

Friday 7th November 2025

Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

As November begins, we are delighted to share how positively the new half term has started. Across the school, we've seen a marked improvement in both the quality of work students are producing in lessons and in their attitudes and behaviour around the site. These developments are fundamental to building an excellent school environment, and they make a real difference to the students who are here and engaging fully.

This term, we are placing a strong emphasis on improving whole-school attendance. High attendance is essential for academic success, and we are committed to working in partnership with families to support students in attending school regularly. Currently, our attendance figures are below where they need to be. Week 7 stood at 89.0%, and Week 8 at 86.7%. Our short term goal is to reach and exceed 90%, moving towards the national average of 94.6%. You'll hear more from us in the coming weeks as we work together to achieve this target. In the meantime, thank you for everything you are doing to ensure your child is in school and ready to learn each day, it truly makes a difference.

Our Science, Modern Foreign Languages (MfL), and History departments have been incredibly active recently. A standout moment was the STEM trip to Formula 1 Williams in Grove, where students explored real-world applications of Science, Maths, and Design. It was a fantastic opportunity that inspired many.

Additionally, our German and History trip to Berlin provided Year 11 students with a unique chance to bring their GCSE studies to life, whether through speaking German with native speakers or visiting key historical sites. This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and we look forward to sharing photos with you next week.

I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the many staff members who generously give up their evenings, weekends, and holidays to make these trips possible. These experiences wouldn't happen without their dedication, and we are incredibly grateful for their commitment to enriching our students' education.

Finally, we've been impressed by the focus and determination shown by our Year 11 students as they prepare for their Pre-Public Exams, which begin on Monday. Many will be using the weekend for final revision, and we wish them the very best of luck. We'll be supporting them every step of the way.

Thank you for your continued support.



Alastair West
Headteacher

Whole School News

Year 9 Visit to Williams F1

Forty Year 9 students set off with excitement and anticipation for their visit to Williams F1, eager to discover what awaited them behind the doors of one of the world's most iconic Formula 1 teams. The chatter on the coach was filled with questions about what they might see, learn, or even who they might meet.

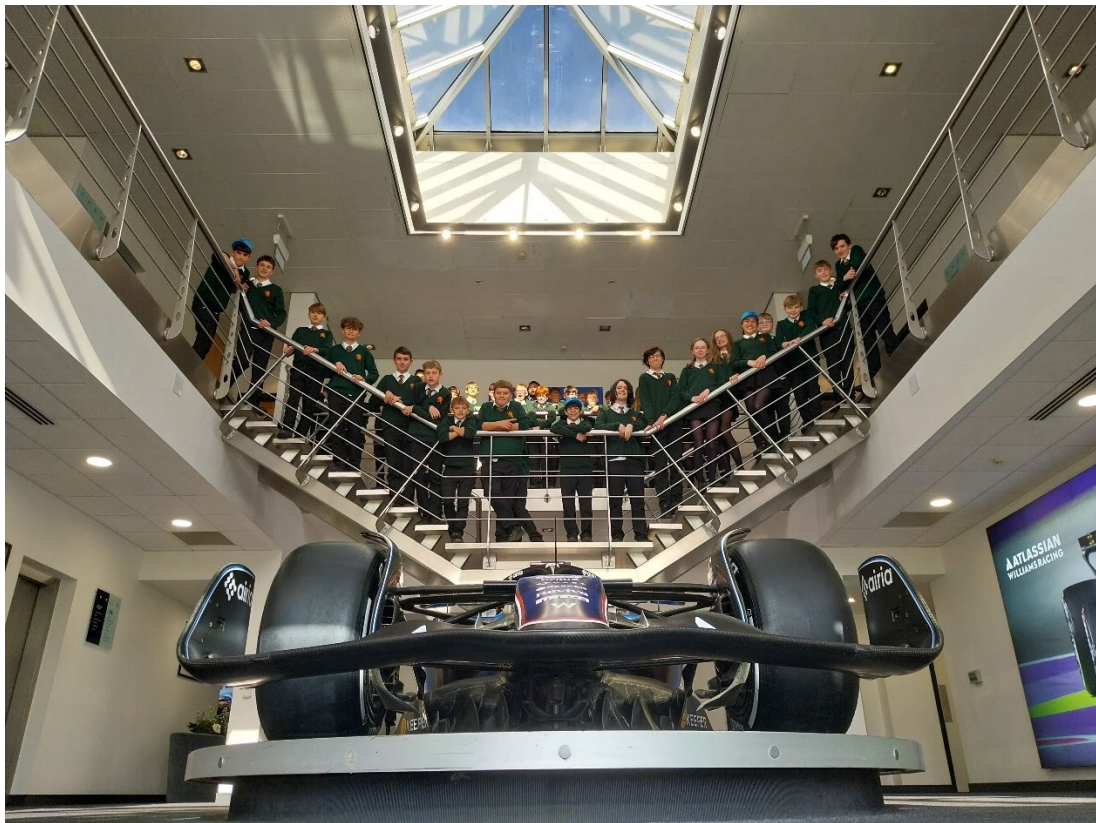
On arrival, students were led through the sleek corridors of the Williams headquarters to a presentation hall, where they watched an engaging introduction video about the history and engineering behind Williams F1. Their first challenge followed swiftly to design a nose cone for an F1 car. Eight students were selected to have their paper prototypes tested under pressure, quite literally, with a 1kg aluminium block dropped from a set height! Williams engineer Niv then questioned them about how their designs could be improved, and students rose to the challenge with thoughtful, creative responses.

