

## Key Information 2023–2024



# Fitzharrys School

Aspiration • Opportunity • Integrity







# An Introduction to Fitzharrys

2022/23 saw our students achieve another superb set of examination results. GCSE results show a consistency of high achievement, with students making progress and achieving above their targets. 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 the high aspirations shared by staff and students alike.

2023/24 promises to be another exciting year at Fitzharrys. Students will have the opportunity to build their knowledge, skills, and resilience both in lessons and in the wider school community. We have high aspirations for our students and will continue to work with them so they can achieve grades which help them move forward.

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**  
**Headteacher**

## School Tours

Our annual Open Evening is held in the autumn term 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 5th October 2023, 5.30–8.00pm, open to all (no booking necessary). This is followed by our Open Mornings: commencing Monday 9th October – Friday 13th October, with tours available at 9.00am and 10.00am; please note that booking is essential for these dates. Contact us to reserve a space.

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. We look forward to welcoming you to our wonderful school.

## 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 visit: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) and apply online, or download a digital copy of the application form. Alternatively, you can request a paper copy of the application form from our Admissions Co-ordinator.

If your child is over 11 years of age, you can apply for an in-year transfer by following the same process outlined above.

# The School Day

Each morning and afternoon begins with registration 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. Students study PSHE content as well as complete activities relating to literacy, numeracy, and citizenship.

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

## Timetable

08:40 – 08:50	AM 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	PM. Registration / Assembly / PSHE
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. It operates a cashless, card-based system for payments. Canteen cards are issued to all students, and these can be topped up with a balance by parents using our online payments system. This system allows parents to have an overview of how money is being spent.

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 for bicycle parking, and cycle helmets should be worn by those cycling to school.

School transport is managed by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC). Children who are eligible for free school transport will be informed in their place offer letter from OCC. For information on school transport policy, eligibility for free transport, most current routes and timetables, or how to apply for a concessionary place, please consult the OCC website: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/travelling-school](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/travelling-school)

There is on-site car parking available for staff and visitors to Fitzharrys School. However, with the exception of organised transport taxis, we encourage parents and carers who wish to drop off or collect children by car to do so beyond the school gate, allowing our students on foot and on cycles to enter and exit the site as safely as possible.

## 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. This ensures the school is kept informed of any arrangements or concerns, and supports robust safeguarding practices.

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 without permission 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 Headteacher reserves the right to send students home who are not appropriately dressed.

**All starred\* items are available online from our supplier: Price and Buckland.** Our Student Services office hold a full collection of sample school blazers, jumpers, and summer polo shirts; students are very welcome to try these on for size before ordering online.

Our Student Services office also holds a stock of second-hand uniform which can be purchased for a small donation. You are welcome to contact us at any time during the school year if you are interested in purchasing items second-hand.

## Standard School Uniform

- **School tie** (available from Fitzharrys School only)
- **Black blazer\*** with school logo 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

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

- **Optional blue polo shirt\*** with school logo badge, replaces shirt, tie and blazer
- **Optional blue V-necked jumper\*** with school logo badge
- **Optional black tailored shorts\*** (only through Price & Buckland)

## PE Uniform

- **Navy blue shadow stripe shorts\***
- **Navy/sky blue polo shirt\*** with school logo badge
- **Navy blue/white, long sleeve, reversible sports shirt\***
- **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. Exceptions are of course made for medical bracelets.
- **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 Headteacher.

## 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-83GTCW and Casio FX-85GTCW)
- **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 safekeeping.

## 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.

Payments for lockers are made online through ParentMail. We appreciate your patience whilst our admin team set up all the new ParentMail accounts early in the academic year.

## 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.

We encourage parents to read our detailed **Attendance Guide for Parents**, located on our Policies webpage, to further understand the processes Fitzharrys School uses to support 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.

## 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 and reward

excellent performance in a subject or an area of school life.

Students also work towards the Fitzharrys Awards. These consist of Aspiration, Opportunity and Integrity awards at bronze, silver and gold levels, where students earn recognition for completing a series of tasks. When a student achieves all three gold awards, they are then awarded a special Full School Colours tie.

## House Points

Students in years 7-11 are awarded House points for Aspiration, Opportunity, and Integrity, in recognition of their effort, achievement, excellence, community spirit, and participation across every area of school life. Students can keep track of their House points on Epraise (see **Online Systems** section for more information). Students progress towards House point milestones, which are tiered and become more challenging to achieve at each level. House point milestones are celebrated in our Achievement assemblies, and can also be used as evidence towards the Fitzharrys Awards.

## Expectations

Fitzharrys places great importance on celebrating achievement to encourage students to make the right choices and invest in their learning and personal development. We use an effective system to ensure good behaviour at all times and address any issues. Our behaviour system 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 Headteacher.

## Progress

Students and parents receive regular updates through 2-3 progress checks each academic year. These give information on students' progress in each subject, along with their approach to learning and homework. One of these is an Impact Progress Check, which includes specific actionable targets for each subject which, if completed, will move your child's learning forwards.

Parents' evenings occur each year, where parents, students and teachers can discuss students' current achievements and the actions they can take to progress further. There is also an opportunity to meet your child's tutor early in year 7 to understand how they have settled in to Fitzharrys and encourage strong links between home and school. We encourage attendance to all of these evenings.

