

**Key Information 2021-2022**



# **Fitzharrys School**

**Aspiration • Opportunity • Integrity**





# An Introduction to Fitzharrys

2020/21 once again saw our students achieve excellent GCSE and A Level results despite the extraordinary circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 lockdown. This is a wonderful reward for our students' hard work and the significant progress made over their time at Fitzharrys School, as well as a reflection of Ofsted's view that:

**"Fitzharrys is a very caring and supportive community where pupils flourish."**

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, 2021/22 promises to be an exciting year at Fitzharrys. Students will have the opportunity to build their knowledge, skills and resilience both in lessons and the wider school community. We have high aspirations for our students and will continue to challenge them to meet them.

This information booklet contains a collection of key information points for prospective students and new starters at Fitzharrys School. We hope you will find it a useful starting point. Additional information can be found on our school website, including term dates, curriculum summaries, a full library of school policies and so much more. Do get in touch if you have any questions – we are always very pleased to help.

Best wishes,

**Will Speke**  
**Head of School**

## School Tours

Our annual Open Evening is held in October and is great chance to explore Fitzharrys and meet our staff and students. We would also encourage you to visit during our annual week of Open Mornings, where visitors can come and see us in action during normal school days.

This year, our Open Evening is being held on Thursday 14th October 2021, followed by a week of Open Mornings (commencing Monday 18th October). We look forward to welcoming you to our wonderful school.

We are always keen for people to come and visit us. Meeting our staff and students will give you a real insight into what our great school has to offer. Contact us to book your visit.

## Admissions

We follow the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) policy on admissions. OCC administer the applications process on our behalf.

If your child is under 11 years of age, you can select the school online: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) or complete the Secondary School Preference Card in October prior to their entry in the following September and follow its instructions for delivery.

If your child is over 11 years of age, contact the Admissions Officer at Fitzharrys to request a place.

## The School Day

Each morning and afternoon begins with Fitz Focus time in tutor groups which, alongside a weekly assembly, is an important part of the school day, helping students to reflect and prepare for the challenges ahead.

Fitzharrys School follows a two-week timetable and weeks are labelled 'Week A' and 'Week B'.

### Timetable

08:40 – 08:50	Fitz Focus (Registration)
08:50 – 09:50	Period 1 Lesson
09:50 – 10:50	Period 2 Lesson
10:50 – 11:10	Breaktime
11:10 – 12:10	Period 3 Lesson
12:10 – 13:10	Period 4 Lesson
13:10 – 13:50	Lunchtime
13:50 – 14:15	Fitz Focus/Assembly (Registration)
14:15 – 15:15	Period 5 Lesson

## Break & Lunch Times

Students are welcome to either bring a packed lunch or buy food from our canteen, which serves a variety of tasty menu choices that are very competitively priced. The menu rotates on a three-week cycle and can be accessed on the school website.

**The canteen is open 10.50 – 11.10 for break time and 13.10 – 13.45 for lunch.**

With the exception of the Sixth Form, students may not leave the school site during lunch or any part of the school day without special permission from their Head of Year, agreed in advance.

## 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.

Fitzharrys School has a large cycle lock-up onsite for bicycle parking, and cycle helmets should be worn by those cycling to school.

Children entitled to school transport will receive a bus pass via Oxfordshire County Council. School transport is managed by Oxfordshire County Council. For information on school transport policy, eligibility for free transport, most current routes & timetables, or how to apply for a concessionary place, please consult their website: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/travelling-school](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/travelling-school)

If you think your child is eligible for free transport but you have not already been informed of this, please contact the School Admissions Team on **0345 241 2487**.

There is on-site car parking available for staff and visitors to Fitzharrys School. For safety reasons, with the exception of organised transport taxis, the school drive is closed to all vehicles at the beginning and the end of the school day to allow all our students to enter and exit the site safely; parents and carers wishing to drop-off or collect children by car should please do so beyond the school gate.

