

INTHEKNOW

Friday, 9 February 2024

www.fairfax.bham.sch.uk



Respect Matters Focus Week

An advance notice: w/b 19 February 2024 is Respect Matters Week. Tutor time activities will focus on 'respect' and 'being respectful'. #berespectful

Fairfax PFTA

A reminder notice: a Surprise 'Prize' Bingo PFTA event is taking place on Thursday, 22 February 2024 from 19:00. Tickets are available on ParentPay at £12.50 per person. The ticket price includes a curry, rice and naan meal and your three bingo sheets for the evening. World Challenge students will be selling 'Sweet Treats' for dessert on the evening. We hope many parents/carers will support this fundraising event for the students at Fairfax. Please email ff-ptfa@fairfax.fmat.co.uk with any queries.

Parent/Carer Calendar

Please find attached an updated copy of the parent/carers calendar for the Spring Term 2.

Extra-Curricular Clubs and Activities

Please find attached an updated copy of the extra-curricular clubs for the Spring Term 2.

Equalities Group Meeting

A reminder notice: all students are invited to attend our Equalities Group Meetings on Thursdays at lunchtime in C7. If your child is interested in getting involved, please encourage them to attend or speak to Miss Gardner, Mrs Buckley or Mrs Williams.



PRIDE Meeting

An advance notice: all students are invited to attend our next PRIDE Meeting on Wednesday, 28 February 2024 15:00-16:00 in C13. If your child is interested in getting involved, please encourage them to attend or speak to Mrs Lam or Mrs Williams.

School Council Meeting

A reminder notice: all students are invited to attend our next School Council Meeting on Tuesday, 30 January 2024 at lunchtime in B9. If your child is interested in getting involved, please encourage them to attend or speak to Mrs Hau or Mrs Williams.

Library Notice

A reminder notice: each year group has been allocated a day when they can visit the library:

- Year 7 Monday
- Year 8 Tuesday
- Year 9 Wednesday
- Year 10 Thursday
- Year 11 Friday
- Sixth Form Every day

This applies to both break time and lunch time and **if students want to use the library at lunch on their day, they must obtain a pass at break time.**

We want to allow as many students as possible to use the library. The library is intended as a quiet and calm space for students to read and study and those attending the library will be expected to use it for those reasons.

Attendance Matters

Well done to our students whose attendance has been high! A reminder that attendance should be 97% at least. Attendance improves achievement! Excellent attendance will be rewarded! Please support Fairfax in maintaining a high level. Please contact the Academy before 08:00 each day of absence.

Attendance Office

Please be reminded that you can contact the attendance office and Attendance Manager – Miss J O'Connor via email: ff-attendance@fairfax.fmat.co.uk. For Year 12 attendance, please contact Mrs Brewer on ext. 3309. For Year 13 attendance, please contact Mrs Rai on ext. 3260.

Attendance CSAWS

Please be reminded that CSAWS (Central School Attendance and Welfare Service) may conduct a home visit if your child is absent and their attendance is a concern.


Term Time Holiday Requests

A reminder notice: parents/carers are kindly reminded that Fairfax Academy cannot authorise holiday leave during term time. Please be advised doing so may result in penalty charges.

Punctuality

A reminder notice: all students are expected to be on school site from 08:25 and be in their tutor room for registration by 08:30 each day.

Any student arriving after this time will be considered late to school. Students who arrive after 09:15 without a valid reason, e.g. medical appointment, will be recorded as an unauthorised absence for the AM session only. To notify us that your child will be late to school, please telephone 0121 378 1288, press option 1 and leave a voicemail stating a valid reason for the lateness. We ask for your support in reminding your child of the importance of punctuality and the need to ensure enough time is given in order to travel to school each morning. Please be reminded that the third instance of lateness, and any lateness after this during a half term, will result in a 60 minute after-school detention.



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ATTENDANCE MATTERS

At Fairfax Academy we believe that excellent attendance and punctuality are the key to success. A missed school day is a lost opportunity to learn. Students who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve higher grades than students who do not have regular attendance.