## Online Systems

### **Epraise, My Child at School, and ParentMail**

Epraise is an online system used by both students and parents. It provides live information on attendance, timetables, behaviour, homework, and more. Parents can view precisely what homework has been set and when it is due in. Epraise also provides information on rewards and achievements, including an analysis of House points.

My Child at School (MCAS) is another online system that allows parents to access live

information on attendance and timetables, but it is also used to publish exam timetables and relay information about progress checks and school reports. Students also bring home hard copies of their reports.

Fitzharrys School uses ParentMail as a system for online payments. Through this system, parents can top up their children's canteen cards (and have access to itemised records of where money has been spent), as well as purchase school ties, pay for trips, school show tickets, and more.

We provide logins for parents for all our online systems and advise checking these regularly.

## Pastoral Care

Tutors will ideally be with the same group of students throughout the first five years at Fitzharrys. Tutors are supported by Heads of Year, Deputy 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, measurable interventions. Each member of staff is given training to deliver personalised and scaffolded learning to ensure all pupils are included. Teaching Assistants support in subject lessons and with specific interventions outside of the classroom. We also work closely with outside agencies and specialist consultants to ensure the needs of every student are met.

We have made adaptations to the school site to improve access. These include the installation of automatic doors 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 13 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 (including Food & Nutrition), Drama, Geography, History, Music, Physical Education, Philosophy & Ethics, and Personal, Social, Health & Economics education (PSHE). All students study French and Mandarin in Year 7, progressing to include Spanish in Year 8.

Students are first taught in mixed ability sets across the curriculum, moving to ability groupings in some subjects later in Key Stage 3. Students may periodically change sets as appropriate to best support their learning.

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, and the highly anticipated, character-building adventure that is our annual Year 7 camp, held at Youldbury.

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 work towards the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and so follow courses in the core subjects of English, Maths, Science, PE, and PSHE, plus a Humanities subject. All students study both English Language and Literature. Students will study either the three separate Sciences or a Combined Science award. All students who take the separate Sciences also take a Language at GCSE. In addition to their core subjects, students may select from a wide range of GCSE options within a system of timetable blocks. Courses currently on offer include Art & Design, Business Studies, Computer Science, French, Food & Nutrition, Geography, History, Music, Performing Arts (Drama), Physical Education, Product Design, Religious Studies, Sociology, Spanish, and Statistics.

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. 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: Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, English Literature, Fine Art, Geography, Graphic Communications, History, Mathematics, Further Maths, Media Studies, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education, Performing Arts (Drama), Philosophy, Physics, Psychology, Sociology, and Textile Design. Criminology (VRQ Level 3) and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) are also on offer.

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

## PSHE

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education 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' PSHE curriculum is supported by our year group assemblies and is enriched by outside speakers who specialise in certain areas, for example, drugs education, relationships, and careers advice, alongside Wider Learning Days on dedicated themes. The school's policy on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) can be found on our website.

## Homework

All students are set regular homework to reinforce and extend their classroom learning. Homework 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.

Teachers record homework tasks on Epraise and attach links to resources if applicable. Students can manage their homework tasks through the app, and parents are also provided with logins for a full overview of homework tasks.

## 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 in recent 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.

We are proud of our students and the fantastic results they achieved in 2023. They are outlined in the table below, alongside the previous 3 years (please note that, as per government guidance following the national disruption to exams and assessments, we cannot publish results for 2020 or 2021).

## GCSE

Measure	2018		2019		2022		2023	
	National	School	National	School	National	School	National*	School*
Progress 8 – progress across 8 qualifications	-0.03	-0.07	-0.03	-0.18	-0.03	+0.43	0.01	+0.34
% entered for the English Baccalaureate	38%	27%	40%	25%	39%	51%	38.2%	24.1%
% achieving grade 5 or above in English and Maths	43%	52%	43%	43%	50%	63%	44.8%	48.3%
% achieving grade 4 or above in English and Maths	64%	67%	65%	67%	69%	87%	65.5%	74.1%
Attainment 8 – attainment across 8 qualifications	46.5	44.88	46.7	45.46	48.77	54.56	46.47	47.44
English Baccalaureate average points score	4.04	3.93	4.07	3.99	4.27	5.01	4.05	4.18

\* Estimates based on collaborative data with 1,458 schools and 271,985 students. Final DfE data to be confirmed.

## A Level

	2018		2019		2022		2023	
	JMF6	National	JMF6	National	JMF6	National	JMF6	National
APS/Grade	32.6/C+	32.1/C+	32.6/C+	34.9/C+	37.5/B-	38.9/B	32.8/C+	TBC
%A* – A	23.5%	26.8%	17.4%	25.4%	35.8%	36.4%	16.2%	TBC
%A* – B	42.4%	53.3%	42.7%	49.8%	56.6%	62.8%	42.9%	TBC
%A* – C	70.6%	77.3%	74.7%	73.7%	78%	82.6%	64.9%	TBC
%A* – E	97.4%	97.9%	98.7%	97.0%	97.1%	98.4%	96.5%	TBC

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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