand their experiences and to continue shaping provision to meet the diverse needs of our students. Thank you to our Year 7s for their valuable contributions. I look forward to meeting with representatives from other year groups as we move through the summer term.

Finally, to those of you who celebrated the Holi Festival on Wednesday, and to everyone enjoying the first signs of spring, I wish you a weekend filled with colour and warmth.

Best wishes,



Alastair West  
Headteacher

## Curriculum News

### World Book Day 2026 in the LRC

Students took part in the World Book Day Scavenger hunt this week. Titles and clues from different literary genre led them on a tour of the school to find the name of a famous author: J.R.R. TOLKIEN



John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1892–1973) was a major scholar of the English language, specialising in Old and Middle English. Twice Professor of Anglo-Saxon (Old English) at the University of Oxford, he also wrote a number of stories, including most famously *The Hobbit* (1937) and *The Lord of the Rings* (1954–1955), which are set in a pre-historic era in an invented version of our world which he called by the Middle English name of Middle-earth. This was peopled by Men and women, Elves, Dwarves, Trolls, Orcs (or Goblins) and of course Hobbits. While many other authors had published works of fantasy before Tolkien, the tremendous success of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* ignited a profound interest in the fantasy genre and ultimately precipitated an avalanche of new fantasy books and authors. This has led to his popular identification as the "father" of modern fantasy literature. His works have sold over 250-300 million copies and inspired major film adaptations. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential authors of all time. You can find out more about Tolkien and his works at The Tolkien Society - <https://www.tolkiensociety.org/discover/biography>

WINNERS!

The Tutor Group with the most correct entries was 8XO – enjoy sharing your box of treats.

Prizes will also be given to the following students:

- Josie in 11YO - who was first to complete the circuit.
- Elsa in 7XS who took a keen interest in all the books.
- Seth in 8XT who started and finished in record time!

Well done to all those who took part and congratulations to the winners!

### Carnegies

The Carnegie book club also started this week. The Shady Bookhounds form years 7 and 8 met to discuss the 2026 Carnegie longlist and enjoy reading some of the World Book Day, free books.

## Whole School News

### Careers Fest Twilight Session for Parents and Carers

[Careers Fest - Enterprise Oxfordshire Skills](#)

Please use National Careers Week as an opportunity to remind your parents and carers about the opportunity to come along to Careers Fest at The Kassam Conference & Events Centre on **18th March between 16:00 and 19:00** to meet 75+ employers, higher and further education and training providers to find out all about local and national opportunities for their young people.



### ACE Training Open Mornings

[Event Calendar | Talks, Workshops & Open Mornings | Ace Training Centre](#)

Students interested in a career in construction can drop in to one of ACE Training's Saturday open mornings to see what ACE can offer them. There are 2 open mornings this month, on **14th and 28th March from 10:00 - 12:00**. Attendees can take a tour of the workshops, meet the team and learn all about ACE's apprentice and pre apprentice opportunities.

## Careers Unlocked Webinar Series

### [Free Events – InvestIN Education](#)

Are your students wondering how to get into some of the most competitive careers, such as law, medicine, psychology, engineering and investment banking? This March, students and their families can get valuable insights from experienced industry professionals by attending Investin's new, free Careers Unlocked online workshop series, running between **10th and 17th March at 18:00** to find out what these careers are really like and what they need to succeed. Attendees will learn what employers look for, gain practical tips they can use to stand out and take the next steps to unlocking their future career. If students can't attend live, they can still register to receive the recording and follow-up resources.

## Careers Convention, open to Y10 -12 students and parents

# ABINGDON CAREERS CONVENTION

Don't miss the chance to get insights into different occupations from working professionals and apprentices, attend topical talks, get CV writing tips, and meet 1-to-1 with an independent careers adviser.

 **DATE**  
Thursday 12 March 2026

 **TIME**  
6.30PM - 9.00PM

 **LOCATION**  
St Helen and St Katharine

**REGISTER NOW**

**TICKETS ARE FREE BUT LIMITED. BOOK EARLY!**

<https://bit.ly/m/CareersConvention2026>



SCAN ME



All students in Years 10, 11 and Sixth Form are invited.

Parents welcome (one per attending student).



## OX14 Learning Partnership Weekly Update

Please find the OX14 LP Weekly update [linked here](#) for circulation.

The calendar can also be found here: <https://www.ox14lp.org.uk/events/>

# BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK

A ten-day celebration of science, technology, engineering and maths featuring entertaining and engaging events and activities across the UK for people of all ages!

Each year British Science Week has a new theme to explore. This year is...

