



Your Child, Your School, Your Voice

Heads Up!

Dear Parents and Carers

Forgive the repeated content of this week's scribblings, but if you have a child in Year 7 or Year 9, I have no doubt they came home this week and spoke about their day with Humanutopia, a group who work with young people on self-esteem, ambition, peer pressure and 'bin filling' – I'll come back to this. A day with Humanutopia is a humbling experience, every time; I am moved by the courage of our children, their support of each other and their honesty – such essential qualities. The assemblies about resilience this week by Ms. Butler, have also been met with maturity and care, genuine interest and compassion. They have shown us **valuing ourselves and each other.**

As you know, I expect our children and adults to act with **honesty, kindness and respect**; these are our core expectations for behaviour at John Mason School. However, where you have a community of over a thousand people you will have difference, and where you have difference you will have a small minority of people who do not show kindness and pick on the difference; a bully. The word itself is contentious; no one likes to be thought of as a bully, or in the words of Humanutopia, a 'bin-filler' – and yet we probably all have been on the receiving end at some stage. I was bullied, but not as a child. I thought I had been, but the fact of the matter is a girl called Heidi pushed me into some stinging nettles when I was 10; a one-off, tear-stained moment. Was it bullying? No. Did it hurt? Yes. Do I remember it? Absolutely – even her name (and sometimes I forget my own children's.) What a simple indicator of the impact of not being kind. I was actually bullied in my first teaching post. As a young teacher I was put in charge of a team in my role as Assistant Head of Sixth Form. Enthusiastic, ambitious and wanting to impress, I was a stickler for detail, not wanting to let down the faith put in me at such a young age. In my team there was a sociology teacher, an old school practitioner; a Welshman with a wonderful moustache, amiable manner, a real crowd pleaser who was always cracking a joke with colleagues. However, he never came out on duty at break or after school. I would go and find him, having a coffee and belly laughing at the centre of a crowd, ask him politely to come and support the students. What started as nods and, 'I'll be there now Sarah,' became, 'Alright love, just finishing this coffee', to, 'Who are you to tell me what to do? I've been teaching longer/you silly little girl/don't you know who I am?' Any chance to refuse, to make a dig about the fact I was young and female, to assert his age/gender – I'm not sure what else, was taken. The situation was eventually resolved. But, the feelings of anger and frustration, the hot tears of wounded pride, have stayed with me to this day.

I doubt there is anyone that hasn't experienced some form of unkindness in their lives; I wonder what yours was? It's not OK to make someone feel small or insignificant; it's not OK to tease someone -for any reason; it's not, OK? The reason we work with companies like Humanutopia and 'Just Like Us', is because we want every child to understand the impact of unkindness and that **difference is fantastic**. I avoid the word tolerance here as this suggests we are putting up with difference, passively allowing each other to be. What I want at our school and for our children is recognition, interest, and understanding. What a dull life we would lead if we were all the same, how exciting and brilliant it is that we have the opportunity to meet people who bring their individuality into our lives. I hope you get the chance to talk with your children at some point about what they have heard, particularly those who 'heroes' trained by Humanutopia – they were a credit to you and our school.

That's all from me, have a great weekend.

Sarah Brinkley

Follow me on Twitter: @HeadteacherJMS

Focus On Learning Support Faculty

Term 1 has been very busy and buoyant for the Learning Support Faculty. As the newest member of the LS Team, it has been a steep but ever so pleasant learning curve to get to know the pupils, the ins and outs of the Faculty and the school system.

The LS Team has been planning the various interventions that will take place for the forthcoming academic year; priority will be given to pupils on the SEND register although we can offer ad-hoc interventions to all pupils at JMS should the need arise.

2017-2018 Interventions:

Intervention	Key Skills	Age range	Ratio	Frequency
FFT	Reading (fluency and comprehension)	11-13	1:1	Every day / 100 sessions
Over-learning	Core subjects (revision and retrieval of knowledge)	14-16	1:1 and small groups	Weekly
Writing skills	Structuring and writing skills	11-16	Small group	Weekly
Precision Teaching	Spelling	11-13	1:1	10 min daily
Social skills	Communication, interaction and relationships	11-16	1:1 or small group	Weekly
Nurture Session	Emotions, self-awareness and self-regulation; communication	11-16	1:1 or small group	Weekly
Art as Therapy	Emotions, self-awareness and self-regulation; communication	11-16	1:1	Weekly

Pupils in need of quiet and calm are also welcome in the foyer of LS at break and lunchtime. There, they can have a bite to eat, relax and have a chat with other pupils. The atmosphere there is always friendly, positive and nurturing! Let me also take this opportunity to remind you of our homework club that runs Monday to Friday, 3:10-4:10 pm. We have two Teaching Assistants supervising and supporting pupils in approaching and completing homework tasks.

Astrid Fox-Orband, Head of Learning Support Faculty

Spanish Student Visit

Hi!

We are fourteen Spanish students who left Vigo to visit England on the 20th of September 2017. When we arrived, we were all so excited to meet our host families. During these last three weeks they made us feel as though we were in our own homes!

When we got to meet our buddies our awesome English routine started. Despite the fact that we had to get up earlier than in Spain, we enjoyed each day in John Mason School as if it were the last one.

John Mason School has a lot of classrooms and students need to change from one classroom to another for each lesson. Every student had a 'buddy' – a person who helped us. During the week we went to classes like we were a John Mason School student. Everybody tried to speak with us in Spanish and they always said "Hola!" when they saw us. That was funny and we felt like we were at home. Teachers helped us in our integration. They are all cool teachers and very different to in Spain.

