



John Mason School
Excellence Through Creativity



Key Information

2023-24



A message from the Headteacher

I am honoured to have been chosen to lead John Mason School as Headteacher. At John Mason School we believe in success for all, not just the many. The inclusive nature of our community ensures that all children and young people, regardless of their background, ability or circumstances, can thrive and succeed here. Getting to know the young people in our classrooms underpins our teaching practice by allowing us to strike the balance between providing support and guidance with encouraging independence and curiosity.

At John Mason School we aim not just to teach young people the knowledge and understanding they need within their subjects, but to strive to develop the skills they need to become independent lifelong learners. Opportunities are taken both in the classroom but also beyond it by providing opportunities to achieve exceptionally both as individuals and as part of a team.

To improve the life chances of all the learners we serve at JMS we will:

Develop a shared vision for the John Mason School community based on values shared by all our stakeholders.

Align our systems and structures to allow us to maximise the impact of all the work that we do to achieve this vision.

Communicate clearly and concisely what students learn at John Mason School and why.

Further **improve Teaching & Learning** by using evidence based best practice.

Develop positive attitudes, self-belief, and instil independence and investment in self by developing a common understanding of the habits of highly effective independent learners.

We look forward to working with you as partners in achieving these aims.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Al West." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mr Alastair West
Headteacher

Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet which outlines the Key Information you may require. This booklet is helpful whether your child is transitioning from Year 6 primary to secondary school or transferring secondary school as an in-year transfer. We hope we have covered everything you would like to know about our school to help your child have a positive, happy start to their John Mason school journey and we look forward to being there every step of the way with them. Our school website is also a valuable source of information.

Our School

John Mason School is a mixed secondary academy school for 11-18 year olds, rated 'Good' by Ofsted in May 2019, situated on the Wootton Road in Abingdon. The school became part of the Abingdon Learning Trust in 2018. Each year group has 180 students, and JMF6, our outstanding (Ofsted 2019) 6th form is based on the site. The Headteacher, Mr Alastair West took over as Head in September 2023. Julie Tridgell is the Director of Secondary Education for Abingdon Learning Trust.

High Quality Teaching & Learning

John Mason School is dedicated to continuous improvement and strives for the very best for all of our students. The Leadership team and Governors are ambitious for the future of the school and this is evident in all the staff do. Teachers and support staff work tirelessly to support students in everything that they do, and are dedicated to student success.

The staff at JMS foster excellent relationships with students, encouraging mutual respect. These relationships support learning and ensure all students have the opportunity to succeed. Lessons at JMS are challenging and engaging, well sequenced and build on previous learning every day. Students are focussed in lessons and are encouraged to be independent learners and to track their own progress through keeping records of what they have learnt, continuously working on, and revising topics to embed them in their long-term learning.

Teachers are supported to research new teaching methods and engage in developmental opportunities on a regular basis. This leads to variation in teaching styles that support student progress.

School Values

Our commitment is to provide the very best education for all our students. We believe our school values allow us to achieve this:

Proud of our creativity

Passionate about learning

Keen to inspire

Valuing ourselves and each other

Determined to be the best we can be

We are proud of these values and our students and staff are encouraged to display them in their actions.

Ethos

We believe that the ethos of our school is one of mutual respect. As such, our ethos is driven by our values. All members of our school community must show respect for one another by treating each other, as we would wish to be treated. We must work hard at school and in the wider community to show ourselves as model citizens.



Curriculum

All children have a right to broad, balanced and relevant education which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. At John Mason School we provide this through ensuring we offer a wide range of academic subjects, alongside the development of essential skills that help students grow to become confident, independent individuals.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9)

All students follow the National Curriculum, which consists of the core subjects of English, Maths and Science together with the foundation subjects of Computing, Drama, Music, PE, Art and Design (including Textiles, 3D Design, Graphics and Hospitality and Catering), Geography, History and Religious Studies. In KS3 all students study a modern foreign language - either Spanish, German, Mandarin or French. Most students have the opportunity to take up a second language in Year 8.

In KS3, students are taught in form groups or other mixed ability groupings, although Maths and Modern Foreign Languages are taught in groupings that are suited to the current knowledge and understanding students have. All students are regularly assessed as well as supported, to ensure that they are in the right class for that current knowledge. PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) is delivered through timetabled lessons as well as part of the tutor programme.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

During Key Stage 4, students follow courses in the core subjects of English, English Literature, Mathematics, and Character Education. The majority of students are entered for 'triple science': three separate GCSE qualifications in Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

In addition, students follow a number of options chosen from a wide range of subjects.

