



Information Booklet



John Mason School
Excellence Through Creativity

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 Head of School, Mr Adrian Rees, took over the Headship in April 2020, and Sarah Brinkley, Executive Headteacher and Director of Secondary Education for Abingdon Learning Trust has taken over the leadership of the secondary phase of learning, to which John Mason School belongs, together with Fitzharrys School and Rush Common Primary School.

A message from the Head of School

Welcome to our school, it is an exciting place to be. As Head of School, I am very proud to have the opportunity to lead such a special place and to work with our students, parents and community.

At John Mason, we believe that learning should be enjoyable and challenging. This belief, combined with the excellent teaching skills and commitment of our staff and the enthusiasm and hard work of our students, lies at the heart of our success.

We have high expectations of our students and our aim is to enable each of them to achieve success and meet their potential in order to open up a lifetime of opportunities. At the heart of our ethos is the belief that each child is an individual, with a unique set of talents and abilities.

We believe that high standards of academic achievement and consistently high expectations of behaviour provide children with the stable and calm environment in which to learn effectively. All our staff work hard to develop curiosity, a love of learning, resilience and kindness in our students.

We are an inclusive school, catering for all abilities and providing access for all students. Day to day the school is filled with students participating in vibrant music, arts and drama, as well as engaging lessons in science, maths and the humanities among others. As a school, we offer an extensive range of sports, charity events, trips and expeditions, all of which combine to create a caring and highly successful school. Every parent wants the very best for their child; at John Mason, we do too.



Mr Adrian Rees
Head of School



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.

School Values

We are proud of our values. We aim to ensure both Students and Staff display them in their actions and conduct. We use them as a foundation for our learning and development and feel that they are the key to our Character Education provision:

Proud of our creativity

Passionate about learning

Keen to inspire

Valuing ourselves and each other

Determined to be the best that we can be

These values are underpinned by three essential behaviours that we expect from all stakeholders;

Ready

Respectful

Safe

The school values are 'recognised' in the form of House Points and our Assembly programme and tutor activities are based on these values and behaviours.

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.

High Quality Teaching and 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.

Student Outcomes

The past five years have seen the GCSE and A Level results improve year on year, and although 2020 results have been calculated in a different way and cannot be published, we know our students have worked extremely hard and would have shown us they could have continued that upward trajectory.

The results every year reflect a huge amount of hard work and effort on behalf of our staff, students and their families and 2020 is no exception.

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 a broad and varied curriculum to support all our students.

Key Stage 3 (Years 7-8)

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, Food and Nutrition and Graphics), Geography, History and Religious Studies. In Year 7, all students study a modern foreign language - either Spanish, German, French or Mandarin. In Year 8, most students have the opportunity to take up a second language.

In Year 7 and 8, students are taught in form groups or other mixed ability groupings, although Maths is taught in ability sets in Year 7 and 8. In Modern Foreign Languages, students are grouped according to the language they have chosen and their ability. All students are regularly assessed as well as supported, to ensure that they are in the right set for their ability and potential.

PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education) is delivered through a course called Character Education.

Key Stage 4 (Years 9, 10 and 11)

During Key Stage 4, students follow courses in the core subjects of English, English Literature, Mathematics, and Character Education. All students also study Statistics and Science: the majority are entered for 'triple science': separate GCSE exams 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; Media Studies; Music; BTEC Performing Arts; Physical Education; Business Studies; Art; Textiles; Graphics, 3D Design and Health and Social Care. Some students also study for The Prince's Trust qualification.

Key Stage 5

A Level Courses in the Sixth Form

JMF6 is part of a Consortium with the other education establishments in Abingdon. It was rated as an outstanding provider of 16-19 education by Ofsted in June 2019, only one year after it was formed as a merger of the 6th Form provision of John Mason and Fitzharrys schools. JMF6 shares a common curriculum with our consortium partners. Abingdon and Witney College, Fitzharrys and Larkmead.



Attendance

Regular attendance is important for students to achieve their potential at school. Those who are regularly absent miss out by falling behind with classwork and homework.

Not only do students feel left behind in class they can also feel left out of friendship groups, which change rapidly. This makes them nervous and worried about attending school, so making the attendance issue worse.

John Mason School monitors attendance very closely and our Student Managers are in regular contact with parents, chasing absences and supporting parents and students with any issues affecting attendance.

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 uniform can be ordered on line. Our 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.

