



FITZHARRYS SCHOOL

TOGETHER **EVERYONE** ACHIEVES **MORE**



'Fitzharrys is a very caring and supportive community where pupils flourish'

Ofsted



Our Vision

High expectations and high ambitions for all

Students and staff at Fitzharrys are active, enthusiastic and engaged. As a school, we have high aspirations and ambition for our students. We will rise to any challenge, buoyed up by the optimism and pride that comes from being part of something special.

Success at Fitzharrys is founded upon high quality teaching and learning. We cultivate curiosity, courage and independence, fuelling a passion for learning in all students and staff. This culture helps us to shape confident, creative, resourceful and resilient individuals.

Positive behaviour, mutual respect and care are at the heart of good learning and the Fitzharrys community. All relationships at Fitzharrys are based upon trust, compassion and constructive honesty. We nurture wellbeing and good mental health as part of our commitment to getting the very best for and from our students and our school.

Fitzharrys is a true community; everyone matters, successes are shared, and mutual support ensures that **Together Everyone Achieves More.**



Welcome to Fitzharrys School

Together **Everyone Achieves More**

There is real warmth in the welcome you receive when you join Fitzharrys, underpinned by a strong sense of ambition, pride and belonging.

I am very proud to be the Head of Fitzharrys, a fantastic school where students have a wide range of opportunities to develop, thrive and achieve. Our superb team of staff are committed to helping every pupil reach their full potential, working with care and expertise to provide personalised support and challenge. We want our students to be the very best they can be, and we do everything we can to make that happen. This is evident in the enthusiasm, focus and achievements of our students. Great teaching and learning are at the heart of what we do, complemented by a wide range of experiences and exciting opportunities in and out of the classroom.

Our ethos and curriculum are centred on the 5Cs of Character, Curiosity, Culture, Connections and Confidence. These principles underpin the education and opportunities we provide, equipping our students with the knowledge, skills, and resilience they will need to succeed in their future endeavours.

We are always keen for people to come and visit us and we are looking forward to welcoming visitors again once social distancing measures have been relaxed. Meeting our staff and students will give you a real insight into what our great school has to offer. Contact us to book your visit, or to arrange a phone call or online meeting.

Best wishes,
Will Speke
Head of School



Quality - Opportunity - Collaboration - Ambition - Community

Fitzharrys is part of the Abingdon Learning Trust, a family of schools rooted in local communities.



Our vision is a bold one:

'To nurture curiosity and fuel a passion for learning – shaping confident individuals and resilient communities, stronger together and ambitious for the future.'

For our students, this means the opportunity for a rich education; the chance to experience new things – in sport, music, science, languages, computing and the arts; through trips and visits delivered by authors, engineers, university lecturers, employers, actors, musicians, politicians – authentic learning experiences. We endeavour to make the connection between what children are learning and the potential it has to change their lives in the future. These opportunities should raise aspirations and show our students that if we work together, they can achieve whatever they set their minds to. This mindset is essential in the classroom when learning gets hard, growing the essential skills of grit, resilience and enquiry.

I am extremely proud of the ethos and community in our schools, shaped by Abingdon Learning Trust. We believe in the power of young people to change the world; they just need to be shown how.

Sarah Brinkley
Executive Headteacher



Cultivating Character

With a very positive Ofsted report, high attendance, consistently strong results and impressive behaviour for learning, Fitzharrys is a school where everyone has an opportunity to shine.

We have high aspirations for our pupils, and this means high expectations and standards. Our focus is on students developing academically and as positive participants in the community. Attendance at Fitzharrys is at high levels because students enjoy coming to school. Our students are encouraged to aim for 100% attendance as there is a clear link between excellent attendance and high achievement. Students come in each day with a positive approach to learning. They are keen to participate in lessons and set challenging goals for growth.



'I am so impressed with our school. Students are at the centre of everything.' **Parent**



At Fitzharrys, we praise and reward students, not only academically but across every area of learning and personal development. This is of vital importance in growing each student's confidence in their own abilities and encouraging further success.

We are proud of our students and recognise the effort and progress they make across all areas of school life in a variety of ways. These include special achievement assemblies; giving out Fitzharrys Awards which consist of Community, Cultural, School and Sport awards; and subject awards, which reward exceptional performance in a subject or an area of school life, given out on Presentation Evening.