Next came the main engineering task: to design, build, and market a new nose cone this time in teams, and under strict design criteria and budget constraints. The workshop buzzed with collaboration and competition as teams built, tested, and refined their creations using launch machines and accelerometers to measure performance. Each team then presented their final design, and the winning group proudly walked away with official Williams F1 hats.



After lunch, energy levels soared again as students took to the racing simulators for three head-to-head challenges on tracks from around the world. Some demonstrated real racing potential, while others quickly learned the importance of using the brake pedal! The final race, set in wet Monaco conditions, with damage simulation turned on proved especially tough, with only three cars surviving to the finish line. The overall winner, earning the most points across all races, was awarded a signed Williams F1 poster.





The final stop was the renowned Williams F1 Museum the largest private collection of Formula 1 cars in the world. Students were guided through the rich history of Williams Racing, from the team's beginnings in 1977 to the legendary FW14b driven by Nigel Mansell, and right up to the cutting-edge machines of today, driven by Alex Albon. They even had the chance to handle a real F1 steering wheel and a custom racing helmet before snapping photos of the incredible collection.



As the students boarded the coach home, they compared race times, swapped photos, and shared stories from the day. Everyone, students and teachers alike, left Williams F1 with smiles, inspiration, and memories that will last a lifetime.

Mr S McEvoy



Winter Cycling Safety: Staying Safe on Two Wheels

As the days grow shorter and colder, many of our students continue to cycle to school and around the community. Cycling remains a great way to stay active and independent — but winter brings a few extra challenges that require care and preparation.

1. Be bright and visible

With darker mornings and early sunsets, visibility is key. Make sure bikes have **working front and rear lights** and **reflectors**. Bright, reflective clothing or backpack covers can make a big difference in helping drivers and pedestrians see cyclists clearly.

2. Dress for warmth and safety

Encourage your child to wear **layers, gloves**, and a **windproof or waterproof jacket**. Avoid scarves or loose clothing that could catch in the chain or wheels. A helmet remains essential in all seasons — consider adding a thin skull cap or headband underneath for warmth.

3. Check bikes regularly

Cold and wet weather can affect brakes, tyres, and chains. A quick weekly inspection helps:

- **Brakes** should respond quickly and not feel slippery.
- **Tyres** need good tread for grip; slightly lower pressure can improve traction on wet roads.
- **Chains** should be clean and lightly oiled to prevent rust.

4. Ride with caution

Winter roads can be slippery with rain, ice, or leaves. Encourage students to slow down, especially when turning or approaching junctions. They should keep a safe distance from vehicles and avoid sudden stops or swerves.

5. Plan safer routes

Stick to well-lit streets and familiar paths. Avoid shortcuts through unlit areas. Parents and students can check local council websites for recommended cycle routes that are maintained during winter.

6. Stay alert and focused

Distractions like headphones or phones make it harder to react quickly — especially in poor weather. Encourage riders to keep their attention on the road and be aware of other cyclists and pedestrians.