## CURIOSITY!

John Mason School will be celebrating starting **9th March** with these

### FORM TIME QUIZ

Gaining points for your house!



### POSTER COMPETITION

What makes children's lives positive?  
What will a positive childhood look like in the future for young people your age?

See Google Classroom for more information.



### INVESTIGATING SEPARATING MIXTURES

at Vertex Pharmaceuticals



### STEM CLUB

Investigating Diffusion

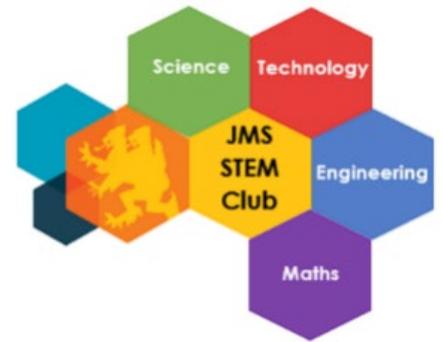


LET'S EXPLORE THE SCIENCE OF  
**CURIOSITY!**



## STEM Club

STEM club welcomed Joe and Tommy from Stantec in to learn about Civil Engineering. We learnt what a Civil Engineer does and the career pathway that led Joe and Tommy to become Civil Engineers, threw university or apprenticeship.



They then set the club a challenge to build a tower out of paper that was at least 50cm tall, that would withstand a little wind or earthquake (a good shake of the table). Each group only had 10 pieces of A4 paper and Sellotape to build their tower in 20 minutes. They all had different designs and fantastic ideas.



## Uniform Sale Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 3:30-4:30pm

We will be holding the pre-loved uniform sale Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 3:30-4:30pm. **We still would like to receive more outgrown or unwanted items to help us for the 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!



## John Mason School Production - Arabian Nights, Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March

Please come along and support all the hard work our talented students have put into this year's school production *Arabian Nights*.

Tickets are now on sale via this link: [John Mason School](#) Tickets are selling fast!!

## Science Trip

Year 10 students studying Triple Science recently took part in an engaging chemistry lesson at Vertex Pharmaceuticals where they learned about titration, an important laboratory technique used to determine the concentration of solutions.

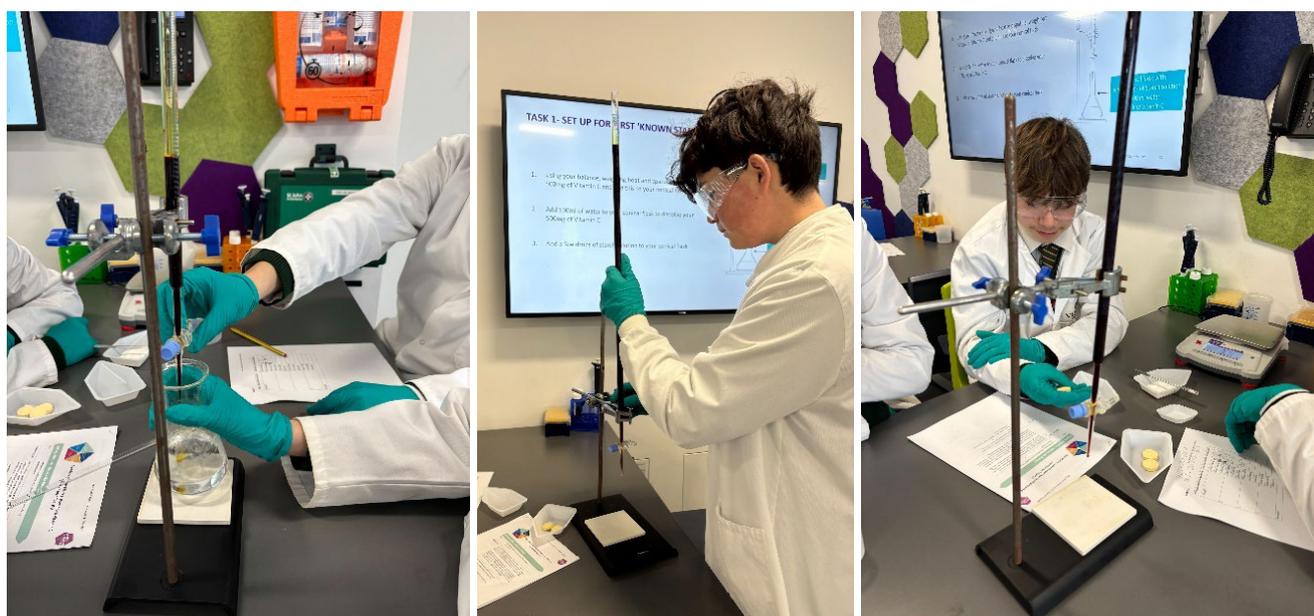
During the lesson, students explored how chemists use titration to measure the exact amount of acid or alkali needed for a chemical reaction. Titration is a method where a solution of known concentration is slowly added to another solution until the reaction reaches its endpoint, often shown by a colour change in an indicator.

