

Fitzalan High School
Specialist Curriculum Information



**How you can best support
your child to learn**

Summer 2021

Dear Parent,

Welcome to our KS3 curriculum booklet. We hope that it will help you understand what your child will be studying at school.

We believe that the partnership between home and school is vital. We also realise how important the transition from primary to secondary school is for you and your child. By knowing a little more about what your child will be doing, we hope that you will feel better able to support them in their learning.

We have also included some tips on how you can help your child to improve in each subject. If you have any other ideas, please share them with us.

We are confident that if we work together your child will have a happy and successful time at Fitzalan.

Mrs C Bradshaw

Headteacher

GETTING READY FOR SUCCESS

Q. Why is Education Important?

- 80% of the fastest growing jobs will require an education beyond school.
- 36% of all new jobs will require a university degree?
- The job market is much more competitive than it used to be and most employers are looking for formal qualifications.
- 10% of persistent absentees achieved 5 A*-C grades compared with 38% of occasional absentees and 58% of good attenders
- 21% of persistent absentees had no qualifications as opposed to 3% of good attenders

Q.What can you do to help?



This is Charlotte and she is in Year 7.
Her attendance is around 90%

She thinks that this is fairly good, however...

- 90% attendance means that she is absent from lessons for the equivalent of **one half day every week.**
- If it stays at 90% in Year 7, she will miss the equivalent **of four whole weeks**
- If Charlotte continued this pattern then over five years she will miss the equivalent of about **one half of a school year.**

Show an interest & work with the school:

- Provide a space in the home where they can study.
- Spend time, if you can with your child to encourage their learning.
- Encourage good eating habits and regular exercise.
- Support our routines and contact us promptly if you have any concerns.
- Use the SIMS Parent App to ensure they are completing their work.
- Praise good work.
- Find out what has gone well or what is going badly.
- Make time to read and check their reports & find out their targets

Homework tips:

- Encourage your child to complete homework regularly, early in the evening, in a separate room to avoid distractions. Record favourite TV programmes for later.
- Don't do the work for them. Help them to find answers to questions themselves.
- If they get stuck- encourage them to stick at it (PERSISTENCE) but don't let them get worried. Jot a note to their teacher explaining they have tried.
- Encourage them to use the library as well as the internet.
- If your child needs help or resources to complete homework they can have support from their Pupils Achievement Leader (PAL).

What does all the jargon mean?

Key Stage 3 (KS3)

Year 6 is the end of Key Stage 2. Key Stage 3 is generally Year 7, 8 and 9. However pupils may complete some GCSE/KS4 in Year 9.

Key Stage 4 (KS4) is Year 10 and 11.

Setting: means placing a child in a class according to their ability. Setting means that a child can be in a high ability set in one subject but in an intervention class for another one. It also means children can be moved from set to set according to the progress they make.

Core Subjects: the core subjects are mathematics, English and science.

Foundation Subjects: these are art, design and technology, drama, French, geography, history, Latin, music, PE, RE and health and wellbeing.

National Curriculum Levels (NC Levels): National Curriculum Levels span Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. Children should aim to make at least 2 levels of progress between each Key Stage. As a result of levels being so broad they are divided into upper (u), middle (m) or lower (l) in order to track progress across the Key Stage. 4u is the top of Level 4 and therefore a little push will achieve a Level 5.

Intervention Class/Group: If a child has not achieved the expected level at the end of the key stage/year then they will receive extra support either with a class or in a booster group.

Curriculum Access: Helping every child fulfil their potential

At Fitzalan High School we believe that every child deserves the best education possible. For some pupils this means that they may need some extra support.

Our Curriculum Access team have liaised closely with your child's primary school teachers to find out as much information about how we can best meet their needs. If you feel that there is something we need to know then please ask to speak to Mrs Roberts-Ablett (Assistant headteacher) or Mrs V Cahill (ALNCo).

More Able and Talented Pupils

More able and talented pupils at Fitzalan follow a differentiated curriculum at KS3 which includes Latin lessons and the opportunity to study Classical Civilizations in Year 8. There is also a comprehensive programme of enrichment activities to help develop their interests.

If you are aware of a particular talent that your child has that we may not see within the curriculum e.g. a sporting, musical or other creative talents, please let us know. In some cases there is further support available and we are always keen to liaise with coaches and to help your child celebrate their success.

Pupils with Additional Learning Needs

If your child has a specific need we will work with you to ensure that this need is met. We have a range of specialists in school and work closely with other agencies to ensure that such needs are not barriers to learning. We are always keen to work with parents both informally and through the formal review process.

