



FITZHARRYS SCHOOL

Fitzharrys School
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Head of School: Mr W Speke, BA (Hons)

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Dear parents and carers,

I hope that you and your families are well. As we come to the end of term 3, I wanted to update you with key information in readiness for the start of term 4.

Thank you

Firstly, I wanted to say thank you for all your support over the last 7 weeks. It has been a challenging time for everyone, and we know the challenges of remote education while balancing work and family pressures. I am extremely proud of the response of our students. They have adapted superbly to the new systems and methods of learning. The fortnightly newsletter which you will receive today illustrates the quality of what students are producing under the guidance of their teachers.

Staff have worked incredibly hard to adapt to this new way of teaching and have been able to transfer methods from the classroom onto both live and record lessons. The resilience, creativity, and professionalism they have shown has been superb. Staff have also been brilliant at facilitating COVID-19 testing, supporting key worker students, and checking in with students learning from home. At the end of such a busy term we know many students and parents may want to thank their teachers, one method of doing this is through the following website [Thank a Teacher Form | Thank a Teacher](#)

Possible return to school

As a school we look forward to being able to revert to face to face teaching but must be patient for when this will happen. We are expecting an announcement about a possible return on 22nd February, knowing that we will have 2 weeks' notice before any students return to school. 8th March is therefore the first possible date of any return, but this is not confirmed yet. We will be in contact with details once there has been an announcement and guidance from the government.

Testing

Staff continue to have tests in school when they are in to supervise students who are in school, currently they have two a week. Having been out of school for 9 days, all students who have previously consented to be tested will have two tests in the first week back after half term. Our testing centre is working very well, and we are grateful for the staff volunteers who are carrying these tests out.



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When more students are in school, we will need to expand our test centre capacity for the initial testing of returning students. This will involve more volunteers joining our testing team. If you are interested in helping within our test centre on a voluntary basis, then please contact the school via email. No previous experience is required, we will provide training and PPE, and we can accommodate those who can spare just a couple of mornings a week.

COVID-19 cases over half term

For the parents of students who have been in school this term, please remember that if your child develops symptoms or has a positive test over the first weekend of half term (13th and 14th February), then you will need to contact the school for track and trace purposes. Please email our COVID-19 email account on covid.reporting@fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk with any details. This will be checked daily by members of the leadership team this weekend. If there is a positive case, we will then contact possible contacts to explain the period of self-isolation.

Digital access

We continue to support students who are struggling with digital access. As ever, please let us know if your child is struggling to access live or recorded lessons or relying solely on a mobile phone for access. We will endeavour to help find a solution so that their online learning works as smoothly as possible.

A reminder that if your child is using a laptop loaned from school, they will need to log on at least once during half term to avoid technical problems. As we continue to use these systems, we are learning new innovations and methods to enhance learning. Ms Corley will continue to let you know of any improvements as we move forward.

Site security

Over the last fortnight work has begun on a new front gate to increase the security of the school site. This is a positive step for safeguarding our school community and we anticipate the work will be complete early in term 4. Once the system is ready and staff are trained in its operation, we will be writing to you explaining how the system will work.

Well-being

Whilst we have taken steps in our approach to remote learning to reduce screen time and increase engagement with peers, we know that this lockdown has created challenges for everyone's well-being. The pastoral team have created a series of challenges for students, these are a good source of ideas for activities away from a screen over half term. We will continue to try and reduce screen time in our planning, whilst maintaining a balance between schoolwork and relaxation, and ensuring that students have opportunities to share their worries or concerns with our pastoral team.



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There are also some resources which may support you at home, I have attached a flyer outlining some free courses provided by Oxfordshire Adult Learning, through Abingdon and Witney college. There is also some valuable guidance on online safety from Thames Valley Police which can be found in the letters section of our website [Letters Home \(fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk\)](https://www.fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk)

Lastly, I recommend the power of reading to help students relax and take them away from their screens. Mrs Holt, our librarian, has put together a fantastic guide of how to access audiobooks, which I have attached. World book day is coming up in term 4, more details will follow the half term break.

I hope that you and your child have a relaxing break over the next week. We look forward to seeing them safe and well online at the start of term, and hope to welcome them back into school as soon as it is deemed safe.

Yours sincerely,



Will Speke
Head of School



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