

# JOHN MASON SCHOOL

## NEWSLETTER

### YOUR CHILD, YOUR SCHOOL, YOUR VOICE

We would love to have your suggestions or ideas on what to call the Newsletter – please email suggestions to Lucie Cotmore-Brown at [events@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:events@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk).

### HEADS UP

Wow! What a great start to our new academic year it has been. I am sure your children have come home tired after their first few days back, but I have been hugely impressed with their attitudes to learning and respect for each other so far.

I wanted to thank you for your support with sending your child in the correct uniform. No doubt the jungle drums have been in over drive with regards to our ban on 'super skinny' trousers. This is not a new uniform policy; I just want to enforce what we already have. Some people have asked why it matters; it is about standards. If we are to raise the bar in everything we do - teaching, extra-curricular activities, communication, and behaviour for learning – it starts with the basics. I want every child to be proud to be wearing their uniform and to be proud to be a part of this fantastic school. It's in our values, in our way of thinking, it is who we are.

Our new staff have got off to a great start and I have thoroughly enjoyed going into classes and seeing a broad range of strategies and activities in place. Our drive this year is to put learning first, in all its forms, with a focus on challenge and stretch for all, independence and improving the quality of reading and writing. In addition we have an exciting iDay programme planned (watch this space), trips and visit and a relaunch of our House system to encourage wider participation and pride in all that we do.

When I was appointed to the role of Headteacher at John Mason School, I was delighted to be working in and serving my local community again. The truth is? It is an absolute privilege.

Sarah Brinkley

Follow me on Twitter: @HeadteacherJMS

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

#### Year 7 2015-2016

I am sure that there were a few butterflies floating around on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September; not to mention nausea and nervous energy - and that was just from you parents! However, there was no need to worry: students in Year 7 made a wonderful start at John Mason School, and even those who were nervous soon felt less so as the day went on.

I have been so very impressed by the attitude and diligence of our Year 7 students. I can honestly say that they are a well-presented, hard-working lot who are already a credit to our school! In the morning assembly on the first day, I talked to students about 'community', and stressed that one of their main responsibilities would be to build a strong, inclusive community within the year group. I was amazed by how quickly and whole-heartedly the students embraced this message: during break and lunch times I witnessed several

instances whereby our students approached those who were on their own to ask them to join their group; fabulous!

There have been many occasions over the last few days where teachers have approached me to comment on what a lovely year group our current Year 7 is. They have been impressed by the standard of students' work and their commendable work ethic. I know that this positive start will continue and in fact will only increase as the year progresses.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Year 7 students, their families and carers, year seven tutors, as well as the student managers and teaching and support staff at John Mason School, for ensuring that this year's transition has been smooth and successful. Many thanks to you all.

*Ruth Davies, Head of Year 7*

**“Great books help you understand, and they help you feel understood”, says teen author of the moment, John Green.** In many ways I think this encapsulates what we want for the children in our care. At John Mason we are passionate about supporting pupils to develop a love of reading and good reading habits. This year we have a fantastic new librarian who joins us from the Bodleian, as well as a dedicated team of English teachers, all of whom are committed to helping pupils improve their reading.

Sometimes pupils say “I don't like reading”, but I have never had a pupil tell me they don't enjoy being read to or that they are not enjoying a novel we read as a class. For this reason I am a firm believer in the idea that people who say they don't like reading just haven't found the right book. Those who have could, I expect, eulogise endlessly about the benefits of reading; the joy of getting into something that you just can't put down and the mixed emotions you feel when you finish a great book; what is more, research shows that as a result they will make better progress at school. Limited vocabulary is one of the primary causes of academic failure and this comes as no surprise when we consider GCSE exam papers have a reading age of 15 and yet the average reading age in the UK is 9.

We aim to encourage reading in a number of ways. Pupils at John Mason use a programme called Accelerated Reader which tracks and monitors their reading age and sets targets to help them improve. They can take regular quizzes on books they read and can win prizes for achievements such as most number of words read or most number of quizzes passed. We also shadow book awards such as the Carnegie and encourage pupils to use the LRC outside of lessons, including before school, at lunch time and after school.

Most of all, teachers at John Mason understand that we are all teachers of Literacy. We all have books which are special to us, which we would recommend and which we would love to talk to pupils about.

*Sally Butler, Head of Faculty, English and Media*

## COMMUNITY NEWS

Well done to Chloe Ellis who was very brave over the summer holidays and helped a lady who had fallen off her bike and was found lying in a ditch. Chloe and her friend called the emergency services and ran for help – excellent quick thinking Chloe.

Congratulations to Connor Ferguson who is now England's No.1 youth tennis player. This is a fantastic achievement Connor – the school community is very proud of you.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Parents Forum – 29<sup>th</sup> September @ 6pm

The first Parents' Forum of this academic year will take place on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September at 6pm and will be led by the Headteacher, Sarah Brinkley.