This year the choices include: History; Geography; Psychology; French; German; Spanish; Computer Science; ICT; Film Studies; Music; Performing Arts; Physical Education; Business Studies; Art; Textiles; 3D Design; Graphics; Hospitality and Catering and Health and Social Care.

Key Stage 5 A Level Courses in the Sixth Form

JMF6-Abingdon is the sixth form provided by Fitzharrys and John Mason Schools, recently rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted, delivering high quality, post-16 education to young people in the Abingdon area and beyond. Our ambition is for every student to access outstanding learning opportunities, which encourage them to become academically successful, happy, confident and inquiring young people.

Homework

Homework is a vital part of learning. It allows students to build up their self-reliance and organisation skills. Our vision is that John Mason will be an outstanding learning school. We also aim to produce independent, lifelong learners.

Homework is set on BromCom and may link to resources in Google Classroom or other online platforms such as Sparx (Maths) or Carousel (Science). Parents and students have access to BromCom homework through the MCAS app.

Student Outcomes

Recent years have seen the GCSE and A Level results improve year on year, which has resulted in a growing 6th Form rated Outstanding by Ofsted.

The results every year reflect a huge amount of hard work and effort on behalf of our staff, students and their families and 2023 is no exception.

House Points

We believe that learning is rewarding and that students will reap the rewards of their own efforts and hard work. We also believe that students respond to positive recognition and encouragement and that good manners, effort and a positive attitude in lessons, on the sports field, in music or art or any walk of school life, should be acknowledged and celebrated.

These positive achievements will be recognised by staff in the form of verbal recognition. House points will be awarded for achievements and improvements in students' Progress Checks as well as for attendance (reviewed monthly) and for exemplifying the school values. Students are assigned to a House (Stern - Red, Oak - Green or Thames - Blue) for sporting events.

Attendance

Regular attendance is extremely important and we do ask that students keep their attendance above 95% to ensure they do not miss out on vital learning. We do however understand that there may be occasions where students are ill or have appointments they need to attend during the school day. All student absences should be notified via the dedicated school absence email address, whether it is sickness or a scheduled appointment during the school day.

Punctuality

The school day starts promptly at 8.30am. We expect students to arrive on site by 8.25am each day, ready to be seated in their form room by 8.30am for the register to be taken by their form tutor. Detentions are in place for students who are late.

Behaviour

Good learning starts with good behaviour. The whole community at John Mason School benefits from a clear Behaviour for Learning Policy; we want all students to learn effectively within a safe, calm and purposeful environment. Where students do not meet the expected level of behaviour and conduct, staff use a graduated consequences approach. The full Behaviour Policy can be found on our website.

Mobile Phones

The evidence to show a clear link between the use of mobile phones by young people and reduced mental health is building.

For this reason, as well as disruption to learning, all mobile phones must be switched off and put away during the school day. We follow a 'See It, Hear It, lose It' policy. Confiscation of phones will be made if a student is found using their mobile phone during the school day without permission.



The School Day

We run a two-week timetable at John Mason School. Students will be given a copy of their timetable and can also view their timetable on the student app. Parents and carers can also view their child's timetable via their My child at School account.

Our school timings are:

8.20am	Arrive at school
8.30am	Registration (Tutor Room)
8.45 am	Period 1
9.45 am	Period 2
10.45am	Break Time
11.10am	Period 3
12.10pm	Period 4
1.10pm	Lunch break
1.50pm	Afternoon Reg (DEAR time)
2.10pm	Period 5
3.10pm	Home Time

Break & Lunchtimes

Each year group is allocated a social space within their year group area. A space to go during break and lunch to meet other students, stay warm and dry in the winter and to obtain support from their Head of Year and Student Manager.

The Diner

The Diner is the in-house catering provision and serves a selection of hot and cold food at break and lunchtime. All menus are designed to the government nutritional standards with full allergen details.

Menus are run on a three-week cycle. Meals are freshly prepared on site using Hedges as our local butcher.

The Diner uses a biometric fingerprint system so that students can pay for purchases without the need to carry cash and parents can see at a glance if their account requires topping up and what their child purchased.



Travelling to School

Members of staff are on duty at the main gate to oversee students at the beginning and the end of the school day.

Most students are able to walk or use a bicycle to get to and from school but some students may need school transport. Secondary school children are eligible for free home to school transport where they attend their nearest available school if that school is over three miles from their home address. However, transport can also be provided where the distance to the nearest available school is less than three miles and the route is currently listed as dangerous by the council. **Full information on school transport is available at [Oxfordshire.gov.uk](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) website.**

John Mason School has bike sheds for students to put their bikes and scooters in and these are locked during the day. Cycle helmets should be worn by those cycling to school.

