

20th December 2023

Dear parents and carers,

As ever, thank you for your support across a packed term. The last couple of weeks has featured brilliant whole school events, including the wonderful Carol Concert, Key Stage 4 quiz, and the Staff Pantomime. In these events, and those across the term, we have seen students take leading roles and responsibilities superbly, enacting our school values throughout.

Aspiration

Year 11 students have sat mock exams, received results, and reflected on them carefully. Year 10 students have taken part in the OX14 LP Business Language challenge. Year 9 students have taken part in a STEM careers event, whilst JMF6 students have taken part in the Senior Kangaroo and Olympiad events. The Oxford Academy of Broadcast Journalism has seen students continue to develop key journalism skills. Alongside all these events, we have seen hard work and application in our calm and focussed learning environment; it is a pleasure to see students working so well in school.

Opportunity

Sporting fixtures have been wide ranging, with our year 11 boys unfortunately losing out in the county cup football semi-final. There have also been fixtures for our rugby, netball, cross country, and badminton teams. Rehearsals for the school production of 'Shrek' have been continuing, whilst A level English students have visited the Theatre to see 'Medea'. A level Media Studies students have visited Warner Brothers Studios, and a range of students went to Wembley to see the Lionesses in action. All of this alongside the wealth of clubs and opportunities in school.

Integrity

A group of students continue to regularly visit the Leafield Care Home to work with residents. Students have also shown leadership in their fundraising for Children in Need, and other charities. The year 9 Sexual Health wider learning day and the recent prisoner talk helped develop students understanding of social issues. The launch of our leadership academy allowed those students to develop their wider leadership skills. These events sit alongside the daily routines where students consistently learn and demonstrate their empathy and support for others in our community.

Yesterday and today our award assemblies have seen students receive a range of certificates to celebrate their achievements in our three core values, ensuring recognition for their efforts in school. It has been a pleasure to celebrate such a high number of students reaching house point milestones. This is part of the new awards process which was launched in September. To help you understand this system, and help your child ensure they are rewarded for their efforts and achievements, you can read through the student booklet that guides students through the process here: [SCHOOL-AWARDS-booklet-2023 ONLINEv2.pdf \(fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk\)](#)



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The assemblies also provided us with the opportunity to say thank you and goodbye to Mr Davies who, as some of you may be aware, is leaving Fitzharrys to start a new role with GLF trust in January. This is a promoted post with leadership of behaviour and attendance across this large trust. He has been a fantastic member of the team, and whilst we will miss him, we wish him the very best for the future. We have appointed a replacement Assistant Head, Mr Jamie Clelland, who will start after Easter. Until he arrives, we welcome Mr Tom Edwards, who will be employed on a temporary basis in the role. He has been in school to meet the team over the last week or so, and we look forward to him starting in January.

There are two other vacancies to draw your attention to within the Abingdon Learning Trust. Firstly there is an HR/Payroll administrator role in the central team, details of which can be found here: <https://www.abingdonlearningtrust.org/about-us/work-for-us/current-vacancies/> In addition we have a governance professional vacancy; details can be found on the Abingdon Learning Trust website.

Term 3

All students are due back at Fitzharrys on Tuesday 9th January. There will be a wide range of activities and events in the new year, details of which will be sent out in the curriculum letters that you will receive in the first week back.

When we do return to school, please can I request your support with regards parking at the front of school at the end of each day. The council, local residents, and Thames Valley Police have been in contact around people parking on the green, as well as blocking access for local residents. We have had a couple of near misses and disputes which have prompted collective action by all stakeholders. Please refrain from parking on the green, in bus bays, or blocking driveways. Parking a little further away and asking your child to walk, will, whilst being less convenient, reduce traffic, limit damage, and mitigate risk in an already busy and congested area. We really appreciate your support with this.

We will also be having a particular uniform push in the new year. Though I regularly put in a reminder about this in the newsletter, some areas of our uniform policy are not being consistently adhered to. Hoodies, trainers, and jewellery will be areas of focus, so please ensure your child is dressed correctly for the new term. I will remind students of our expectations in the start of term assemblies, and our pastoral team will offer guidance and support for those not clear on correct uniform. This will be in line with our uniform guidance and behaviour policy [Uniform - Fitzharrys School](#)

A guide to our behaviour policy can be found here: [B4L-BEHAVIOUR-students-poster-2023 ParentInfo.pdf \(fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk\)](#) We will be sharing further parent guides in this format in the coming terms to ensure shared understanding of how Fitzharrys works. These will be available on the website and are a good reference point for key information. This is part of our response to some of the key points raised in our parent survey from the last academic year. We have used the feedback from this survey to make changes to our homework policy, our awards system, and our communication around SEN and mental health support. We will be sending out another survey in the spring of 2024.

I hope you have a restful festive break and wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely



Will Speke
Headteacher



OXFORDSHIRE SECONDARY SCHOOLS
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HEADTEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



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