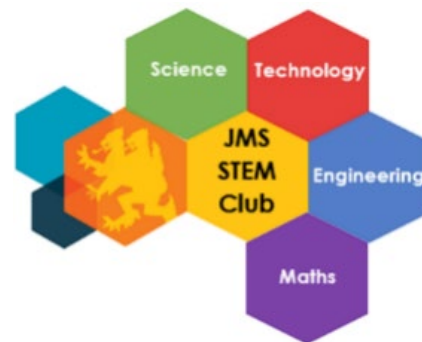
Cycling to school through the winter months can be a rewarding challenge, building resilience, fitness, and independence. With the right gear, maintenance, and awareness, our young cyclists can enjoy the journey safely all season long.

Let's help our students stay visible, vigilant, and confident on every ride this winter!

We will be having an assembly in the coming weeks to cover the above points.

Stem Club

To celebrate Guy Fawkes night, STEM club were carrying out flame tests of different chemicals. They investigated 5 different chemicals to see the different colours. The two favourite chemicals were Copper which turned the flame green and Lithium which turned the flame red.



Chemical	Colour prediction	Colour observed
Copper chloride	blue purple	green
Sodium chloride	yellow	orange yellow
Potassium chloride	green	purple
Calcium chloride	purple blue	orange
Lithium chloride	blue	red



LITHIUM



SODIUM



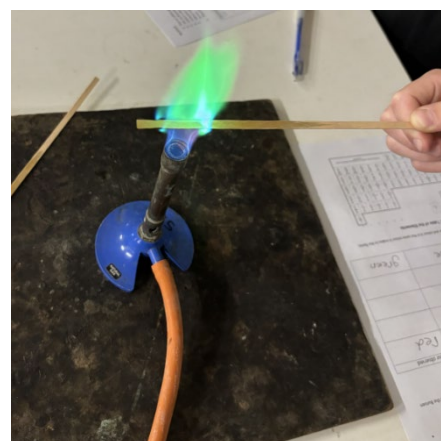
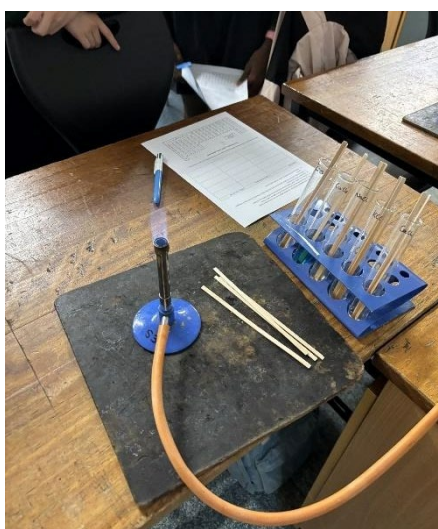
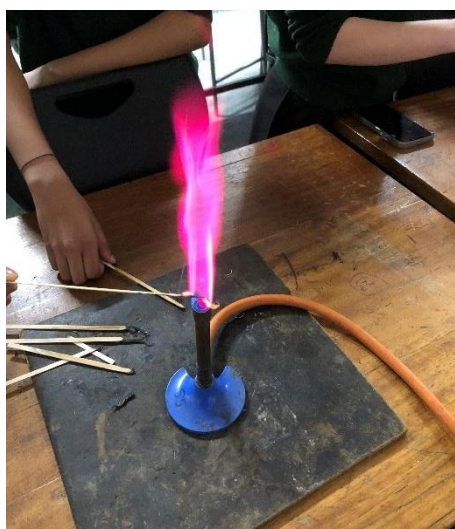
POTASSIUM



CALCIUM



COPPER



We also had enough time to do a second experiment which was to make lava lamps. This consisted of the students mixing food dye with water in a jar, adding vegetable oil and an Alka-Seltzer. Water and oil have different densities so do not mix. The Alka-Seltzer reacted with the water producing Carbon Dioxide, which creates bubbles. We had a few volcanoes, due to excess Carbon Dioxide, but the results were amazing.



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/>

Upcoming Important Dates:

Wednesday 12th November Year 10 PIE

Thursday 27th November JMF6 Open Evening at Fitzharrys 5-7pm

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](#)