## Mobile Phones

Fitzharrys School appreciates that parents and carers may wish their child to carry a mobile phone to allow for contact on the way to and home from school, and for reasons of personal safety. As a school, we do not take responsibility for phones or other electronic devices brought onto site. We encourage parents not to communicate with their child by mobile during the day but use the main school switchboard to make contact.

We have a clear and enforced policy to manage students' use of mobile phones. Phones are not permitted for use in school unless students have specific permission from a member of staff. The approach of 'See it, hear it, lose it' is used. If phones are seen out they will be confiscated, with escalating consequences if caught more than once. Fitzharrys' regulated approach encourages a focus on learning, socialising, and reducing screen time.

# Uniform

Uniform helps to create a sense of community and equality and there is a compulsory uniform for students in years 7–11 at Fitzharrys School. The Head of School reserves the right to send students home who are not appropriately dressed.

**All starred\* items are available online from our supplier: Price and Buckland**, or over-the-counter at school in our Students Services office where there is a full collection of school blazers, jumpers and summer polo shirts; students are very welcome to try these on for size.

## Standard School Uniform

- **School tie** (available from Fitzharrys School only)
- **Black blazer** with the school badge\*
- **Plain white school shirt** with white buttons and collar – no logos or blouses
- **Black smart, tailored trousers** – strictly no logos, embroidery, jeans, combats or cargoes
- **Plain black formal knee-length skirts** – acceptable skirt styles are strictly A-line, pleated or skater, and should not be tight-fitting
- **Plain grey/black/white socks**
- **Black/natural tights**
- **Sensible black shoes** – trainers may only be worn for PE lessons

## Optional Summer Uniform (Terms 5 & 6 only)

- **Optional blue school polo shirt** replaces shirt, tie and blazer\*
- **Optional blue V-necked jumper** with Fitzharrys School logo\*

## PE Uniform

- **Navy blue shadow shorts\*** (shadow stripe)
- **Navy/sky blue polo shirt** with Fitzharrys School logo\*
- **Navy blue rugby shirt** with Fitzharrys School logo\*
- **White ankle socks**
- **Navy blue rugby/football socks\***
- **Non-marking training shoes** (cushion sole)
- **Outdoor trainers**
- **Football boots**

## Outline Guidance

- **Plain, dark outer coat** – strictly no hoodies/ tracksuit tops; other non-uniform sweatshirts are not acceptable as outside coats
- **Boys should be clean shaven**
- **Hair should be a natural colour**
- **Watches are permitted**
- **No jewellery is permitted** – excepting one stud in the lobe of each ear
- **Facial piercings are not permitted** (any type)
- **High-heels are not permitted** – for health & safety reasons
- Discreet make-up may be worn in Year 10 and above
- Extremes of fashion in clothes, hair or styles of dress which cause offence or are unsafe are not acceptable

We believe this code makes appropriate allowances for cultural and religious traditions. Parents should discuss the necessity for any variation to the code with the Head of School.

## Equipment

- **Mathematics set** – including ruler, protractor, compass
- **Pencils, eraser & sharpener**
- **Black, blue & green pens**
- **Dry-wipe pen**
- **Coloured pencils** – these are more useful than felt tips
- **Scientific calculator** (recommended model: Casio FX-83GTX or 85GTX)
- **Large, strong rucksack** – to carry school books and equipment (strictly no handbags)
- **A separate bag for PE kit** – on required days

Please ensure all belongings are clearly named for ease of returning to owners if lost.

Valuable items should not be brought into school and we would discourage students from bringing in expensive electronic devices; Fitzharrys cannot accept responsibility for any belongings that are damaged or go missing. On unavoidable occasions, valuable items or large sums of money brought into school must never be left unguarded in coats or bags; instead, they should be passed directly to Reception at the start of the day for safe-keeping.

## Lockers

Students can use school lockers to safely store belongings. They are available to hire for £25 for a student's school career. £2.50 will be paid on return of the locker key at the end of Year 11. Refunds are available if students leave Fitzharrys School before this time.