Support and Challenge

Star Academy



Star Academy is our provision for children in receipt of Pupil Premium. Pupil Premium was introduced to improve educational outcomes for our most disadvantaged students. At John Mason we are committed to ensuring Pupil Premium students have the same high aspirations and opportunities to enable them to reach their potential. We have a dedicated member of staff who as Student Support Manager works with all eligible students.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (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 also 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 are particularly proud of our prestigious Symposium offer. This enables students from all key stages to access lectures and seminars led by external speakers from industry and academia. Students also complete an independent research project and present on this to parents and guests at one of our partner universities in the summer term. This both gives them a valuable foretaste of studying at the highest levels, but also gives them a chance to explore areas of academic interest that go far beyond the national curriculum.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

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.



Stay Safe, Feel Well

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 Student Manager is linked to a certain year group and stays with that year group through the school.

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.

Keeping in Touch

We believe in making communication from school to home as simple and efficient as possible. To do this we use an electronic system called **ParentMail**. This allows us to do most of our communication using a paperless system, saving on printing costs and the environment. We can send emails, text messages and forms for you to complete and as we are a cashless school, you can add money to your child's lunch account, pay for school trips and other items.



The School Day

8.20am	Arrive at school, make way to form room
8.30am	Registration. Students must be sitting in their form room in time for their tutor to take the morning register.
	Assembly days and location will be notified in September
8.45am	Period 1
9.45am	Period 2
10.45am	Break time
11.15am	Period 3
12.10pm	Period 4
1.05pm	Lunch break
1.45pm	Afternoon Registration (DEAR time & Academic mentoring)
2.10pm	Period 5
3.10pm	Home time

Warning bells ring 5 minutes before each lesson bell to give students time to get to their correct classroom.

Social Spaces

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.

We make every effort to keep prices as low as we can. The Diner uses a swipe card system and parents and carers can easily top-up lunch accounts via Parentmail. This also enables parents and carers to see what their child is purchasing.

Houses

As well as belonging to a **Year Group** and **Tutor Group**, each student also belongs to **one of three houses**.

The main function of the house system is to develop a sense of identity or belonging and to celebrate achievements. Each house at JMS represents a river in Abingdon and each student will belong to either **Thames, Stert** or **Ock**. Every member of staff and every student belong to one of the 3 houses.

It is important for students to have the opportunity to play an active role and contribute to a community within their school, which allows them to develop skills and talents and acknowledges their successes in a wide range of ways. We encourage students to play an active role in the success of their house.



Learning Resource Centre

John Mason School has its own Learning Resource Centre with a dedicated Librarian. Students can use this space during their break and lunch times and can spend time reading, borrowing books, catching up on homework and using computers.

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 accessible via our online homework system 'Show my homework'. Homework is uploaded by teachers and can be accessed via a phone app or via the student's login on any computer device. Parents can also get text alerts when homework is set and overdue.

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.



Our School Community

JMA

The **John Mason Association** (JMA) is another name for the friends of John Mason School or John Mason PTA. Anyone with any connections with the school - parents, teachers, governors, students - is automatically a member of the JMA. 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. They arrange social activities which are great fun and a chance to meet other parents and students.



Welsh Farm

Troedrhiwgellifawr, 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 O2 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.

Admissions

As an academy, Oxfordshire County Council is the admissions authority for the school and we follow their admissions process.

Key dates when applying for a place

4th September 2020 Applications Open
31st October 2020 closing date for applications
1st March 2020 National offer day
16th March 2020 Last date to respond to offers

Catchment Area

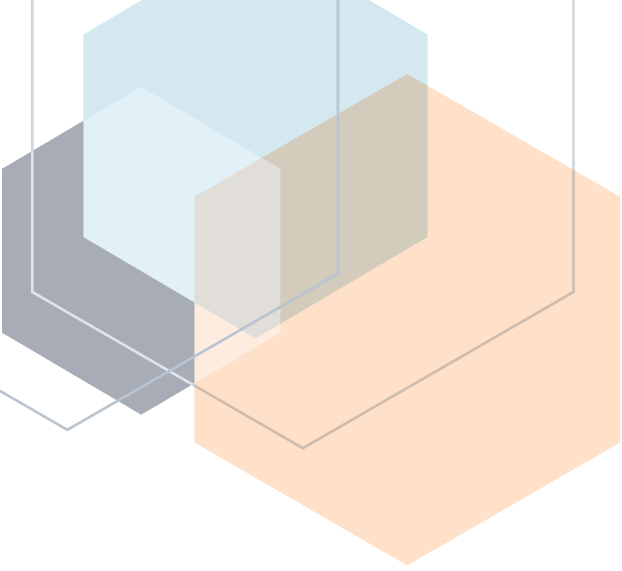
John Mason School has a catchment area which includes the whole town of Abingdon and many surrounding villages, because we believe everyone should be able to join us if they wish. **To check if you are in the catchment area, visit the Oxfordshire.gov.uk website** where a map of the catchment area can be found.