Working in small groups, students practised using key pieces of laboratory equipment such as burettes, pipettes and conical flasks. They investigated the amount of vitamin C (also known as Ascorbic acid) found in vitamin C supplements by reacting it with a carefully measured amount of ascorbic acid until a colour change showed the reaction was complete. They carefully measured the liquid and added them drop by drop while watching closely for the moment the solution changed colour, signalling that the reaction had reached the neutralisation point.

Students showed enthusiasm as they recorded their results and compared their “titres”, the volume of solution used to reach the endpoint. By repeating the experiment several times, they learned how scientists improve reliability by calculating an average result.

The activity helped students develop practical scientific skills including accuracy, observation, and teamwork. Titration is also a required practical in GCSE Chemistry, meaning it plays an important role in preparing students for future exams and laboratory work.

Year 10 will next visit Vertex Pharmaceuticals in May to study Sickle Cell Disease. We look forward to seeing how they tackle this next challenge in science.



## Workshop

Join us for a Workshop to support parenting your teenagers, run by Abingdon and Witney College.

**Abingdon  
& Witney  
College**

**Oxfordshire  
Adult  
Learning**

A FACULTY OF ABINGDON & WITNEY COLLEGE

### **FREE Workshop! Teen Boundaries and Consequences**

#### **Where?**

John Mason School

#### **When?**

Monday 16<sup>h</sup> March 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 how to tackle boundaries and consequences with your teen.**



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

- Changes in boundaries from child to teen - how to make them realistic but effective
- How to avoid the pitfalls of consequences
- Boundaries and consequences for phones/screens



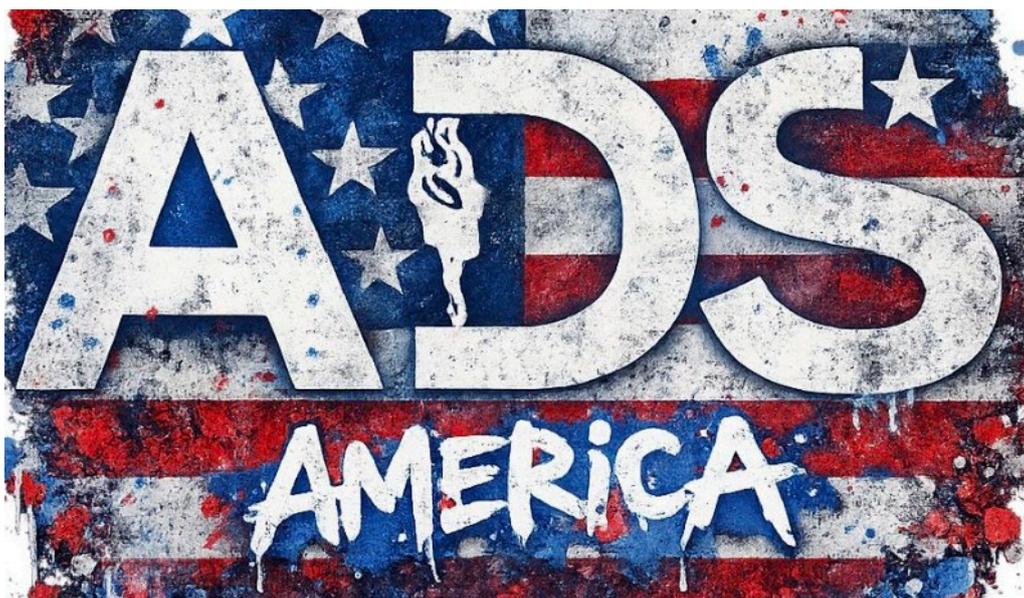
To book a place click the below link or scan the QR code and complete the **Google Form Booking Form - Teen Boundaries and Consequences**



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



## Dance show



The American Dance School will be putting on their annual showcase at Radley College this April. As many pupils from school will be performing please find details how to purchase tickets with this [ticket link](#) so you can attend this wonderful show.

<b>Upcoming Important Dates:</b>	
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> - Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	School Production
Week 16 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 10 Work Experience Week
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Preloved Uniform Sale 3.30-4.30pm
Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 7 parents Evening
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	School closes at 1.05pm
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> March – Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Holidays
Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	New Term - 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](#)