## Attendance

Fitzharrys School works hard to recognise good attendance, with rewards given to students at the end of each full term to celebrate the commitment and determination that comes with 100% attendance. Parents and carers are requested not to take their children out of school during term time, as missing school means missing out on vital lessons and key areas of learning. With approximately 175 non-school days available across a calendar year, we strongly encourage families to use this time for non-urgent medical and any other appointments to support your child's good attendance.

## Absence

When students must have time away from school in cases such as illness, urgent medical appointments or bereavement, please keep us fully informed so we can ensure your child receives every support upon their return to school. Be assured the details can remain confidential and, if required, the school can arrange for work to be sent home.

If your child is ill or cannot attend school due to an appointment or exceptional circumstance, please **contact the absence line on 01235 538243** and leave a message. In the case of prolonged absence, please contact your child's tutor.

## Achievement

Special achievement assemblies are held at the end of each full term to celebrate all our students' progress and exceptional work. Subject awards are given out once a year at our annual Presentation Evening and reward excellent performance in a subject or an area of school life.

Students also work towards the Fitzharrys Awards. These consist of Community, Cultural, School and Sport awards where students earn a special badge for completing a series of challenges. When a student achieves all four awards they are then awarded the special Full School Colours tie and earn their place on our Honour Boards in the Main Hall.

## House Points

Students in years 7-11 are awarded House points for effort, achievement, excellence, community spirit and participation. With House points also awarded for academic competitions, performance events, sporting fixtures and much more, effort made in every area of school life is recognised and has an impact. Students achieve bronze, silver, gold and platinum certificates as individuals. Students can keep track of their house points on [www.epraise.co.uk](http://www.epraise.co.uk)

## Expectations

Fitzharrys places great importance on celebrating achievement to encourage students to make the right choices and invest in their learning, and we use an effective system to ensure good behaviour for learning and address any issues. Our behaviour system, the 'ABC levels', is used consistently across every classroom, making rewards and consequences very clear to every student. We work on the principle of doing 'the right thing, in the right place, at the right time', and our pupils respond to these clear expectations. Our full behaviour policy can be found on the school website.

## Communication with Parents

At Fitzharrys we will always act in good faith in the best interests of students, their learning and the learning of others. We recognise that students, parents and carers may at times have worries or concerns about an area of school life. The school welcomes and encourages all members of our community to communicate concerns at the earliest opportunity, so that we may attend to and resolve the matter as swiftly as possible.

The first point of contact for parents and carers is your child's tutor. Our Heads of Year and Student Wellbeing Managers are also on hand to provide additional support with important issues or concerns. If you feel that your concern has not been adequately addressed or if your concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, please make an appointment to discuss it with the Head of School.

## Progress

Students and parents receive regular updates through 3 progress checks each academic year. These outline how students are progressing in each subject. One of these is an enhanced progress check which includes subject-specific comments and guidance for each student from all their teachers.

Parents evenings occur each year, where parents, students and teachers can discuss how students are doing and the actions they can take to progress further. Parents evenings increase in frequency at key stages 4 and 5, while there is an opportunity to meet your child's tutor early in Year 7 to understand how they have settled in to Fitzharrys. We encourage attendance to all of these evenings.

## Epraise & My Child at School

Epraise and My Child at School are online systems which provide live information on

attendance, behaviour and homework. In conjunction with each child's homework timetable, this means you have an overview of precisely what homework has been set and when it is due in. These systems provide you with information on all progress checks, rewards, and achievements. We provide the logins for parents and recommend checking these regularly.

## Pastoral Care

Tutors will ideally be with the same group of students throughout the first five years at Fitzharrys. They offer one-on-one coaching and support meetings for students in individual mentoring sessions. Tutors are supported by Heads of Year and our Assistant Head, Personal Development. In addition, students are championed by our unique and highly valued team of Student Wellbeing Managers who are trained to support young people. They are individually attached to particular year groups and are available throughout the school day, ensuring that children have a supportive adult that they can talk to in order to resolve any issues. Students also have access to a School Nurse for additional support and advice.

