



2023–24: Term 1 Overview

Our Overview newsletters are designed to contain the key information you'll need each term.

Briefing on curriculum content, extra-curricular opportunities, current school messages and more, parents and carers can use this outline to support students and help them succeed at school.

Learning

For a full breakdown of subject curriculum content, please visit our [Curriculum Maps](#) webpage.

ENGLISH: <i>Non-fiction Reading and Writing</i> – Students will study a range of non-fiction speeches from orators from a range of cultures and contexts. They will produce an analytical reading of a speech and write a speech themselves.
MATHS: Our first topic in Year 7 is <i>Number Operations</i> . This is the underpinning topic for all other areas of maths, covering the four operations, working with decimals and negatives and BIDMAS. We also explore how to use letters to generalise number and gently introduce algebraic concepts into mathematics.
SCIENCE: Students will complete an introductory topic to science focusing on key practical enquiry skills. They will move on to a biology topic focusing on cell structure and transport in cells.
ART: Students will practice observational drawing, developing skills in tone and texture which will underpin their journey through KS3 and KS4 in Art and Design.
COMPUTER SCIENCE: Students will learn how to use email accounts, as well as online systems: Learning Resources, e-Praise, and One Drive. This term's topic is <i>Online Safety</i> : Cyberbullying, Computer Viruses and Passwords.
DRAMA: Students are introduced to skills such as Mime and Gesture, and work on creating characters for the end of term assessment, entitled: 'Bar Story'.
FRENCH: The sound of French – Introducing phonics via songs and self-description. Students will study a range of key basic concepts such as phonics, articles, subject pronouns, and key verbs (to be/to have).
GEOGRAPHY: <i>Wonderful World – What is my place in the world?</i> Introducing physical and human features of the geographical world, e.g. locating countries, continents, and oceans.
HISTORY: Students are introduced to key historical skills such as chronology, and then we look at what makes us British, and the impact migration has had on the UK over the last two thousand years.
MANDARIN: Students will focus on learning how to greet other people and Count from 0–10 in Chinese.
MUSIC: <i>Night and Day: The Elements of Music</i> – Pupils will be learning about the key building blocks of what makes Music, music. This term, they will be particularly focusing on Dynamics (volume) and Tempo (speed).
PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS: <i>What are key Hindu beliefs?</i> An investigation into key aspects of Hindu belief including gods and goddesses, worship, holy books and texts, holy places, and pilgrimage.
PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Most students will be developing their skills and exploring the principals of Invasion Games (Netball and Rugby). Some will experience a Dance activity with simple choreographed routines, allowing them to enjoy PE in a different way. The focus for all is on high levels of activity and participation as well as establishing consistent routines and encouraging independence.
PSHE: <i>Being Me in My World</i> : We will look at what makes us unique and how we can support others to be unique. We will assess who influences us and how they affect our emotions and actions. We will assess our online footprints.
TECHNOLOGY: Students follow a rotational system, all starting at different points. Key topics covered across year 7 are: a Christmas cracker project, designing a phone pod, making a drawstring bag, and key knife skills for cooking.

News

School website: [Home page](#)
 Facebook: [@fitzharrysschool](#)
 Instagram: [fitzharrys](#)
 Twitter: [@fitzharrys](#)

Key Contacts

Head of Year 7 & Transition: **Ms K Emeny**
 Year 7 Student Wellbeing Manager: **Mr T Clarke**
 Assistant Head, Personal Development:
Mr M Davies

Queries

Any queries, please [contact](#) the school.
 Email: office.4127@fitzharrys.school
 Phone: **01235 520698**

Aspiration

NEW FITZHARRYS AWARDS SYSTEM

Our new Fitzharrys Awards launch this term, recognising our students' achievements that reflect our core values: Aspiration, Opportunity, Integrity. Every student can work towards achieving Bronze, Silver, and Gold awards by completing a series of activities that support the development of our core values. Each student will be issued with an Awards Booklet to record evidence of their progress. A guide for parents detailing the new awards system will follow in the coming weeks.

ATTENDANCE GUIDE

Excellent attendance offers the best opportunity to ensure academic success. Please read our new guide: [Attendance - A Guide for Parents & Carers](#), which contains useful information to help support your child's good attendance.

COGNATIVE ABILITY TESTS (CATS)

On Tuesday 19th September, Year 7 students will complete cognitive ability tests, sometimes referred to as CATs. The CAT4 assesses four areas:

- Verbal Reasoning: the ability to reason with words representing objects or concepts
- Non-Verbal Reasoning: the ability to reason with shapes and patterns
- Quantitative Reasoning: the ability to identify numerical relationships
- Spatial Ability: the ability to reason with shapes to transform visual images

We use these assessments to understand more about our new students and how best to teach them. CATs differ from SATs in that they test cognitive ability rather than knowledge. There is no need to revise for the CATs tests.

Students will also complete a reading assessment within their first term at Fitzharrys. This is used as a baseline to assess progress and to help teachers plan effectively for individual students' needs.

