



FITZHARRYS SCHOOL

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Head of School: Mr W Speke, BA (Hons)

20<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Firstly, I wanted to say thank you for all your support in this challenging academic year. I am extremely proud of how our students and staff have shown such resilience, positivity, and focus amidst the pressures we have all been under. We continue to be grateful for your support and understanding as we have adapted to everchanging circumstances.

Whilst we are all disappointed with how this year has ended, over the last few weeks it has been wonderful to see students thriving in lessons, taking part in Sports Day, participating in partnership Science projects, producing an array of media with the Oxfordshire Academy of Broadcast Journalism, and performing superbly in our annual Stars event. We are really proud of what our students have achieved and look forward to helping them grow further in their skills, knowledge and confidence from September.

### Summer Work

Our site team and contractors will be busy over the summer break, with a range of work happening. Following two successful applications for government funding, work on the sports hall roof will begin, alongside a range of fire safety improvements. Our sixth form centre will be refurbished in readiness for increased numbers of JMF6 Abingdon students being based at Fitzharrys in September. Added to this we will also be improving our ICT provision with new projectors and whiteboards in several classrooms. There will also be a range of repairs and improvements across the site in readiness for the autumn term.

### Coming back in September

When students do return in September there will be a couple of key changes for them, both of these follow our recent behaviour review. Firstly, we will be making a change to the timings of the school day. Our lunch time will be ten minutes shorter, running from 13.10 to 13.50. Therefore, our afternoon Fitzfocus session will be from 13.50 to 14.15. There will no longer be an earlier finish on Wednesdays. This will allow us to deliver the PSHE curriculum in these sessions, increasing curriculum time for key subjects and the post COVID-19 recovery curriculum during the rest of the school day.

Secondly, we will also be changing our expectations on mobile phones. From September students will not be allowed to have their phones out or switched on during the school day. We will expect mobile phones or other devices to be off and safely stored away in bags when students are on site. Students may be permitted to use their mobile phones in specific lessons, however if they are seen or heard without the permission of a member of staff they will be confiscated.



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If there is an emergency and you need to reach your child, then you will be able to contact the school in the usual way. This change is in line with the government plans around mobile phones in schools, and we believe that this is a positive step for our school community, ensuring greater focus on learning, building positive relationships, and extra-curricular opportunities in school.

### COVID-19

I am pleased to say that, at the time of writing, the government guidance is that there will be no bubbles or masks in school from September. I am also pleased that we will no longer be expected to carry out track and trace in school following any positive cases. This means that from September, we can return to all students going to lessons in subject specific classrooms, no bubbles at lunch and break, and the use of facilities in shared spaces, such as lockers.

We do however still need to put some COVID-19 measures in place. These will include hand sanitising points in key areas, ventilation for all classrooms and offices, and maintaining a ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’ approach to sneezing and coughing. There will be a new risk assessment in place for September, which I will send to you before the start of term when we have the most up to date government guidance. We will also have an outbreak management plan in case of a local spike in cases.

The current guidance is, of course, subject to change. I will be in touch before the start of term if there are any changes to our approach.

### Holidays and quarantine

We look forward to welcoming all students back into school in September. If you are going abroad do please check the quarantine guidance beforehand to ensure your child is able to attend from the start of term. The latest guidance can be found here: [Travel abroad from England during coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/travel-abroad-from-england-during-coronavirus-covid-19)

### Testing

As part of the government guidance, we have been asked to test all students twice at the start of the academic year. Once before they start school and a second time 3-5 working days afterwards. We are in the process of planning our approach to this and will be re-opening our testing centre in the Technology block. As part of this testing approach, we are looking for any parents or members of our school community who would be willing to help in our testing team on either a voluntary or paid basis. If you would be interested in helping, please do get in touch on [head.4127@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:head.4127@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk)

The testing will happen from the start of September, and we hope to test all students twice by Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> September. We will be writing to you in late August with the finer details.

Thank you again for your continued support. Our school community has more than earned a relaxing summer break. I hope you have a fantastic holiday and look forward to welcoming your child back in September.

Yours sincerely,



Will Speke  
Head of School



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