Lockers

Lockers are really useful for keeping your personal belongings safe, such as cycle helmet, heavy books, and for storing your PE kit between lessons. **Secure Lockers** are available to rent on a yearly subscription.

Visit: www.locker.rentals - enter the school name and press 'start booking', follow the simple steps to secure your locker or call 0330 311 1003.

School Uniform

At John Mason School we believe that wearing school uniform gives a sense of belonging to our students. Our uniform supplier is **Price and Buckland** and all **JMS badged and house uniform can be ordered on line. (starred below)** www.pbuniform-online.co.uk/johnmason

Our full uniform policy including the rules on jewellery, make up, hair and nails can be found on our website.

Students who are not in the correct uniform are not allowed to access the main school and will be isolated until the situation is rectified.

Standard School Uniform

Plain white collared shirt buttoned to the neck
(A plain white T-shirt may be worn underneath the shirt)

***School Tie**

(must be knotted & hide top button).

***JMS School Jumper**

(worn at all times except when given permission by a member of staff)

Black formal, tailored trousers

(strictly no logos, jeans, tracksuits, cargoes or combats)

Plain Formal Knee Length Black Skirt

(skirt styles are strictly A-line, pleated or skater and should not be tight-fitting)

Plain grey, white or black socks

(no above knee length)

Black/Natural Tights

Plain black low heeled shoes or plain black

trainers with laces (no logos, coloured laces, coloured soles)

Optional Summer Uniform

(Terms 5 & 6 only)

***JMS branded white polo shirt**

No Jumper required

No tie required

Black Tailored Shorts (suitable length)

PE Uniform

***Rugby Top in house colour**

Black shorts

Black tracksuit bottoms

(tracksuit not to be worn for rugby)

***Polo Shirt in House Colour**

***Orange JMS socks**

Rugby Boots & Football Boots

Shin pads

Trainers (no plimsoles)

***GCSE PE Sports Top** (ordered separately in year 10 if studying GCSE)

Outline Guidance

Plain outer coat - strictly no hoodies. Coats mustn't have large writing on them. No denim jackets.

Hats/Caps - may only be worn for specific events during summer or winter.

Hair - natural colour, no extreme hairstyles.

Make-up - may only be worn in year 10 and above.

Nail varnish is NOT permitted.

Jewellery - in the interests of safety jewellery must be kept to a minimum and not exceed the following:

Watch - permitted and recommended for all students

Earrings - one plain pair of studs may be worn (one in each ear lobe).

No other jewellery or body piercing is allowed.

All jewellery is to be removed when taking part in PE.

Equipment

We recommend that you have the following items before you join us in September:

Strong school bag

Pens - (a good supply including blue, black and green)

HB and 2B pencils

Pencil Sharpener

30cm ruler

Soft eraser (correction fluid is not allowed)

Coloured pencils (no marker pens)

Mathematics Set - including protractor, compass

Scientific Calculator

(recommended model: Casio FX-83GTX)

Reading book of your choice (for every day)

Keeping in Touch

We believe in forming strong communication links with our parent/carer community and we may do this in a variety of ways. Our main communication route is via **My Child At School (MCAS)**. For parents, this means you can easily pick up school messages on your smartphone.

Emails and text messages: MCAS is a fast and effective way for the school to get reminders and urgent messages to the appropriate parents/carers. We can send messages to one parent/carer or the whole school, and can create new groups if they will be useful, such as for specific school trips.

Cashless catering: All our students use the cashless system when buying from the Diner and you can pay money directly into your child's lunch account.

Paying for school trips: You can use MCAS at home to pay for school trips.

You will be able to register when we send you an email or text registration. You just follow the simple steps.

Pastoral Care

We understand how important it is for parents and carers to be able to have contact with a member of staff if they are worried or experiencing any issues with their child, and for them to know that their child is well cared for in school. Form Tutors, Student Managers, Head of Key Stages and other staff are all contactable if needed:

Form Tutors have the most day to day contact with students and should be the first point of contact for students or parents with any worries.

Student Managers are available throughout the school day to support students and parents with any issues affecting students' well-being or progress at school. Each year group has a Student Manager assigned to them who works closely with the Head of Year and Director of Key Stage.

The **School Counsellor** offers students regular sessions to talk over any problems or issues they have. All discussions are confidential unless child

protection guidelines are brought into force. Students are referred to this service.

