

9th February 2024

Dear parents and carers,

Thank you for your support over this term. It has been five weeks packed with activities and events, alongside a continued focus and progress in lessons. Throughout the term we have been impressed by the approach of our students to their learning and the wider opportunities they have taken up, all the time embodying the ethos and values of Fitzharrys.

Aspiration

There has been a wealth of subject specific opportunities to stretch and challenge students. This has included Chemists from year 9 to 11 taking part in the Royal Society Top of the Bench event, year 10 students enjoying Poetry Live at the New Theatre in Oxford, year 11s watching a screening of Romeo and Juliet, Year 11 Drama students performing for their mock exam, students from key stage 3 have taken part in the intermediate Maths challenge, and A level English students travelling to London to watch the opera of The Handmaid's Tale. The aspiration and understanding of university study has been reflected through a year 9 and 10 trip to Trinity College, Oxford, and through the launch of this year's Oxbridge club through the OX14 Learning Partnership. Year 9 students have also had a comprehensive options process to help them make informed choices for their GCSE courses.

Opportunity

There has been a wide range of experiences for our students across the year groups. A level Historians were taken to see 'Hamilton' in London. The Oxford School of Drama performed 'Electra and her shadow' to GCSE and A level Performing Arts students before a workshop to develop their skills. The GCSE Performing Arts students also visited museums in Oxford in preparation for their forthcoming assessments. Continuing the Theatrical note, year 9 students visited Abingdon School's Amey Theatre to watch a performance of 'Dear England' through the OX14 LP.

On a sporting front year 7, 8 and 9 boys have taken part in football fixtures, representing the school superbly. Year 8 girls won the Vale indoor football tournament. Our year 9 netball team were victorious in their fixtures, whilst students across all year groups were fantastic in the county cross country competition.

Wider opportunities also took place through a year 7 trip to Oxford to experience Chinese culture as part of the new year celebrations, Year 7 STEM workshops, year 10 Technology students having a day working at a metalwork forge, and a sleepover for our year 8 students. Over half term nearly 100 students will be heading to Andorra for the Ski Trip.



Integrity

Amidst all these opportunities and learning experiences, the conduct and positivity of the students makes Fitzharrys a fantastic place to be. Daily interactions and the working atmosphere in lessons demonstrate this, and the number of postcards being sent home over half term reflects the high esteem staff hold our students in.

In addition, students have also taken part in several events which continue to develop them personally. JMF6 students took part in a diversity day, students from Radley College and JMF6 have begun their academic coaching training as they prepare to work with students from lower year groups in term 4. Our students also continue to visit Leafield care home on weekly basis.

Lastly, a massive thank you to everyone who donated, purchased from, or helped run the FSA Jumble Sale. A magnificent £2158.55 was raised. This has boosted the FSA toward their £5,000 funding target. More events are planned for terms 4, 5 and 6, details of which will follow soon.

Term 4

This morning staff said thank you and goodbye to Miss Owen-Sinclair who is leaving Fitzharrys to pursue a new vocation working in the charity sector. We wish her the very best for the future. A new teacher to the school, Mr Brown, will be taking her year 7-9 classes, alongside her tutor group 10I. The year 10 group will be taken by Mrs Lefroy and Mrs Amos.

Over the half term break there will be work going on to improve facilities for our students. This includes new computers, keyboards, and monitors in our computer rooms in south block. Additionally, the basketball court on the playground will be resurfaced to provide a vastly improved surface for both PE lessons and break times.

In term 4 we will also be looking to ensure that attendance of B3 detentions is followed up more rigorously. There are a few students who, despite reminders and notifications, are choosing not to attend this behaviour consequence. Members of the pastoral team, and the leadership team, will be collecting students up toward the end of period 5 and escorting them to the B3 detention room. Please can I ask for your support through encouraging your child to attend should they receive a B3, and supporting us in any follow up, should they refuse to attend despite the reminders and collection from lessons.

All students are due back at Fitzharrys on Monday 19th February. In the first week back, we will send out our curriculum newsletters to signpost the learning and events for term 4. Two events to draw to your attention are the Parent Information Evening on Tuesday 20th February which focuses on Vaping, and the Careers Fair on Tuesday 5th March which will be visited by students in the school day and is open for parents between 3.30-4.30pm [Careers-Fair PW 2023-24.pdf \(fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk\)](#). Many local businesses are already involved, but if you are interested in participating as an employer, please do get in touch.

I hope you and your families have a restful and relaxing half term break.

Yours sincerely



Will Speke
Headteacher



OXFORDSHIRE SECONDARY SCHOOLS
OSSHTA
HEADTEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



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