We also give House points and 'praise postcards' to students to ensure they are rewarded for effort and achievement in and out of class, as well as for contribution to the community and participation in events. Our four Houses are a well-established part of life at Fitzharrys, promoting leadership, friendly competition and community, with every student, staff member and governor belonging to either Dragon, Griffin, Pegasus or Phoenix. Sports day, inter-House competitions and termly House assemblies are focal points for our House system.



'The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils value the good friendships they make here. They are respectful to each other, staff and visitors and enjoy the pleasant and secure environment the school offers.'

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Nurturing Curiosity

Fitzharrys' broad and balanced curriculum creates active learners by building up a curiosity and interest in the world in which we live, helping prepare students for their next steps in life.

Our three-year Key Stage 3 means that all students will enjoy a breadth and depth of learning, accessing an appropriately broad body of knowledge, skills and experience across the curriculum for as long as possible. It is not about simply preparing students for a set of examinations. We want every student to further their love of learning, developing across different disciplines as actors, artists, athletes, coders, cooks, craftspeople, geographers, historians, linguists, mathematicians, musicians, performers, scientists, writers and more.

Our Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) programme aims to help improve the ways our students learn, relate to others, grow socially, choose healthy lifestyles and become independent citizens playing a positive role in society. Alongside this, our curriculum incorporates a series of Wider Learning Days in which students develop confidence, leadership, independence and teamwork through a series of exciting challenges in and out of school. They also develop their understanding of and appreciation for diversity.

Key Stage 4 enables students to specialise while following a core offer of English, Maths, Science and a Humanity/ Language to develop essential knowledge and skills. Students can then take a diverse range of subjects based on their interests, enthusiasm and experiences at KS3. Popular subjects include Art, Drama, Music, Food & Nutrition, Physical Education, Technology and Business Studies. We also maintain opportunities for learning outside of the classroom so that students have access to subjects they have not opted for.

We regularly review, update and adjust the curriculum each year to meet the needs of our students. Where appropriate, we will adapt our provision for individual students (for example, some of those with SEND) in order to meet their needs while maintaining ambition and preparing them for their next steps.

Fitzharrys is proud to be a fully inclusive school, valuing and celebrating the diversity of all our young people. We aim to enable every student to achieve their full potential and have successfully developed cultures, policies and practices that include all learners. Students with SEND do very well at Fitzharrys and exam results show that their time at school really adds value.

'My child is making excellent progress and this is due to the teaching and encouragement of all staff and the headteacher. Very pleased we chose Fitzharrys.'

Parent

'Teachers are an enthusiastic and committed team and they are driven to continually improve standards in their subject areas.'

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Experiencing Culture

Fitzharrys students receive an exciting and enriching education beyond the classroom. From Year 7 to Year 13, students enjoy a wide range of trips and experiences that help bring learning to life and positively contribute to our students' personal development and wider outlook on the world around them.

Recent visits include a day trip to France to try out language skills, stepping back in time at Warwick Castle and the Black Country Living Museum, experiencing the arts at Shakespeare's Globe and Tate Modern, our bi-annual ski-trip to Italy and the sporting and cultural calendar highlight that is our annual Netball and Football tour of the Netherlands. These opportunities are open for all students, with a special fund for those with financial difficulties.

A key trip and formative experience for Fitzharrys students is our Year 7 annual camp held at Youlbury. Students' confidence and teamwork blossom as they conquer challenges including the 3G swing, archery, abseiling, Jacob's ladder, go-karting and so much more. It is an impressive showcase of all the great qualities Fitzharrys students develop during their first year.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) inspires and enables our Year 9 & 10 students to embark on a journey, push personal boundaries and gain wonderful, life-shaping experiences along with a great sense of achievement. The highlight for many is the camping and expedition elements at stunning locations such as the Ridgeway, Brecon Beacons and the Peak District.

Cultural experiences are central to school life at Fitzharrys too. Our Languages department hosts several events which include cheese tasting, cooking tapas and salsa dancing. We hold an Arts, Technology & Culture Celebration to showcase all the fantastic creativity that takes place here each year. The cast and crew of our annual whole school musical experience the camaraderie of theatre culture. Our music students also perform at concerts in school and in the wider community. Humanities trips to Oxford, Norfolk, Dorchester, Harry Potter World and Lulworth Cove help to bring concepts and learning to life. During Fitzactive week, students participate in Jamaica Day and other horizon-expanding activities. Through activities and events such as these Fitzharrys develops the whole student, supporting the great teaching and learning taking place in every lesson.



