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19<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

At the end of a busy term, I wanted to say thank you for your continued support. Term 2 has been packed with learning, and activities that help students with their wider personal development. Throughout this, students have impressed with their engagement and attitude. This has been particularly evident in lessons and learning, where the calm and focussed atmosphere has allowed students to develop knowledge and understanding. There has also been a wide variety of extra- and super-curricular events that Fitzharrys students have engaged with in a superb manner.

**Aspiration**

Year 11 students have sat their mocks, and received their results and feedback, followed up by a parents' evening. This has facilitated some clear targets for their next steps to success. Year 13 students are shortly to undertake their mocks in January, as they build toward their final A level exams in the summer. We wish them well with their revision over the break. STEM subjects have been raising aspiration with a number of events: Year 8 students took part in the OX14 Learning Partnership (OX14 LP) 'ChallengED' at Larkmead School with their peers from across Abingdon; students who have parents in the armed forces took part in a STEM workshop at the University of Buckinghamshire; JMF6 Mathematicians took part in the UKMT Senior Maths Challenge, finishing in a very respectable 7<sup>th</sup> place in Oxfordshire; Science club were also making bath bombs.

In other curriculum areas students from KS4 and KS5 took part in the OXCOP, simulating the COP30 climate conference, as part of an OX14 LP team. All students took part in our 'Drop Everything And Read' event. JMF6 Media students visited Harry Potter Studios for a tour and workshop. Local MP Layla Moran visited the school as part of UK Parliament week, meeting both A level Politics students, and members of the student council. There was also a careers focus with our Careers Fair and Pathways Evening for all students where they were able to meet local employers and consider their next steps. JMF6 is a popular option, demonstrated by the open evening, which was hosted at Fitzharrys in November. JMF6 application details can be found here:

<https://jmf6abingdon.applicaa.com/year12>

**Opportunity**

Last week's Carol Concert at Trinity Church was a brilliant event that showcased the wide range of musical talent we have in school. The performances by the Orchestra, Choir, soloists, and various bands, were superb. Other opportunities this term have included the year 7 silent disco, year 9 beginning their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award, our young carers attending a bowling trip, and year 10 and 11 enjoying a Christmas quiz earlier this week.

There has been a wide range of sporting opportunities for students to engage in. Fitzharrys netball teams continue to have success, with year 7 winning their first fixtures, year 9 winning the Vale championship, year 10 coming second in the Vale, and year 11 qualifying for the county tournament, where they finished in 7<sup>th</sup> place. Football has also been a focus this term, with year 7 playing their first fixtures, year 10 winning their cup fixture, year 11 and year 8 also competed in the county cup. We have had students compete in the year 8 and year 10 Vale badminton tournament, Basketball fixtures for year 10 and year 11 boys, American Football taster sessions for year 8 and year 9 led by a SuperBowl winner, and Squash taster sessions for JMF6 students, year 8, and year 9 students. To finish off the term there has been an interhouse cross country competition, and inter house wide games for year 7 and year 8.

**Integrity**

Helping others has been a focus of whole school events this term, with a non-uniform day for Children in Need, a cause which also benefited from a cake sale. Our Christian club also held a cake sale for the charity Crisis at Christmas and for the Abingdon Foodbank. The whole school effort for the Foodbank was also superb collecting over 80kg of food which was dropped off last week in time for Christmas delivery. The choir were also spreading Christmas cheer when they sang at a local care home earlier this week.

Support for peers is an important part of being a Fitzharrys student. This term our Peer Support Leads (PSLs) received training on how to work with younger students through this OX14 LP initiative. The whole school took part in an immaculately observed Remembrance event, a group of boys received a talk on positive masculinity, and a group of students, parents, and teachers joined Abingdon Carbon Cutters in planting a woodland walk at the bottom of the all-weather surface. Last night a packed hall enjoyed the Staff Panto, as a fitting end to the festive season at school. Over the last two days we have also had the recognition assemblies for years 7-11, where it has been a pleasure to give out an array of rewards to so many students.

### **FSA and supporting Fitzharrys**

A massive thank you to the Fitzharrys School Association who have been incredibly busy this term supporting the school. They have sold Christmas Trees, raffled off hampers, and raised money through a GoFundMe page. Please be on the ready for the forthcoming jumble sale, details of this key fundraiser will follow in January.

We always welcome support for the school. Another way to offer support is through sponsorship of kit and equipment. We are looking to renew kits for sports teams, and purchase uniforms/kit for the choir and other music performance groups. If you or your employer are interested in supporting with this, please do get in touch to discuss this further.

### **Mobile phones**

Over the last couple of weeks, we have seen a spike in incidents involving videos and the use of social media. Whilst we have clear rules and guidance in school, we are aware that the pressure on young people to use phones is high, and the habits have become ingrained for some. We advise the careful monitoring of a smart phone, if your child owns one. We will be writing to you early in term 3 with some further guidance and support about reducing risk online. In the meantime, please do keep a careful eye on this over the Christmas break.

### **Term 3**

On Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January we have an INSET day for staff. All students will return to school on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January. We will send our curriculum newsletter to the parents and carers of each year group in the first week back to help you support your child's learning in term 3. I hope you have a relaxing break, a wonderful Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,



Will Speke  
Headteacher