Pupils needing to develop their Basic Skills

Some pupils need support to develop their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. For these pupils there are literacy and numeracy lessons built into the curriculum as well as the opportunity, where necessary, for small group and even 1:1 work on specialised programmes. Some pupils may continue with, or be introduced to, Rainbow Reading. Others will find that they have Read Write Inc lessons on their timetables. This is a structured phonics based programme, designed to give a boost to pupils as they enter high school.

Pupils with English as an Additional Language

Some of our pupils are new to English. These pupils are taught in smaller groups with a focus on developing their English skills. When pupils are confident they join mainstream classes to continue to develop their skills.

Copies of the SEN and the Literacy and Numeracy policies are available on request.

Please contact Mrs V Cahill (ALNCo) for further information.

The Curriculum Access Team at Fitzalan High School

Curriculum Access Team (CAT)

The Curriculum Access Team are committed to supporting parents, pupils and staff in raising the achievement of all pupils with barriers to learning.

They will respond swiftly and with flexibility to requests made and seek to improve communication with parents on curriculum access issues.

Who's who in the Curriculum Access Team:

- ▶ ALN: Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator Mrs V Cahill (VCA)
- ▶ Behaviour Emotional and Social Development: Mr A Evans (AEV)
- ▶ English as an Additional Language: Miss E Taylor (ETA)
- ▶ Specific Learning Difficulties: Miss H Baillie (HBA)
- ▶ Learning Support Unit Manager: Mr J Greenwood (JGR)
- ▶ Restorative Approaches: Mr A Afsar (AAF)

All requests and queries will then be forwarded to the relevant member of the team

Literacy and Numeracy

Literacy and numeracy is at the heart of our curriculum. While we recognise the lead roles that the English and maths departments have, we believe that all teachers are teachers of literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy and Numeracy framework has been mapped across all subjects at KS3 to ensure that pupils are taught the necessary skills and have opportunities to practise and refine them.

We have a common correction code which teachers will use when marking your child's work. Please encourage your child to respond to these corrections and to seek help if they need to.

For many pupils, project lessons will feature on their timetable. These lessons allow specific skills to be taught and practised.

Some pupils will also have additional support through targeted literacy / numeracy catch-up programmes. The programmes are designed to support pupils to improve their literacy / numeracy skills, to develop levels of confidence and self-esteem, to increase pupils' ability to access the curriculum and work more independently.

Interventions available at Fitzalan

Nessy Learning Programme

The Nessy program has been designed to help students of all abilities learn to read, write, spell and type, especially those who learn differently.



The Nessy Learning Programme ensures that pupils receive instruction tailored to his or her specific needs.

The intervention is a highly structured, sequential, cumulative and systematic phonics based learning program.

Accelerated Reader

Accelerated Reader is a reading programme that motivates students to read with support from online quizzes, personalised targets and rewards. The programme aims to promote independent, regular reading.



Nurture Group

What is a nurture group?

A nurture group is a small group of up to 8 pupils that follows a structured and predictable routine. Pupils attending the group are given opportunities to revisit early 'nurturing' experiences and develop their self-esteem. Pupils take part in activities designed to improve their social skills and emotional wellbeing and they are involved in setting their own personal targets for improvement. Identified pupils attend between 1-3 sessions per week and take part in activities designed to raise self-esteem and improve social skills.



What happens in a nurture group?

Pupils take part in a circle time followed by paired or group activities which are designed to develop their social and emotional skills whilst incorporating literacy and numeracy. Positive relationships are modelled and there is an emphasis on developing language and communication skills.

Who attends a nurture group?

Pupils are selected to attend a nurture group for a number of reasons. They may be finding the transition to secondary school challenging or they may have social or emotional needs. Some pupils may choose to have breakfast and/or some break times in the nurture house and others may benefit from regular one to one sessions for a period of time.



How are children selected for the nurture groups?

Pupils are initially identified by primary school colleagues during the transition between KS2 to KS3. Year 6 teachers will be asked to complete a Boxall Profile or Thrive assessment for each identified pupil. Pupils are then selected on the basis of suitability and consideration is given to group composition. Parents are informed and encouraged to attend a coffee morning to find out how the nurture group will support their child. Pupils can also be referred by Heads of Year throughout the year if the need arises.

What are the benefits of a nurture group?

Nurture groups have been proven to;

- Promote self-esteem
- Help the development of children's social skills
- Increases re-engagement with mainstream and future academic success.



How is a nurture room set up?

A nurture room is set up like a home environment with a living room, dining area and kitchen. There is also a learning area as well as a quiet reflection area and an engaging outdoor learning environment.