The **School Health Nurse** is based in school and is available daily for advice and support on any health issues.

Wellbeing

John Mason School is committed to providing a healthy and caring environment that promotes and supports positive mental health for our students, staff and stakeholders. Positive mental health is vital to what we do at school; it underpins the crucial work carried out to support students and their families. By considering student and staff wellbeing in all aspects of school life, a positive, healthy environment can be created that improves student engagement, performance and achievement which in turn gives everyone an opportunity to develop and achieve their full potential. This year we are working incredibly hard to achieve the Wellbeing Award for Schools.

Safeguarding

We recognise our moral, ethical and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students. We are fully committed to ensuring that consistent and effective safeguarding procedures are in place to support families, young people and staff at school.

Progress

Students, parents and carers receive 3 Progress Checks each academic year. The first of these is to comment on attitude towards learning inside and outside of the classroom for each subject to show you how your child is settling into the new academic year. The further two Progress Checks will give an indication to how your child is performing in each of their subjects, either through standardised scores (KS3) or Predictions (KS4 and 5).

On one Progress Check per academic year teachers will write a moving forward target for students to be working on.

Parents and carers also get the opportunity to speak to their child's teachers at Parents' Evening. Each year group has one scheduled Parents' Evening per year. If parents and carers are concerned about their child's progress, they can make contact via email with the teacher at any time throughout the year.

Support & Challenge

Star Academy

Star Academy is our provision for disadvantaged students. Funding and support is in place to improve educational outcomes for these students. At John Mason we are committed to ensuring Pupil Premium students have the same high aspirations and opportunities to enable them to be the best they can be. We have a dedicated member of staff who as Student Support Manager works with students.

Inclusion (SEND Provision)

Some students will need extra support to enable them to reach their full potential. For other students, sustained support will be needed throughout their time at school. It is the role of the Inclusion Unit to ensure that all students identified as having a particular need are given the best possible support to enable them to achieve their potential. The Inclusion Unit, led by the SENCo, identifies students who need extra support and ensures that those students are given the best chance to succeed, both in class and through the wider school community. We do this by sharing information on

how best a student learns and by providing tailored intervention packages to help those students to close any gaps in progress with their peers. We advise teachers on best inclusive practice, providing teachers with detailed knowledge on the specific needs of each student on the SEND register.

Stretch, Challenge and Super-Curricular

Different students will be excited about different areas of the curriculum and it is these passions which can go on to form life-long interests and even careers. It is a key principle of good teaching that students should feel challenged in all their subjects and this is a responsibility all of our teachers take very seriously. We also offer an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and trips to inspire students' passions for learning.

We are committed to ensuring that our students leave JMS equipped to excel. Throughout their time in school we work with our partner colleges (Trinity College, Oxford and Peterhouse, Cambridge), we offer a range of visits, talks and sessions designed to raise aspirations and encourage students to aim as high as possible for their future beyond school. The HPQ transition project at the end of year 11, the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award and the EPQ in JMF6 are all designed to ensure that our students have the academic credentials to apply for the country's top universities and apprenticeships if they so desire.

Beyond this we regularly offer students the opportunity to access lectures and seminars led by external speakers from industry and academia in different subject areas.

We have a fantastic STEM lead who coordinates STEM clubs, trips and activities, In addition to this we are particularly proud of our arts and our music, visual arts and performing arts subjects offer a range of ways to get involved in school life.

Our School Community

Duke of Edinburgh Awards

John Mason is committed to supporting all students in KS4 achieving and engaging with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. This is a nationally recognised award that challenges students to take part in activities in four areas; Volunteering, Skills, Physical and Expedition. The award tests resilience and resourcefulness and completion of the award is very favourably viewed by employers and college admissions tutors. These skills also are invaluable in meeting the demands of GCSE and A Level exams.

LRC

Our Learning Resource Centre at John Mason School has a dedicated member of staff who has an extensive knowledge and love of literature. Students may have library lessons in the LRC and may use it to borrow books, read, complete homework using the computers or study in a quiet space. As a school we are passionate about students reading books and we are incredibly proud of our Read-Aloud Programme where trained tutors read to students during every afternoon registration period, allowing student to experience some of the best and most exciting works of literature during their time at school and helping to foster a love of reading in our students.

Welsh Farm

Troedrhigellifawr, the Welsh Farm, was bought by the John Mason Association in 1969 for £1500, originally a dairy farm, it is now our very own outward bound centre in the remote valley of Pumpsaint in West Wales. It is surrounded by forested hills and sheep farms.