'My daughter loved year 7 camp. It was a really formative experience. She came home brimming with confidence.'

Parent

'Fitzharrys School cares a great deal about pupils' achievement and personal development and so working relationships between staff and pupils are very strong.'

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Making Connections

Fitzharrys is an ambitious school where good teaching and a focus on growth mindset supports everyone in developing their skills and talents. Students can also experience extra stretch and challenge through a rich range of extra-curricular opportunities.



Our well-established partnership with Abingdon School involves students working together and mentoring each other. Our students regularly take part in collaborative projects in Science, English, Maths, Geography, PE, Drama and Languages. This has led to students presenting Science projects at the Royal Society and performing Shakespeare as part of the Shakespeare Schools Festival. Fitzharrys students also take part in Latin Club lead by Radley College, with some taking Latin GCSE.

Fitzharrys students excel in national and international competitions, including UK Maths Challenge and Modern Languages Olympiad. Our Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Club is a great success; our Year 8 students recently won an Oxford University Physics competition. Our Debate Club were the youngest participants in a competition in London, while our future lawyers participated in an Oxfordshire Magistrates' Court competition.



Fitzharrys School has Arts Mark Gold status, recognition of the fantastic arts opportunities our students enjoy and illustrative of the importance we place on arts education as a vital key to developing creativity and critical-thinking skills. Students attend regular theatre workshops, and our young performers and musicians play in theatres and concert halls in Oxfordshire and beyond. Our budding filmmakers have premiered their debut films at the Amey Theatre, working with the Abingdon Film Academy. Avid readers enjoy participating in the Carnegie Book Awards Shadowing competition with peers from all six senior schools in Abingdon.

Fitzharrys students also excel in the sporting arena, and we encourage sporting success by supporting students who play or perform at county, national and international level in Athletics, Football, Rugby and Swimming. Fitzharrys students have watched the England Rugby Union team train, been trained by England Netballers and regularly train and support each other in after school clubs.

"We have felt that our children have been offered the brightest of futures here at Fitz."

Parent

Building Confidence

At Fitzharrys we want each of our students to be happy, independent, resilient and resourceful, developing their confidence and creativity. We believe every student should receive guidance and support in a positive environment of security and compassion; building confidence is key to creating a climate for success.

Fitzharrys students have many champions. We are proud to have a fantastic team of committed and caring staff who work incredibly hard to help every child reach their potential and do a superb job of enhancing the skills, knowledge and self-belief of our students. We see our students as our greatest assets, as it is their spark, enthusiasm and individuality that makes our school what it is.

The form tutor is the first port of call for any worries, and they can also offer one-on-one coaching and support meetings for students in individual mentoring sessions. We know that communication between school and home is vitally important, so we hold a 'Meet the Tutor' evening early in Year 7 to build those relationships. Tutors are supported by Heads of Year and our Pastoral Director.



Our unique team of Student Wellbeing Managers (SWMs) are also on hand to help with any difficulties and for emotional support. Attached to particular year groups, this team has a wide variety of skills and experiences that make them ideally suited to resolving issues and ensuring that children always have a supportive adult that they can talk to. The team are greatly valued by students, staff and parents alike, and make a significant contribution to the happiness and success of all the students in their care.

All teachers at Fitzharrys are passionate about supporting and challenging every student. They use a range of strategies to ensure no-one is left behind. Our comprehensive staff development program gives teachers and teaching assistants the skills and understanding to empower Fitzharrys pupils.

A special feature of Fitzharrys' pastoral care is our focus on positive mental health and well-being. We know that adolescence can be a challenging time with lots of pressures from social media and other sources. We help our students develop the strength needed for challenges, the resilience to see things through, the confidence to know it is ok to make mistakes and healthy attitudes towards themselves and others.

Our focus on building confidence ensures students leave Fitzharrys as empathetic, socially competent and well-rounded members of the community, confident in their own abilities and ready to embrace life and meet any challenges they come across.

"I really like the sense of community at the school, teachers and senior staff have been very supportive of my child's needs."