If you would like more information about nurture please contact Mr Leggett on 02920232580.

Assessment

This is an important aspect of your child's development. Assessment aims to inform the pupil, parent and teacher of how well your child is progressing and what they need to do to improve. Much assessment in school is formative; this means that the purpose is to make sure that pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve. At the end of Key Stage 3 (Year 9) your child will receive a Teacher Assessed Level for each subject. In school we use it to monitor and measure pupil progress, to identify appropriate interventions and curriculum pathways and to place pupils into teaching groups.

Further information on levels can be found in the Welsh Government booklet "How is your child doing at Secondary School?" http://www.sjhs.org.uk/correspondence/how_was_secondary.pdf

At Fitzalan, every department will set assessments. These pieces of work will cover a variety of skills and topics. They will also require your child to work in different ways; for example, research work followed by a presentation to the class. The assessments are recorded as a National Curriculum level and will enable your child, the department and the school to monitor progress throughout the key stage.

Departments will assess your child regularly. This may be through written or verbal feedback. Pupils will also be encouraged to peer and self assess. Marks that are given are explained in pupil exercise books. This will help you to follow their progress and help your child to understand what they need to do to improve. There are also specific areas in the planner that enable pupils to track their own progress.

Finally, you will be aware of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests introduced by the Welsh Government this year. Your child will sit these tests annually. The results will be used nationally as a measure of standards and to track pupil progress. In school we will use the results to monitor progress and to put in place appropriate interventions to support and to challenge your child to enable them to fulfil their potential. Pupils will be prepared for these tests primarily in literacy and numeracy lessons but also English, maths and other lessons across the curriculum.

If you have any queries regarding assessment, please contact your child's head of year in the first instance.

Homework

Homework is an opportunity for your child to consolidate, to reflect and to expand on their learning. Tasks may include research, projects, reading, planning, drafting, even watching TV!

There is no absolute time for homework however you might reasonably expect your child to have at least one piece a night. If you feel that your child is receiving an unreasonable amount of homework, or not enough- please do contact your child's head of year.

Even if your child has no set homework, please encourage them to read for a short time every day.

Rewards

We all like to know that we are doing well. At Fitzalan High School pupils have the opportunity to gain achievement points that are recorded in SIMS. These points are monitored by Heads of Year. Pupils can earn points for a range of things including consistent effort, demonstrating PRIDE characteristics like persistence or being helpful or kind and for excellent work. Pupils accruing many points will be awarded bronze, silver and gold stars which are awarded in regular praise assemblies. These pin badges can then be worn on blazer lapels.

Reporting

You will receive a written report once a year. In Year 7 and 8 this is towards the end of the school year. In Year 9 it is timed to help with making choices for KS4. This report provides some detail on your child's performance and progress. At regular intervals during the year you will also receive interim reports. These reports provide an effort grade, a target National Curriculum level and an actual level as well as lesson attendance percentage for each subject. They are intended to provide you with a snapshot of your child's performance so that you can monitor progress, discuss any issues and celebrate success with your child.

Every year group has a Parents' Evening. This is an essential evening for discussing your child's progress and identifying ways to ensure your child fulfils their potential. We find that pupils, parents and teachers value these evenings and recognise their importance. We believe it is vital that you attend these evenings.

If we, as teachers, have any major concerns about your child we will not leave it until parents' evening to speak with you but will make contact by telephone or letter as the issue arises. We would ask that you do the same.

Essential equipment for Learning

In general all specialist equipment is provided. There are, however some things that will enable your child to make the most of their time at Fitzalan ensuring that they can focus on learning.

It is important that your child has a good size school bag. Ideally it should also be weatherproof too. In this bag your child should have a pencil case containing at least two black pens, pencils, a ruler, rubber, sharpener and a highlighter. The maths department will be able to offer advice about a calculator and the art department will offer for sale specialist sketchbooks.

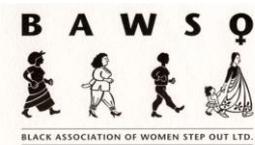
Your child will be provided with exercise books which will need to be looked after and brought to every lesson. Some children find it difficult to organise themselves. Please help them go through their timetable each evening and pack their bag with what they need for the next day.

At home your child will need a quiet place to work- away from the TV and younger brother and sisters. They will also need a safe place to keep their school books - a drawer or storage box is good. A store of colours (pencils or felts) may come in handy for homework too.

Healthy Body, Healthy Mind

For your child to make the most of the learning opportunities they need to be alert and well fuelled! Please try to ensure that they have a good night's sleep and a nutritious breakfast.