We would welcome your ideas about what the first topic should be, if you have any suggestions; please let us know by emailing Lucie Cotmore-Brown at [events@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:events@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk) by Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September.

The second half of the meeting will allow you to ask questions on any topic – sent in advance please; as this allows us time to ask appropriate staff where necessary. Please email your questions, to the same address – we look forward to seeing you on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

Open Evening – 8<sup>th</sup> October from 5pm – School will close at 1pm on this day

'Pizza for Parents' during the year 7/8 disco on 22<sup>nd</sup> October

Further dates of forthcoming events can be found on the JMS Website

## PARENT DIRECTOR ELECTION

John Mason Academy Trust is the charitable company responsible for the running of John Mason School. It has a Board of Directors (who are also the school's governors) including parents, staff and other members of the community.

The Board meets about six times a year (meetings are usually on Wednesdays starting at 17:30 and lasting about two hours). Directors also serve on one of the two main committees (Curriculum, Welfare & Assessment and Finance, Premises & Personnel).

There will be two vacancies on the Board this term for Parent Directors to serve for the next four years. All parents with one or more children currently registered at John Mason School are eligible to stand for election.

If you would like to help the school by joining the Board, please complete the nomination form below, giving brief details of yourself and your interests and including the signatures of two other current John Mason parents, and return it to the School office by 12:00 on Friday 25 September. If more than two nominations are received, ballot papers will be distributed to parents the following week including candidates' names and details.

### PARENT DIRECTOR ELECTION 2015 - NOMINATION FORM

I should like to stand for election as a Parent Director of the John Mason Academy Trust  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (John Mason students)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please give some brief details of yourself and any relevant interests (not exceeding 200 words)

**This nomination is supported by the following two current John Mason parents**

**Seconder 1**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (John Mason students)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Seconder 2**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of \_\_\_\_\_ (John Mason students)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form to the School office by 12:00 on Friday 25 September 2015**



# SPORTS CLUBS

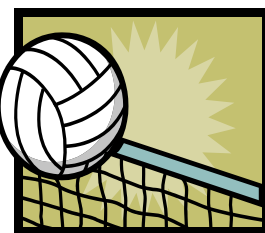
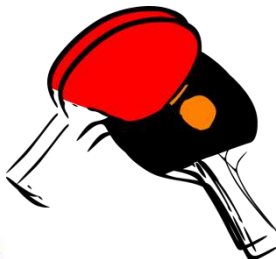
**Clubs to start Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September**

DAY	SPORTSHALL	GYM
Monday	Netball : Yr8 & 9 LG & SK	
Tuesday	Netball : Yr7 SK	Fitness : KS4 JD
Wednesday	Basketball : Yr10 & 11 IF	Table tennis : LG & GG
Thursday	Netball : Yr10, 11 & Seniors LG	Indoor football : Yr7 JD
Friday	Basketball : KS3 CS	Volleyball : All years LG

RED = GIRLS    BLUE = BOYS    PURPLE = MIXED

*Please keep an eye open for upcoming fixtures*

*Any questions please ask the member of staff leading that club*





# Calling all parents, carers, grandparents and friends.

John Mason Association would like to invite you to join the

## JMA Lucky Numbers Club

Helping raise funds for a school mini bus.

Join the JMA Lucky Numbers Club with a one off payment of £15 and you could win a cash prize, 10 monthly draws take place per academic year, support John Mason School to help fund a school mini bus, plus a chance to win a cash prize!

How does the JMA Lucky Numbers Club work? Each member is allocated a number(s) upon receipt of their £15 membership fee. Your **JMA Lucky Number** will be confirmed via email so please make sure you leave an email address along with your full postal address so we can send those winning cheques to you! If you don't have an email address we will confirm your lucky number by post.

**Membership** is open to anyone over 18, cost will be £15 per academic year, running from October to July. From the membership fee 50% goes directly to helping the school, 50% goes into a prize fund which is divided into 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, so remember the more members we have the higher the prize fund!

**To join** please complete the slip below. You can apply for as many **JMA Lucky Numbers** as you would like, tell all your friends and family. We accept payment via Parentmail2 (look for payment option under SCHOOL SHOP), cash or cheque enclosed with the slip below.

I/We wish to join the **JMA Lucky Numbers Club** for 2015-2016 and enclose £15 per membership. Please indicate: ParentMail2/Cash/Cheque (Please make cheques payable to JMA Lucky Numbers Club)

Amount of **JMA Lucky Numbers** you would like: .....

Name(s): .....

Email .....

Address: .....

Post code.....Telephone: .....

Student's name: .....Form.....

Signed: .....Date:.....

**Don't forget to either post your contact details (above) to; Helen Wright at JMA Lucky Numbers Club, John Mason School, Wootton Road, Abingdon, OXON, OX14 1JB**

**OR Email to [luckynumbers@jma.org.uk](mailto:luckynumbers@jma.org.uk)**

**Thank you for your support!**