ABSENCE

Children are required by law to attend school 190 days per year and the Government advise that students' attendance should be at least 95%. However, **95% attendance equates to 10 missed days of school; a massive 50 lessons!** Research has shown that students missing 20 days of school performed a whole grade lower in their exams than similar ability students with good attendance.

PUNCTUALITY

Poor punctuality can have a significant impact on learning time. Across a school year, being **5 minutes late per day results in a loss of 3 days learning per year.** Being 15 minutes late every day will result in **10 lost days.**

Our school day starts at 8.35am and students should be through the school gate at this time. Students that are late into school will be issued with sanctions in line with our academy Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

APPOINTMENTS

Wherever possible appointments should be made out of school time. We understand that at times appointments in the school day are unavoidable. Please provide evidence of the appointment in advance, so that we can amend our school records, and advise the school who will be collecting your child during the school day.

ATTENDANCE

At Fairfax Academy we are committed to challenging poor attendance. In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absence, the academy will advise the parents/carers that we require an improvement in attendance.

When attendance fails to improve, the school reluctantly takes the line that legal action has to be considered, and the Court Section in Birmingham becomes involved. In previous academic years, cases have been heard, and either a fixed penalty has been issued, or a court appearance has been determined as an appropriate course of action.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Please keep in mind the cost to your child's education should they miss school. Please do not book holidays in term time. Holidays in term time will not be authorised.

95% ATTENDANCE
= 10 missed days = 50 lessons!

5 MINUTES LATE PER DAY
= 3 lost days learning per year

AVOID BOOKING
holidays in term time

Detentions

A polite reminder that schools and academies have the right to detain students for breaches of the School Behaviour Policy. Schools do not have to give parents/carers notice of after-school detentions or tell them why a detention has been given.

More information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/school-discipline-exclusions/discipline>.

Uniform Reminder

A reminder notice: we would like to highlight specific aspects of our dress code that have been observed recently and require your support on:

- **Prohibited Items**: Students are not permitted to wear hoodies, sweatshirts, trainers or tight elastic trousers within the school premises. These items have been identified as potential distractions and may impede the uniformity and professionalism we strive to instil in our students.
- **Tight trousers**: It has come to our attention that there may be instances where students are wearing tight-fitting trousers, which is not in alignment with our dress code standards. Please be reminded that school trousers should not be tight-fitting. This guideline is in place to ensure that students maintain a respectful and modest appearance, contributing to the overall professional atmosphere of our school. Only tailored or 'slim' trousers will be allowed to be worn. Please see the pictures below for further guidance.



- **Earring Limitations**: Please note that stud earrings are limited to one per ear. This restriction aims to maintain a neat and conservative appearance while allowing for personal expression within reasonable bounds.
- **Clear Nose Studs**: If your child has a pierced nose, we require them to wear a clear nose stud. Students arriving without a clear nose stud will be asked to remove the stud. Failure to comply with this request will result in the student being placed in refocus, a designated area where they can refocus on adhering to the dress code.

We thank you in advance and appreciate your support and cooperation in reinforcing these guidelines with your child. Consistency in dress code adherence contributes significantly to the overall positive atmosphere within the school.

Wet and Cold Weather

A reminder notice: during wet and cold weather, we would ask that you equip your child with a waterproof coat and/or umbrella in order to ensure they are able to have a break outside. We know that being in the fresh air benefits well-being. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Assistant Head of Year or Head of Year.

PE Lessons – Winter Months

A reminder notice: with the colder months ahead, we kindly remind parents that students are permitted to wear the following to keep them warm during PE lessons:

- Girls are allowed to wear black base layers under their House polo shirt, along with the optional mid layer. The black base layers should be a long sleeved top and base layer leggings (no fashion leggings permitted).
- Boys are allowed to wear a long sleeved black base layer underneath their PE tops, and base layer leggings (shiny, stretchy, non-cotton) under their shorts. Alongside this, an optional mid layer is permitted.

PE Lessons – Footwear

Please be reminded that school shoes are not to be worn as PE trainers within PE lessons. Outdoor trainers should be worn in line with the Academy's Uniform Policy. Consequences will be issued to students who do not comply.

