



This Overview newsletter contains the key information you'll need this 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 curriculum content for all subjects, visit our [Curriculum Maps](#) webpage.

ENGLISH: Students will study *Macbeth* and the aspects of Tragedy. They will produce an analytical essay exploring theme, character, language, structure, form and context in an extract from the play and the play as a whole.

MATHS: This term we will be continuing with algebra – the language of mathematics. Learning to speak, write and read as a mathematician enables students to generalise and solve complex problems. Solving problems and equations using algebra will follow this.

SCIENCE: Students will study a Chemistry topic focused on atomic structure, the periodic table, and the properties of group 1, group 7 and group 0. They will also study a Biology topic looking at the digestive system and enzymes.

ART: This year, students will complete a range of shorter projects on the overarching theme of *Nature*. They will use a range of media, building on existing skills and knowledge, developing ideas and outcomes underpinned by artist references and analysis. Skills covered will include drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, and mixed media. The order in which projects are completed will vary from class to class.

COMPUTER SCIENCE: Students will learn higher level coding language – Python.

DRAMA: Students will prepare and then take part in a final performance of *The Tempest*, adding in both comic scenes and narration linking all the scenes together.

FRENCH: *Free Time and Holidays* – Students will revisit the near future and the perfect tense.

GEOGRAPHY: *Global inequality* – Students will look at the ways in which wealth is distributed unequally.

HISTORY: *Life in Nazi Germany* – Students will look into how the Nazis impacted different groups in German society.

MUSIC: *Samba* – Students will be learning how Samba evolved and the cultural impact of Samba music. They will learn a Samba piece and then compose their own.

PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS: *Does religion play a role in medical ethics?* An investigation into the relationship between religion and animal rights, experimentation, zoos, abortion, euthanasia, and genetic engineering.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Students will be developing skills and confidence within basketball, netball, and a unit of 'Sport Education' in which students focus on developing their leadership skills.

PSHE: *Dreams & Goals* – We will concentrate on recognising our personal strengths, understanding effective planning techniques, and envisaging our life's aspirations. Emphasis will be on distinguishing between mental health and illness, the influence of media on mental wellbeing, and avenues for mental health support.

SPANISH: *Identity and relationships with others* – What type of person are you? How are your friends? What is the modern family? Students will revisit ser and estar, adjectives and reflexive verbs.

TECHNOLOGY: Students follow a rotational system, all starting at different points. Key topics covered in year 9 are: making an Ugly Toy from recycled fabrics, a unit of Food Technology exploring a café culture, and an electronics project making a music box.

News

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

Key Contacts

Head of Years 8-9: **Mr J Crowe**

Deputy Head of KS3 (Years 8-9): **Mrs A Coekin**

Years 8-9 Student Wellbeing Manager: **Miss P Allen**

Assistant Head, Personal Development: **Mr J Clelland**

Queries

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

Aspiration

IMPACT PROGRESS CHECKS

During the week commencing 19th January, students will receive impact progress checks. Feedback for each subject includes specific targets set by teachers that, if completed, will have a positive impact on your child's progress.

We would be very grateful to have parents' support in encouraging students to complete these targets by:

1. Reviewing the targets with your child and discussing how and when they will achieve them;
2. Placing the report somewhere prominent and regularly checking to see if they have completed their targets.

Thank you for your support.

KEY STAGE 4 OPTIONS WEEK

This term, students will need to make their Options choices for GCSEs. This is an exciting time for students, and we want to make sure they are making informed decisions. Instead of an Options Evening, we run a full Options Week (w/c 19th January) in which students will take part in the following events both in and out of lessons:

- A variety of careers activities
- Talks and support from current Year 10 students
- Post-16 education choices talks
- A taster lesson for all subjects, which will include assessment structure, examples of work, and a taster activity.

PARENT TEACHER CONSULTATION EVENING

Our Year 9 Parent Teacher Consultation Evening will be held at school on Thursday 29th January, 4:30-7:30pm.

Bookings via Epraise are expected to open from 6pm on Thursday 15th January. We look forward to communicating with parents about the progress and wellbeing of your children, and to working together to ensure further progress.

100 BOOKS – READING CHALLENGE

Students are being encouraged to engage with our [100 Books to Read Whilst You're at Fitzharrys](#) booklet. Each time a student has read ten books from our list, they will be entered into a prize draw to win book vouchers from local bookstore, Mostly Books. Reading Award badges will be given out when students reach the milestones of 25 books, 50 books and 75 books. Any student who reads all 100 books before leaving Fitzharrys will receive a Platinum Award.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of what we do at Fitzharrys School. Research suggests that meaningful homework supports the acceleration of progress in students of secondary school age. We aim, through homework, to promote a culture of scholarship, setting purposeful homework for revision, preparation, and consolidation. Specific homework details can be found on [Epraise](#), where you can also see whether your child has completed and handed their work in.