We didn't only go to school, in fact we visited many different places such as London and Burford Village. We also had the opportunity to walk around Oxford colleges and Abingdon. We will miss it all so much! We would want to say to the families, teachers and monitors that we are so thankful for this trip, the best experience of our lives and of course, thanks to Eva, Ella, Millie, Gena, Natalie, Liam, Harry, Antos, Lottie, Ella, Sophie, Abigail, Willow and Lucy for helping us and making us feel comfortable. You were all so lovely.

Hope you visit Spain one day and meet us again!

Eva, Carla, Elena, Uxia, Helena, Pablo, Jon, Diego, Thais, Ana, Nerea, Laura, Uxia, Andrea.



Post-16 Choices

There are two important events in the next few weeks for Year 11 students, to help them decide on their pathway beyond the age of 16.

The first event has already been advertised: on **Monday evening 16th October** at Abingdon and Witney College there will be a *Futures* evening for all year 11 students and their parents. At this event, there will be information shared about A levels and the changes to these qualifications, apprenticeships, vocational learning, pathways to university and a chance to meet with lead professionals from all schools and the college. Keynote speeches will be delivered in the lecture theatre at 6 pm, 6.45 and 7.30 pm and parents can book into their preferred sessions by using the link: <http://tinyurl.com/futuresevening>.

This Futures event is followed by our own **Sixth Form Open Evening on Monday 2nd November**: letters will be issued about this on Monday, but please put the date in your diary. The evening is being held at John Mason School, and we are joining with Fitzharrys School teachers for this event. From September 2018 we are jointly offering a wide range of A level courses, supported by a number of vocational courses at Abingdon and Witney College.

Please do come along to find out about this curriculum offer, but also about our excellent enrichment opportunities, pastoral support, careers advice and facilities for sixth form study. Specialist teachers representing over 25 different subject areas will be available to meet you and give you information and advice about all of the A Level and Level 3 courses on offer. A short presentation will be delivered at 6.30pm and you will be able to take away a prospectus containing all the information you will need.

Students in Year 11 will receive additional advice on possible pathways in assemblies, tutor periods and careers interview, and there will be a Year 11 Parents' consultation evening on Wednesday 6th December where you will meet their subject teachers and discuss the possibility of continuing to study subjects beyond GCSE.

If you have any questions about this provision please do contact either myself or Mr. Duckham, Director of Key Stage 4.

We are sure that the both of these evening will be of great value to you and your parents/carers as you decide your post-16 options. We do hope you will be able to join us.

Mrs Valerie Munro
Deputy Headteacher

Are you interested in science and journalism?

Young Scientists Journal publishes articles written by 12-20 year olds on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and related topics.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO SUBMIT?

1. Your scientific (or related article) in word document format – with all figures inserted as high quality images and full references in the [Chicago Style](#).
2. A biography of you with 200-400 characters written in 3rd person and a photo of you.
3. A short 120 character summary of your article
4. Contact details of your school/organisation so we can inform them you are publishing an article and if necessary verify you are aged between 12-20

Full details about writing and submitting an article can be found at: <https://ysjournal.com/publish>

Please also send a copy to: p.scutt@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk

Follow us at: JMS_STEM

New STEM Competition

Design a new logo for 'John Mason School STEM'. This logo will be used to promote all STEM activities within John Mason and will be displayed in and around the school.

Your logo should promote JMS and STEM (Science Technology Engineering & Maths) and can be produced by hand or on a computer.

To enter, send your final designs to p.scutt@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk or hand it to Mr Scutt (S2), making sure to include your name and form group.

Prizes: A range of scientific prizes are available!

Deadline: Tuesday 31st October 2017

Follow STEM activities via our new Twitter: JMS_STEM

Calling all Girls interested in Engineering!

Can you find the engineering solutions to the world's biggest challenges? Don't miss out on the next competition.

The 2017-2018 Talent 2030 National Engineering Competition for Girls opened on 25 September!

Sponsored by PepsiCo, Rolls-Royce and Centrica, girls aged 11-18 have until 15 December 2017 to show us how they can use engineering to solve any twenty-first century problem.

Winners receive up to £1000 and all shortlisted finalists are invited to showcase their ideas to thousands of people at the Big Bang Fair in March!

So; the energy crisis? Improving elderly care? Living in vertical cities? How will you use engineering to impact the world and improve people's lives?

For more details visit: <http://www.talent2030.org> and contact Mr Scutt (STEM Ambassador) in S2 (p.scutt@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk)

For more competition and STEM events follow JMS_STEM on Twitter.

YOUR FUTURE

DISCOVER THE ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

University | Apprenticeships | Employment | College

CAREERS FAIR

WEDNESDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2017 3.10pm-5pm

At Larkmead School—Hall & Gym
All students & parents / carers welcome

John Mason School

COLOUR RUN

Friday 20th October 'Wear it Pink Day'
1 mile of FUN!

Pupils will take part in a "colour run" during the following lessons :

- P1 = YR8 & SIXTH FORM
- P2 = YR9
- P3 = 11Y
- P4 = 11X
- DEAR TME = YR10
- P5 = YR7

Students will need to bring a top to put over their clothes, that they don't mind getting "coloured". The powder does come out, but may take a couple of washes. Students may also wish to wear sunglasses to stop any going into their eyes accidentally.

Students do not have to be coloured & can by-pass the colour stations if they wish

Dates for your Diary:

We make every effort to keep our calendar on our website up-to-date: click here to view: [JMS website](#).