## SEND: Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

For students identified as having SEND, every individual's learning needs are ascertained as part of our robust monitoring procedures, involving close partnership work with parents and carers. We provide teaching and learning contexts to meet these needs, mainly within the whole class environment. Where appropriate, we withdraw children for time-limited periods to deliver targeted support and personalised interventions. Each member of staff is given training and support to deliver personalised learning. Teaching Assistants support in subject lessons and with specific interventions outside of the classroom. This support develops students' confidence, curiosity and independence. We also work closely with outside agencies and specialist consultants to ensure the needs of every student are met.

Students with learning differences have a welcoming base in the Learning Support

department, with a large, dedicated classroom, a suite of smaller rooms and a special quiet zone. We have made adaptations to the school site to improve access, including the installation of automatic doors, new toilet facilities and ramps to ensure that all are comfortable and safe in our school.

## CIRB: Communication & Interaction Resource Base

Communication and Interaction Resource Bases are part of the continuum of Local Authority provision to meet the needs of children and young people with language, communication and interaction challenges. The Resource Base at Fitzharrys provides places for up to 12 students (age 11-18), with Speech, Language & Communication and Autistic Spectrum Condition challenges, all of whom have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education and Health Care Plan. Admission to the Resource Base is administered and determined by the Local Authority. At Fitzharrys we are proud to host the CIRB, where students have the opportunity to be as integrated into mainstream schooling as suits their needs.

## Pupil Premium

The Pupil Premium is a grant given by the government to schools to support the achievement of students whose families are experiencing significant financial hardship. The Pupil Premium includes children who have qualified for free school meals at any point during the last six years, children who are or have been looked after under local authority care for more than one day, and children from service families who receive a child pension from the Ministry of Defence.

If your child qualifies for free school meals, it is important that you inform Fitzharrys – even if they take a packed lunch – as this enables the school to claim Pupil Premium which will be used to benefit their learning and improve their outcomes. Please contact our Senior Administrative Officer for more details.

## Safeguarding

At Fitzharrys School, 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. The school's full Safeguarding Policy is available on the school website.

## Parent Teacher Association

We have an active PTA group: the **Fitzharrys School Association (FSA)**, where parents, staff, and friends of the school are welcome to join the committee to help run fundraising activities and organise social events for the school community. Previous events include quiz nights and jumble sales. More information including contact details for the FSA can be found on our school website.

## Curriculum

### Key Stage 3: Years 7, 8 & 9

Our Key Stage 3 students follow a challenging and broad curriculum for three years. All students follow courses in English, Maths, Science, Art, Computer Science, Design & Technology, Drama, Geography, History, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education (PE), Philosophy & Ethics, and Personal, Social, Health & Citizenship Education (also known as PSHCE or Fitzfocus+). All students study French in Year 7, progressing to French and Spanish in Year 8.

Students are taught in mixed ability sets across the curriculum, with the exception of Maths where they are taught in ability sets. In Maths the groupings are determined by information passed on from primary schools and our regular progress assessments. Students may periodically change sets as appropriate to best support their learning. In the rest of the curriculum sets are mixed, in line with best practice seen nationally and through educational research.

Special features of Fitzharrys' Year 7 curriculum are a series of Wider Learning Days where students develop confidence, leadership, independence and teamwork through a series of exciting challenges in and out of school, and the much-anticipated, character-building adventure that is our annual Year 7 camp, held at Youlbury.

Years 8 and 9 continue the progression and challenges of Year 7. With a variety of trips, school productions and other wider learning opportunities adding depth to the core curriculum, Key Stage 3 is an exciting and crucial time for each student to develop as an individual, grow in confidence and unearth new skills.

### **Key Stage 4: Years 10 & 11**

Students follow courses in the core subjects of English, Maths, Science, PE and PSHCE. All students study both English Language and Literature. Students will study either the three separate Sciences or double Science award. In addition, students may select from a wide range of GCSE options within a system of timetable blocks. Courses currently on offer include GCSE in Art & Design, Business Studies, Computer Science, Drama, French, Food & Nutrition, Geography, History, Music, Physical Education, Product Design, Sociology and Spanish.