The farm is used primarily for year 8 social trips, each tutor group will visit during year 8 for a 4 day adventure. The trips are designed to promote independence in our students, encouraging them



to take care of themselves, cooking, cleaning and most importantly teaching them to work as part of a team and step out of their comfort zones. The farm is also used by faculties for star gazing trips; DofE; revision weekends or just for tutor group bonding trips.

For many of the pupils the farm trips are a real highlight of their school calendar.

The O6 Gallery

Our own O6 Gallery is a professional space to exhibit art and design work and showcases our students' accomplishments as well as occasionally offering exhibition space for local artists and groups and ex-JMS Art and Design post graduates.

Sport

All students have the opportunity to access many different sports through their PE lessons at John Mason School and there are also a wide variety of clubs at lunch and after school for students to choose from. Students have the opportunity to compete in different events if they are part of the team and all students are encouraged to take part in our annual Sports Day.

JMA

The **John Mason Association** (JMA) is another name for the friends of John Mason School or John Mason PTA. The JMA is run by a committee of parents and staff in order to foster good links between home and school, to provide encouragement and support in all areas of school life, and to fundraise towards these aims. They raise funds to enrich students' time at John Mason School but also support the school in many other ways and provide extra pairs of hands when needed.



Julie Tridgell, Director of Education

Julie has been working in education since completing her BA Hons degree and PGCE at Durham University. Throughout her career Julie has worked in a variety of leadership roles in challenging schools and took up her role as Vice Principal at Banbury School in 2000 and subsequently her first headship at Carterton Community College in January 2004 followed by secondary headship in Swindon and latterly as a primary Executive Principal at Zouch Academy in Wiltshire.

Having served as a Headteacher/Principal in several different authorities and in both the secondary and primary phases Julie has also contributed to wider educational provision throughout her career working closely with her peers on leadership development and coaching as well as working collaboratively across schools and Head Teacher organisations including, on a national level, as a member of the Association of School Leaders Council.

Since leaving full time school leadership Julie has continued to broaden and enhance her professional work and skills set as an educational consultant working on developing high performing schools. Her work has focussed on three key areas of work: strategic and rapid school improvement, leadership development, and establishing effective governance working alongside different MATs and Local Academy Boards. Julie's consultancy work has taken place in mainstream schools – both primary and secondary, an all-through school as well as special schools. In addition, Julie has also specialised in governance and has worked as Chair of Interim Executive Boards for schools that are in special measures.

Julie lives in Oxfordshire with her husband Gareth, and they have three grown up children.



Admissions

For further information on the admissions process please visit our school website at:

www.johnmason.oxon.sch.uk/joining-us/admissions



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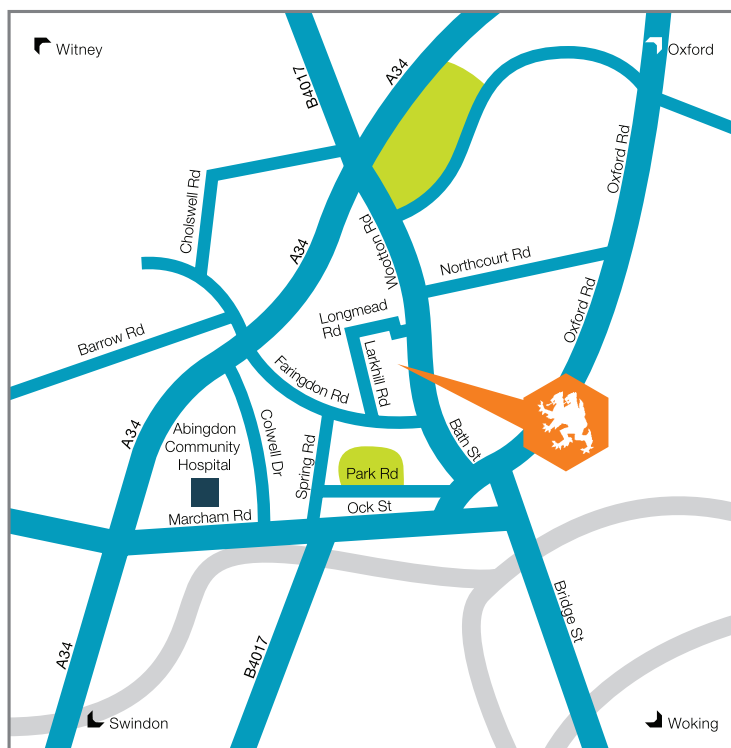
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