Careers Update

This week has been National Apprenticeship Week – BUT What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is an opportunity for you to learn and earn whilst gaining a qualification. Originally just for young people up to the age of 25 apprenticeship are now open to ANY age group.

The breakdown of your programme will be 80% technical/practical skills learnt in the workplace whilst the remaining 20% is the theory part of your qualification. Your theory part can take place at a local college, training provider or online provider.

Apprenticeships are a great way of upskilling young people or even your existing workforce. The government offers a levy for employing an apprentice; see this link for more information: [Employing an apprentice: Get funding for apprenticeship training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/employment/levy)

Apprenticeships come in many levels starting from Level 2 equal to GCSEs through to Level 7 equal to a Masters programme. Entry requirements are set by the employer and there are certain areas where there is a wealth of vacancies, however there are also areas where there is a deficit.

For Year 11 leavers then both the Level 2 & 3 apprenticeships should be sort after and for Year 13 leavers Level 3 through to Level 7 should be looked at.

NAME	LEVEL	EQUIVALENT
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes at grade A*- C or 9 - 4
Advanced	3	2 A level passes/ Level 3 Diploma/ International Baccalaureate
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

On Friday 2 February a 'National Apprenticeship Week' sheet was posted on Show my Homework alongside parent being emailed at the start of the week. The sheet included links for the week's activities including virtual and in person fairs. If you have missed out on some of these opportunities, you can still gather some information on professional roles through the Young Professional website and watch their past webinars: [Events - Young Professionals \(young-professionals.uk\)](https://www.youngprofessionals.co.uk). You can also log into www.unifrog.org and click into their past webinars as well as searching for their information on apprenticeships. Also check out the Fairfax Instagram page for regular updates on apprenticeships @ffxcareers.

BCU Accelerate

Birmingham City University (BCU) work in partnership with Fairfax Academy to deliver the BCU Accelerate programme. As part of the programme students experience a range of workshops from BCU and others.

In late January select students from Year 7 and 8 completed poetry workshops with special guests Dreadlock Alien and Kurly known collectively as Memorhyme. Students have already started to write some amazing poems and showcase their performing talents. Special mention from Memorhyme go to Shevon, Delphi, Kealan and Samira from Y7 and Nissi, Tavai, Presley-Ann, and Ashai from Y8. We look forward to hearing some more fantastic poems in March.

Selected Year 9 students have had a workshop called "Life choices", where they heard real life experiences from two BCU ambassadors of how they chose their GCSE options to their level 3 qualifications to their undergraduate degrees. Later this year we will be inviting Year 9 students onto campus for an experience of university, including a campus tour, creative workshops, and lunch at the university's canteen.

Mathematics Notice - Calculators

The Mathematics Faculty would like to encourage students to have their own calculator, so that students familiarise themselves with how to use their own calculator and this would benefit them in examinations.

Modeshift STARS Active Travel Ambassadors Programme

A reminder notice: students in Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 have been working with Modeshift STARS, an organisation which supports sustainable travel and delivering effective travel plans in education. Fairfax has partnered with the organisation and John Willmott School to achieve the objective of reducing car use and popularity, and to promote active and sustainable travel options such as walking, bus use, park and stride. Our students will be presenting active travel ideas pertinent to Fairfax and John Willmott School to members of Birmingham Council Chamber in February towards the objective, and competing against four other schools. For more information about Modeshift STARS, please see: <https://modeshiftstars.org/>.

YEAR 7

A reminder notice: Year 7 Parents' Evening is on Thursday, 18 April 2024, 15:45 -18:45. Please be advised that Fairfax uses an online booking system for Parents' Evening. Information about how to log on and book appointments will be sent to parents/carers w/b Monday, 8 April 2024. If you have any queries about Parents' Evening please email ff-parentsevening@fairfax.fmat.co.uk.

YEAR 8

A reminder notice: Year 8 Parents' Evening is on Thursday, 7 March 2024, 15:45 -18:45. Please be reminded that Fairfax uses an online booking system for Parents' Evening. Information about how to log on and book appointments will be sent to parents/carers w/b Monday, 26 February 2024. If you have any queries about Parents' Evening please email ff-parentsevening@fairfax.fmat.co.uk.