Years 10 and 11 are ones of great opportunity, important decisions and new challenges. Students undertake work experience to get an insight into possible areas of career interest and experience the working world. They also prepare for public exams, plan for their choices post-16 and look forward to some special social events, particularly the Year 11 Prom.

### **Key Stage 5, Sixth Form: Years 12 & 13**

JMF6 Abingdon is the joint Fitzharrys and John Mason Sixth Form, two schools working together to provide even more opportunities for our students. We are proud that Ofsted rated JMF6 as Outstanding in 2019. Students choose from an extensive range of subjects. Most students study three A Levels, although some study up to five subjects.

Courses currently taught at A Level include: Accountancy, Art, Biology, Business Studies,

Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, English, Literature, French, Geography, German, Graphics, History, Mathematics & Further Maths, Media Studies, Music, PE and Sports Studies, Performing Arts (Drama), Philosophy, Physics, Product Design, Psychology, Sociology, Spanish, and Textiles. Criminology (BTEC Level 3) is also on offer.

**Full curriculum details and information on JMF6, including admissions, can be found on our school website.**

## **PSHCE**

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) aims to help improve the ways in which students learn, relate to others, grow socially, choose healthy lifestyles and become independent citizens playing a positive part in society. Fitzharrys' PSHCE curriculum is enriched by outside speakers who specialise in certain areas, for example, drugs education, relationships and careers advice. The school's policy on sex and relationships education can be found on our website.

## **Personal Study**

All students are set regular personal study or homework to reinforce and extend their classroom learning. Personal study is set according to a schedule which is published on the school website. The time for which students are expected to study beyond the timetable increases as they rise through the school to a minimum expectation of 4 hours per week per subject in the sixth form. Students are issued with a planner to help them record and plan their work and this is regularly checked by their tutor.

## **Assessments & Exams**

Throughout all key stages students are assessed regularly to monitor progress and help students and their teachers to set targets for further improvement. A student's performance is reported home regularly (see Progress section for details). Formal national examinations in all GCSE are sat at the end of Key Stage 4. A Level courses are examined at the end of Year 13.

# Student Outcomes

We are proud of the improvements we have made over the last 5 years. Our students have high aspirations and consequently higher outcomes. This reflects the high-quality teaching and support that our students receive. It also demonstrates how the Fitzharrys ethos impacts on the approach of our students to their studies.

Whilst we were disappointed that our students could not sit their exams to show the skills and knowledge they have acquired, we know that as a year group they, and their teachers, worked relentlessly to get the best possible grades.

Please find below a table of results for the last 3 years (please note we cannot publish results for 2020 or 2021).

## GCSE

Measure	2017		2018		2019	
	National	School	National	School	National	School
Progress 8 – progress across 8 qualifications	0.0	-0.10	-0.03	-0.07	-0.03	-0.18
% entered for the English Baccalaureate	38%	28%	38%	27%	40%	25%
% achieving grade 5 or above in English and Maths	42%	51%	43%	52%	43%	43%
Attainment 8 – attainment across 8 qualifications	46%	45%	46.5%	44.88%	46.7%	45.46%
English Baccalaureate average points score	-	-	4.04	3.93	4.07	3.99

## A Level

	2017		2018		2019	
	Fitzharrys	National	Fitzharrys	National	Fitzharrys	National
Value Added	n/a		+0.10		+0.01	
APS/Grade	34.5/c+	31.1/c	32.6/c+	32.1/c+	32.6/c+	34.9/c+
%A* – A	31%	26.3%	23.5%	26.8%	17.4%	25.4%
%A* – B	49%	53.1%	42.4%	53.3%	42.7%	49.8%
%A* – C	78%	77.4%	70.6%	77.3%	74.7%	73.7%
%A* – E	99%	97.9%	97.4%	97.9%	98.7%	97.0%

A Level students have achieved magnificent things, with their results taking them to Oxbridge, Russell Group universities, apprenticeships, employment, and college courses.





# Fitzharrys School

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