How will my child get to school?

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 website**. John Mason School has bike sheds for students to put their bikes and scooters in and these are locked during the day.

Further Information

We hope you have found this brochure helpful and it has given you an insight into life at John Mason School. For many of the headings above, more in-depth information can be found on our website but if you want to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact the school.



Quality – Opportunity – Collaboration – Ambition – Community

Abingdon Learning Trust is a family of schools rooted in local communities.

Our vision is a bold one:

'To nurture curiosity and fuel a passion for learning – shaping confident individuals and resilient communities, stronger together and ambitious for the future.'

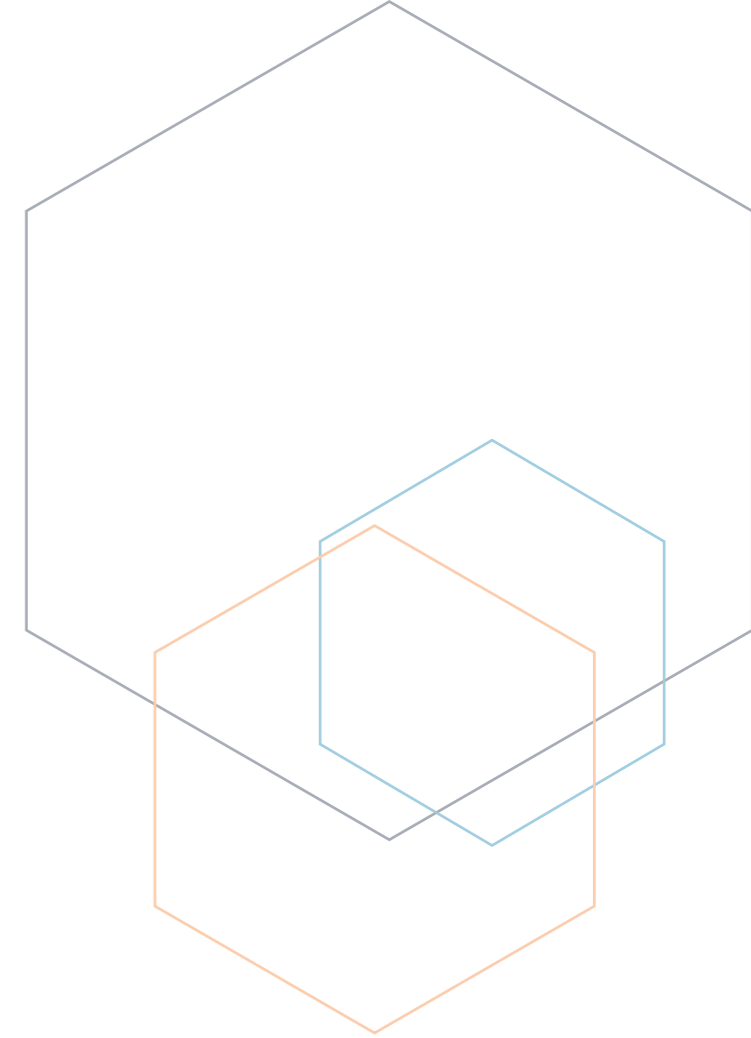
But what does this mean for the staff and students at John Mason School?

For our students it is opportunity rich education; the chance to experience new things – in sport, music, science, languages, computing and the arts; through trips and visits delivered by authors, engineers, university lecturers, employers, actors, musicians, politicians – authentic learning experiences. We endeavour to make the connection between what children are learning and the potential it has to change their lives in the future. These opportunities should raise aspirations and show our students that if we work together, they can achieve whatever they set their minds to. This mindset is essential in the classroom when learning gets hard, growing the essential skills of grit, resilience and enquiry.

For our staff this vision means that their professional development is paramount; if our teachers are reflective in approach and provided with the time and support to continue training, then our students will achieve more. As a Trust our decisions are rooted in evidence, led by our Director of Research and Innovation, and we encourage our staff to be actively involved in research at local and national level.

I am extremely proud of the ethos and community at John Mason School, shaped by Abingdon Learning Trust. We believe in the power of young people to change the world; they just have to be shown how.

Sarah Brinkley
Executive Headteacher, Director of Secondary Education
Abingdon Learning Trust





John Mason School

Excellence Through Creativity

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