YEAR 9

A reminder notice: a reward trip will take place on Friday, 24 May 2024 to Alton Towers, and invited students, who received zero consequences during Year 8, will receive a letter and information from Mr Porter.

YEAR 10

A reminder notice: Year 10 Mid-Year Assessments in English, Mathematics and R.E. will take place between Wednesday, 28 February, and Friday, 1 March 2024. An overview timetable is available on the school website under 'Examination Information'. Students should all have received their personalised timetable with exact timings, exam venue and seat number in tutor time. If this has not been received or has been lost, they are advised to visit the Exams Office to obtain a replacement. Students are reminded to bring a working black pen and pencil to all exams. Mathematical equipment will be provided.

A reminder notice: a reward trip will take place on Friday, 14 June 2024 to Drayton Manor, and invited students, who received zero consequences during Year 9, will receive a letter and information from Mrs Colbourne.

YEAR 11

A reminder notice: the Year 11 Mock Examination Period commences on Monday, 19 February 2024 and runs until Wednesday, 28 February 2024. An overview timetable is available on the school website under 'Examination Information'. Students should all have received their personalised timetable with exact timings, exam venue and seat number in tutor time. If this has not been received or has been lost, they are advised to visit the Exams Office to obtain a replacement. Students are reminded to bring a working black pen and pencil to all exams. Mathematical equipment will be provided.

A reminder notice: the 2024 Sixth Form Online Application Form is now live on our Academy website. The deadline for applications is Friday, 23 February 2024. Please visit [Apply for Fairfax Sixth Form – Fairfax Academy](#).

An advance notice: the GCSE Drama & Theatre Studies practical examination will take place on Monday, 18 March 2024.

A reminder notice: Year 11 Prom will take place on Thursday, 27 June 2024 at Little Aston Golf Club. Please be reminded that students will need to be aware of the examination contingency date of Wednesday, 26 June 2024, and all students should be available up to, and including that day, in case there is disruption to the national examinations.

YEAR 12

A reminder notice: there is an educational visit to Bletchley Park planned for A Level Mathematics students on Wednesday, 6 March. Please see the visit letter for further details.

A reminder notice: sixth former students should check their school email for correspondence from the Sixth Form Team and Careers Department. Please see Sixth Form Supervisors if there are issues accessing Office365.

A reminder notice: all sixth form students must sign out with their pass before leaving the school site at lunchtime. This is a requirement of being allowed to leave school, and if this is not followed, students will not be permitted to leave the site.

A Work Experience notice: students should be looking for their work placements for the week beginning Monday, 17 June 2024. Students have received their placement forms and a consent form has been emailed to parents/carers. The deadline for the consent form to be returned was Friday, 1 December 2023 and the deadline for the placement forms is Friday, 22 March 2024. Please note that places fill up quickly, so students should be seeking out placements now. We have a database of previous placements that students can access by speaking to their supervisor, Mrs Brewer. All queries are to be directed to the Year 12 supervisor, Mrs Brewer and the email address is WEX@fairfax.fmat.co.uk.

An advance notice: the A Level Drama & Theatre Studies practical examination will take place on Tuesday, 5 March 2024.

A reminder notice: a reward trip will take place on Thursday, 14 March 2024 to Escape Hunt Birmingham, and invited students, who received zero consequences during Year 12, have received a letter and information from Mrs Dutton.

A reminder notice: sixth former students should check their school email for correspondence from the Sixth Form Team and Careers Department. Please see Sixth Form Supervisors if there are issues accessing Office365.

A reminder notice: all sixth form students must sign out with their pass before leaving the school site at lunchtime. This is a requirement of being allowed to leave school, and if this is not followed, students will not be permitted to leave the site.

A reminder notice: Year 13 Prom will take place on Thursday, 27 June 2024 at The Townhouse, Sutton Coldfield. Please be reminded that students will need to be aware of the examination contingency date of Wednesday, 26 June 2024, and all students should be available up to, and including that day, in case there is disruption to the national examinations.