Parent



'Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of the curriculum and staff passionately strive to ensure that their welfare needs are met. Parents' faith in Fitzharrys is well founded; this is a very caring community.'

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Exploring Careers and post-16 courses

Fitzharrys fosters the development of self-motivation, communication skills, problem-solving abilities and creative enterprise that will benefit and prepare students for their next steps in life.

Exploring careers options, experiencing the working world and receiving advice from fully qualified advisors are very important parts of our students' personal development.

Careers related activities, CV and application writing and interview practice are features of our Fitz Focus Plus (PSHCE) curriculum. Students meet with employers and people from a wide range of career areas during Key Stage 3 to broaden their knowledge of the variety of opportunities in their future working lives. The Enterprise Project in Year 9 brings additional opportunities and insight into the world of business and entrepreneurship.

All students are prepared for and take part in work experience in Year 10. They play an integral role in the process, from identifying possible placements to liaising with employers. Our students return with a fresh perspective on the world of work.

Every Year 11 student has an individual careers interview with an independent specialist advisor. There is also information and guidance about pathways leading into our sixth form, onto a college course or into an apprenticeship.

'Staff and students share an agenda for 'pursuing excellence'. Students make excellent progress in the sixth form.'

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Our 6th Form

We want Fitzharrys students to be ambitious in their career choices. JMF6 offers the very best teaching, high-quality careers advice, a caring and knowledgeable pastoral support team and many opportunities and experiences designed to help students realise all their aspirations.



We are very proud to provide a fantastic post-16 experience in JMF6: the joint Fitzharrys and John Mason Sixth Form, rated Outstanding by Ofsted in 2019. We pride ourselves on being a friendly and inclusive community. Our ethos is based on the principle that each student is an individual, is exceptional and is valued. This principle drives a personal tutorial programme to support students academically and personally, helping them achieve their goals.

Post-16 students at JMF6 can pick from a great range of more than 30 subjects to study. They also enjoy a comprehensive programme of careers advice, work experience and enrichment. This includes continued Duke of Edinburgh opportunities, access to independent school careers evenings and visits to a university and UCAS fair.

Fitzharrys students have a strong track record of progressing on to established universities including Oxbridge, as well as professional apprenticeships.

Full details on JMF6 including an individual prospectus, list of available courses and admissions guidance can be found on our school website.



Join
Fitzharrys
Be part of the Team

When you join our warm and welcoming school, you are immediately part of the Fitzharrys family, with the care, support and challenge needed to ensure you can achieve your very best.

Whether you are moving up from primary to secondary school or considering an in-year transition, as well as feeling excited, it is perfectly natural to feel a little nervous. Here at Fitzharrys, we have a well-established and effective transition programme to make settling in simple and ensure that you are happy and confident about joining your great new school.

If you are moving up from primary school, you will receive a welcome letter from Fitzharrys as soon as your school choice is confirmed in February. This will let you know about some of the things you can look forward to before you start in September, including our special transition tea where you will get to meet all the other children who will be with you at Fitzharrys.

Our Head of School and Head of Year 7 will visit Year 6 students at primary school. This is an opportunity to get to know you. It also helps us to organise the Houses and tutor groups so we can make sure you will have some friends nearby right from the very start of your time at Fitzharrys. You can ask us any questions you want, and we will do all we can to make sure that you are feeling really positive about the adventure ahead of you.

Everyone comes to Fitzharrys for Induction Day in June where you will start to find your way around the school, make new friends and meet our student Buddies: friendly faces who will be there to support you when you start secondary school.

In the evening, you will come back with parents and carers to share all that you have done earlier in the day. Some of you will be able to visit on additional days to help you feel extra confident about moving up to Fitzharrys.

All of this means that, come September, you will be ready to make a great start in your new school, feeling part of the Fitzharrys family from the very beginning and ready to make the most of all the fantastic things that lie ahead.

Older students who may be moving into the area or wish to join Fitzharrys when the academic year has already started are very welcome to visit our school. You will have a tour with some of our students from your year group and have the chance to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to answer any questions.

If you do join us, you will be assigned a tutor group and a Buddy who will be on hand to help you out in those first few weeks. We are a supportive and friendly community and new students settle in very quickly.

We look forward to welcoming you to Team Fitzharrys where

Together Everyone Achieves More.



FITZHARRYS SCHOOL

TOGETHER **EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE**

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