

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023

## Parent Bulletin

Dear families,

As we head into our last week before a well-earned Half Term break, I would like to recognise the huge amount of hard work that students and teachers have put in so far. It has been fantastic for me getting to know our school and spending time visiting lessons and seeing students engaged and enjoying their learning.

Of course, the John Mason community extends far beyond students and teachers. We value the input we receive from you as family members both through the feedback provided and the support you lend us, encouraging your children to be the best they can be.

If you would like to become more involved in the John Mason School community then there are many opportunities and I would like to pass on a message from our Chair of Governors, Sam Gosling:

### Could you be a Governor?

Are you interested in being a Governor at John Mason? We are currently hoping to recruit additional governors to the Local Academy Committee. John Mason governors are responsible for supporting the Head and Leadership Team to improve the school further.

Our primary role is to read carefully the reports we receive from the school about its work, to ask good questions, and to visit the school. The minimum time commitment is six meetings a year – these are usually held face to face at 17:30pm on a Wednesday, and last for one and a half hours. There is also a planned programme of visits to the school, and occasional requests to take part in panel work (for example, dealing with complaints or permanent exclusions).

The key requirements are enthusiasm and an interest in helping to improve the school. This is not an elected post – we have already filled those. For further information please do contact either the Clerk to the Governors, Rob Barron ([TClerk@abingdonlearningtrust.org](mailto:TClerk@abingdonlearningtrust.org)) or the Chair of Governors, Sam Gosling ([sgosling@abingdonlearningtrust.org](mailto:sgosling@abingdonlearningtrust.org)).

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**Registered Office:** Abingdon Learning Trust  
Hendred Way, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 2AW

John Mason School is part of the Abingdon Learning Trust. Abingdon Learning Trust is an exempt charity and a company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales: **Company No. 7931866**

**School Address:** Wootton Road  
Abingdon, Oxon OX14 1JB

**T:** (01235) 524 664 **F:** (01235) 520 711

**E:** [office.4126@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.4126@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk)  
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## Open Mornings

Families will be back to continue with Open Morning tours on 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October. If you know of any prospective families who would like to come and see John Mason in action, then please let them know. More details can be found [here](#).

## Uniform

As we get to the end of the term, please take the opportunity to check on your child's uniform. All students should be wearing their winter uniform as detailed in our policy which can be found [hyre](#).

On Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October we will be doing a thorough check of students' uniform with a particular focus on plain black shoes, a JMS tie and shirt along with plain formal black skirt or black tailored trousers. We also ask that jewellery and make-up are minimal and discreet and that hair is within the natural range of colours.

We will be following up on any issues with students and families. I ask that you take the next two weeks to ensure that your child has everything they need to ensure they have a smooth start to the new term.

## Year 7 Language Choices

Our year 7 students are coming to the end of a term of MFL taster sessions in our four languages, French, German, Mandarin and Spanish. The teachers have thoroughly enjoyed sharing their passions with students and hope they have enjoyed it too.

Next week all Year 7 students will be asked to select their two favourite languages. Immediately after half term they will start with one of their chosen languages, picking up the second in year 8.

Please talk to your child about their experiences this term and discuss the choices they are going to make. If you or your son/daughter has any concerns or needs some support with making this decision, please email our Director of MFL Mrs Manion at: [emannion@johnmason.school](mailto:emannion@johnmason.school)

## Homework

A reminder that all homework is set on BromCom (Google Classroom for JMF6) and that parents can view this on the MCAS app. Students in Years 7-9 are expected to do between 30 and 45 minutes of homework per subject, per week. In Years 10 and 11 this rises to 1 hour. Please monitor your child's homework and allow them to stop working on a particular homework if they have genuinely worked for this amount of time on it – unless of course they are enjoying it and want to continue!

Our aim is always to support students to complete their homework rather than issue consequences. There is a homework club in the Library on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school until 4:10pm, as well as several lunchtime support clubs run by subject experts. If a student needs help with their homework, this is the place to come to ask a teacher and it is where we will ask students to come along for support if the deadline has passed and homework is still not fully complete.

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## Gardening Club

Gardening Club are working to create more colour and space for wildlife around the school site. Last week they scattered seeds from the seed heads of nigella damascena and hollyhock, (alcea rosea). Gardening Club meets each Friday in S9 and is open to all year groups.



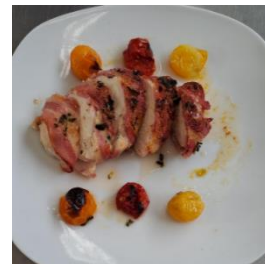
## Meeting the Attorney General

Ten of our JMF6 aspirant lawyers had a treat this week attending the High Sheriffs law lecture by Attorney General of the UK Government Victoria Prentis and came away even more ambitious for their own legal futures!

## Future Chef

Year 10 Hospitality and Catering students have been busy for the last few lessons, planning and costing a meal for two people for less than £5 as part of the Future Chef competition.

This week students had their first heat. They had an hour to prepare and cook their chosen dish. The aromas flooding the Visual Arts block were enough to tempt anyone down for a taste. Students made homemade pasta, curry, chilli, a few shepherds pies and more. Some of our students' creations would not have looked out of place in a fine dining restaurant. Well done to all of our chefs of the future.



## Year 11 Revision

We are looking forward to the Revision Day for Year 11 students on 19<sup>th</sup> October. This is an opportunity for all Year 11 students to increase their range of revision skills with the aim of ensuring that every student has the toolkit they need when preparing to sit their GCSE exams.

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## Extra-Curricular Clubs

Our extra-curricular clubs are a great opportunity for students to develop a skill and a passion for things they may only get a taste of in their normal lessons. Please take a moment to look at the full list [here](#) and talk to your child about which clubs they might like to give a try.

## Important Dates

19<sup>th</sup> October – Year 11 Revision Day

19<sup>th</sup> October 4.30-7pm – New Tutors' Evening for any students with a new tutor – booking now open on Schoolcloud

20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October – Berlin Trip

23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> October – Half Term

31<sup>st</sup> October – 6.30pm – Ski Trip Information Evening

2<sup>nd</sup> November – Year 9 Parents' Information Evening

9<sup>th</sup> November – Key Worker Meetings

9<sup>th</sup> November – Year 7 Parents' Information Evening

17<sup>th</sup> November – JMA Family Quiz (more details to follow)

I wish you and your families a relaxing weekend and look forward to seeing students on Monday for their last busy week before the Half Term break.

Yours sincerely



Alastair West  
Headteacher  
John Mason School

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