APPROACH TO LEARNING REPORT

Expected during w/c 9th October, reports on how Year 7 students have been getting on in their first term will be sent out to parents. All subjects will provide scores for the student's *Approach to Learning* and *Approach to Homework*.

Opportunity

CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

Our [extra-curricular offer](#) is now online. To kickstart the creation of a new club, talk to School Council reps or tutors!

SHREK – WHOLE SCHOOL MUSICAL – AUDITIONS

Our musical this year will be [Shrek!](#) Year 7s are encouraged to attend the information meeting to find out more.

- **Information meeting:** Wednesday 13th September in Music – 3.15–3.45pm
- **General auditions:** Wednesday 20th September in Music – 3.30–4.30pm
- **Callback auditions:** Friday 22nd September in Drama – 3.30–4.30pm
- **Rehearsals** will take place on Monday lunchtimes (dance rehearsals/choreography), Wednesday after school (music rehearsals), and Friday afternoons (staging), and begin on Wednesday 27th September at 3.15pm.

FSA QUIZ NIGHT

The [Fitzharrys School Association](#)'s popular [Quiz Night](#) fundraiser is set for Friday 13th October, 7.30pm–10.30pm. There will be a licensed bar, option for a pizza dinner, and a wooden spoon for the losers! Entry forms will follow by school email soon.

MENTAL HEALTH WEBINAR

A webinar for Year 7 parents entitled 'Understanding your teenager's mental health' will be held online on Thursday 12th October, 7.30–8.30pm. Natalie Hunt (Mental Health & Wellbeing Coordinator for the [OX14 Learning Partnership](#)) will be joined by Louise Aukland, researcher and author in brain science at the University of Oxford, to discuss the transition to secondary school and how families can support their child's brain development at this crucial time. Details of how to sign up will follow by school email in due course.

ANXIETY – CAMHS IN-REACH

A CAMHS In-Reach session about **Talking To Your Child About Anxiety** is being held in the school library on Thursday 21st September, 5.30–7pm. All parents and carers are welcome to attend; the session is open to all.

Integrity

MEET THE TUTOR EVENING

There will be a *Meet The Tutor Evening* on Thursday 19th October, 4.30–7.30pm, to help establish strong links between school and home. Bookings can be made through Epraise closer to the date; more information will follow by email.

UNIFORM

We would like to thank parents for your support in ensuring high standards of uniform. Following the period of hot weather, we have returned to our regular policy. Students who are unable to wear full uniform should see their tutor with a note to be issued a uniform pass for that specific day. A full uniform code can be found here: **Uniform Policy**. Please contact your Tutor or Head of Year with any concerns.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

Further to our focus on wearing the correct uniform, please note that Year 7 students will have their individual portrait photographs taken at school this **Friday, 15th September**, as well as tutor group class photos. Students should be correctly attired, wearing their shirts, ties, and blazers.

WORLD CAR-FREE DAY

At Fitzharrys, we continue to focus on our environment and on being environmentally friendly. In that spirit, we are pleased to share this poster from Abingdon Carbon Cutters: **World Car Free Day** (Friday 22nd September 2023).

OUR FINEST HOUR – DIGITAL COLLECTION DAY

Fitzharrys School is proud to be participating in **Their Finest Hour**, a nationwide campaign organised by the University of Oxford and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which is collecting and preserving the everyday stories and objects of the Second World War.

Bring your diaries, letters, photos, memories, objects or stories about your family's wartime experience to our **Digital Collection Day** taking place at Fitzharrys School on Saturday 16th September 2023 between 10am–2pm, where they will be recorded and added to a free-to-use online archive launching in June 2024.

If you are interested in volunteering and helping on the day, your support would be gratefully received. Please contact Mrs Chadwick at schadwick@fitzharrys.school for more details.

Key Dates

Wednesday 13th September, 3.15–3.45	Shrek – Information Meeting – Music Department
Friday 15th September	Year 7 Individual Portraits and Tutor Group Photos (School Photographer)
Saturday 16th September, 10am–2pm	Our Finest Hour – Digital Collection Day – South Block, Fitzharrys School
Tuesday 19th September	Year 7 CATS tests
Wednesday 20th September, 3.30–4.30	Shrek – General Auditions – Music Department
Thursday 21 st September, 5.30–7pm	CAMHS IN-Reach session on Talking To Your Child About Anxiety, in the Library
Friday 22nd September, 3.30–4.30pm	Shrek – Call-back Auditions – Music Department
Thursday 5th October, 1.10pm	School closes early ahead of Open Evening
Thursday 5th October, 5.30–8pm	Open Evening
Friday 6th October	INSET Day – school closed to students
Monday 9th – Friday 13th October	Open Mornings (tours at 9am and 10am – booking required)
Friday 13th October, doors 7pm	FSA Fundraiser: Quiz Night
Thursday 19th October, 4.30–7.30pm	Year 7 Parents – Meet the Tutor Evening
Friday 20th October	Last day of term for students
Monday 23rd – Friday 27th October	SUMMER HOLIDAY
Monday 30th October	Start of Term 2