To support students with this important aspect of their scholarship, we offer a wraparound service where students can complete work on school premises:

- Our computer room S1 is open on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning from 8am;
- Our Library is usually open every breaktime and lunchtime;
- We offer [Homework Club](#) in West Block until 4pm each day;
- Our computer room S1 is also open on a Tuesday until 4pm and a Thursday until 4:30pm.

For more details, please visit our website, where you will find a helpful video, and a full document detailing how much homework, and what kinds of homework, you can expect your child to be receiving: [Homework – Fitzharrys School](#).

CAREERS NEWSLETTERS

Our careers newsletters are updated each month with school, local, and national information and opportunities relating to careers. When organisations and training providers send us information about talks, vacancies, and applications, these will be shared via our website. To view, visit: [Careers Newsletters](#).

SUPER CURRICULAR CHALLENGES

Our subject leaders have put together some ideas for extra challenges and enrichment opportunities that students could undertake, to sit alongside their studies this term: see our [Super-Curricular Challenges – Term 3](#).

Opportunity

CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

Our [extra-curricular offer](#) is online and is regularly updated. Why not try a new club or activity this term?

CORE OPPORTUNITY: VERTEX PHARMACEUTICALS

Over the course of term 3, all of year 9 will be given the opportunity to participate in a trip to Vertex Pharmaceuticals. This is one of our core opportunities and it is our intention that every student attends the trip. The five different science classes are attending on five different days, and you will receive a letter with more details and the link to a permission form a few weeks before your child's trip. Please don't hesitate to [contact us](#) should you have any questions.

THE BIG FITZHARRYS BOOK SWAP

One of our goals at Fitzharrys is to get all of our students reading for pleasure. Reading is known to promote good mental health as well as building vocabulary and enhancing memory (and it has lots of other benefits too!).

As part of our commitment to promoting reading for pleasure, we are excited to host our first ever book swap after Christmas break!

Students will be asked to bring in their book(s) Monday 19th–Wednesday 21st January and give them to their form tutor. When a student brings in a book from home to swap, they will be given a token to put towards a book brought in by someone else. Your student can bring in more than one book, and will be given a token for each one they bring (up to five). We will display the books for students to browse during lunch break and they can choose the book(s) they would like to take home.

Please make sure all books your child brings in are:

- Age-appropriate (no adult content, but also not too young)
- In good condition (no rips, water damage, drawn or written in, etc)
- Something our students would enjoy (age-appropriate graphic novels/comics are fine too!)

This activity is optional, but we hope you will encourage your child to take part. Thank you for your support.

Integrity

UNIFORM

Please be reminded of our school uniform policy: <https://www.fitzharrys.oxon.sch.uk/school-life/uniform/>

We will be focussing on ensuring all students meet our high expectations. For support with uniform, please contact your child's tutor in the first instance.

LOG-IN SUPPORT

At Fitzharrys School, we use Educational Technology (EdTech) to support learning, independent work, homework, and revision. Research suggests that EdTech, particularly that which offers opportunities for self-quizzing, self-marking retrieval practice, increases retention of key ideas and knowledge (EEF, 2021). Our priorities for homework are laid out [on our website](#), where you will also find details of what types of homework to expect from each subject, and how frequently.

Students are taught to use each EdTech platform before being set independent work. However, we recognise that for parents and carers, there are many new processes, systems, and logins with which to become familiar: we hope you will find this EdTech [Parent Guide](#) helpful.

FSA: GIANT JUMBLE SALE

Following a leave of absence in 2025, the FSA is excited to announce the return of our very popular Giant Jumble Sale! It will be held in the hall on Sunday 25th January 2026, 10am–12pm. The FSA would appreciate good quality donations in January! (Please note, they are unable to accept any VHS tapes, cassette tapes, electrical items, or unsealed toiletries). Do [get in touch with the FSA](#) if you'd like to volunteer to help at the sale, or during set-up the day before, on Saturday 24th January. Find out more about the work of the FSA here: [FSA website](#).

Absence

To report a student absence, please telephone the dedicated *Student Absence Line* as soon as possible: **(01235) 538243**. Thank you.

Key Dates

Thursday 15 th January, 6pm	Y9 Parents Evening Bookings expected to open on Epraise
Monday 19 th – Friday 23 rd January	Y9 Options Week
Monday 19 th January (W/C)	Y9 Impact Progress Checks
Mon 19 th – Wed 21 st January	The Big Fitzharrys Book Swap
Sunday 25 th January, 10am-12pm	FSA Giant Jumble Sale
Wednesday 28 th January	Y9-11 Intermediate Maths Challenge
Thursday 29 th January, 4:30-7:30pm	Y9 Parents Evening
Tuesday 10 th February, 1-3pm	Y9-10 Abingdon YA book awards at Radley College (participating students only)
Thursday 12 th February	Y9 Languages Day, Queens College Oxford (participating students only)
Friday 13 th February	End of term, school closes at 3.15pm
Monday 16 th – Friday 20 th February	HALF TERM
Monday 21 st February	Start of term (Week B)