PUPIL SUPPORT at FITZALAN

<p style="text-align: center;">LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM</p> <p>Each year group has a Head of year (HOY), a Pupils Achievement Leader (PAL) and form tutors who pupils can go to for advice and support. Share your worries, discuss your progress, your learning pathways and any barriers to learning you may have.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MENTORS</p> <p>Every form tutor is a mentor to some of the pupils in their form. We also have some 6th Form pupils who mentor pupils lower down the school.</p>
<p>EMOTIONAL SUPPORT</p> <p>Emotional Support Coach: Mrs S Iqbal – you may be referred to see her to discuss any problems you might be having or to help you overcome ‘barriers ‘ to your learning</p> <p>2talk2 Counsellor: You can refer yourself to this service. A counsellor can help you by listening to you. It is always confidential. She is in school 2 days per week.</p> <p>Bounceback: The ‘Bounceback’ mentors visit school 2 days per week. They have given support to many pupils in Year 10 & 11. Your HOY may refer you to this service.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">INTERNET</p> <p>www. Connexions-direct :this website offer advice on careers, health, relationships, money, housing & rights to 13-19 years.</p> <p>Kooth.com: This is an online service where you can seek the support of a counsellor or other teenagers via blogs, online chats etc.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">TELEPHONE</p> <p>Childline- 08001111 is a phone call away</p> <p>BAWSO- worried about forced marriage or honour based violence. Ring on 0800 731 8147</p> <p>Meic- is a Welsh assembly advice line for young people under 25. Ring free on: 08088023456 or text: 84001</p> <div style="text-align: center;">   </div> <p>Connexions- will offer advice on the phone on relationships, money, housing , rights etc- 080800 13219</p>
<p>EXTERNAL AGENCIES</p> <p>CAMHS: Part of the National health Service who have helped many pupils with emotional and mental health issues.</p> <p>AMBER project: they have worked with pupils to help manage ‘self harming’.</p> <p>PHASE & SASS courses: these are courses designed to help pupils with anger management, self esteem issues</p>	

CAREERS	CHILD PROTECTION TEAM
<p>A member of Careers Wales is based in Fitzalan. They can offer advice on career choices and future learning pathways. Ask Miss Holland-Lloyd for an appointment.</p>	<p>Designated teachers: Mrs J Rees (based in Middle School) & Mrs J Kemp (based in Technology block).</p> <p>Worried about abuse, not feeling safe? You can talk to your HOY, PAL, form tutor or any teacher. They may then refer you to the designated teachers or you can speak to them directly.</p>

Sites that can offer parents support include www.parentlineplus.org.uk and www.parents.org.uk.

Internet-Related Safety Tips for Teens



- Help your children to understand that they should never give out personal details to online friends they do not know offline. Would they put their name address and telephone number on posters around Cardiff?
- Explain to your children what information about them is personal: i.e. email address, mobile number, school name, sports club, arrangements for meeting up with friends and any pictures or videos of themselves, their family or friends. Small pieces of information can easily be pieced together to form a comprehensive insight in to their lives and daily activities.
- Make your children aware that they need to think carefully about the information and pictures they post on their profiles. Inform them that once published online, anyone can change or share these images of them. It can be easy to forget that the internet is not a private space, and as a result sometimes young people engage in risky behaviour online. Advise your children not to post any pictures, videos or information on their profiles, or in chat rooms, that they would not want a parent or carer to see. Again would they put photos of themselves on posters around Wales?
- It's not a good idea for your child to open files that are from people they don't know. They won't know what they contain—it could be a virus, or worse - an inappropriate image or film.
- Help your child to understand that some people lie online and that therefore it's better to keep online mates online. They should never meet up with any strangers without an adult they trust. Remember that not everyone may be who they say they are. For example a person who says "she" is a 14-year-old girl from Birmingham may really be a 42-year-old man from Newport.
- Always keep communication open for a child to know that it's never too late to tell someone if something makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Be aware of professional sources of help. These include:
 - www.thinkuknow.co.uk: the main UK Government website with advice for parents on how to keep children safe online
 - www.ceop.police.uk: the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) is the Government body dedicated to eradicating abuse of children. Concerns about inappropriate contacts between a child and an adult, including online, can be reported directly to CEOP.
 - www.iwf.org.uk: the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) works to remove illegal material from the internet. If you have found any material you believe to be illegal e.g. child sex abuse images, other obscene material or material which incites racial hatred, you can report it to the IWF.
 - A number of specialist websites contain general advice that may be of help to parents. These include www.nspcc.org.uk, www.nch.org.uk, www.barnardos.org.uk, and www.bullying.co.uk.