

FURZE PLATT FAMILY NEWS

Alumni Newsletter - Issue #1



MESSAGE FROM DR ANDREW MORRISON, HEADTEACHER

Dear FPSS Alumni

It is a pleasure to write this foreword to our Alumni Newsletter. Whether you left recently or longer ago, I hope that you look back on our school with many fond memories of the staff and students you met. Moreover, I am sure that you will remember the lessons and events that helped shape you as an individual.



As you will learn from the following pages, we are an ever-changing school not least this year as we have opened a new three storey Science and English block and in the coming months we will add a new Main Hall/Theatre. As we expand our physical site so too does the number of students continue to grow in our oversubscribed school. We are set to exceed 1500 students by 2022. At over three hundred, our successful Sixth Form is the largest in Maidenhead with students being leaders and role models within our community.

In addition to the range of lessons, we continue to offer the wide range of enrichment opportunities often treasured by our Alumni. Whether racing our Greenpower car, taking part in the arts, representing the school at sport, going away on trips and much more students understand what is special about our FPSS community.

Since I joined the school in September 2018, what has been especially noticeable is how our Alumni have played an important role in enriching our school. For example, before Christmas we held a Hustings for the four parliamentary candidates for Maidenhead. Alongside Theresa May sat two ex-FPSS students representing the Liberal Democrat and Labour parties with the Green party candidate being one of our governors.

I have also been amazed at how our Alumni have supported each other. When last year an ex-student made contact asking for us to provide photographs of the school to share with his grandchildren as he was going blind, our Alumni rallied and helped him out. This is exactly the sense

"I have many great memories at Furze Platt and I thoroughly enjoyed my time there, from representing the school at a variety of sports to becoming Head Boy and undertaking a multitude of speeches and events. My time at Furze Platt has impacted and shaped my life, and was a big reason for my successes and the person I am today."



of community we seek to promote at FPSS amongst our current students as well as Alumni.

I hope that you enjoy reading this newsletter and seeing how your old school is evolving. Please keep in touch. We are always keen to hear your stories.

Best wishes,

Andrew Morrison (BA Hons, PGCE, MA, PhD)
Headteacher

JOIN OUR ALUMNI

OUR SCHOOL IN 2020



Furze Platt is a highly **aspirational, high achieving** and fully **inclusive** school providing an **outstanding education** that enables all our students to achieve **excellent outcomes**.

Throughout this newsletter you will see our Values.

These are:

- being **Ambitious**
- being **Collaborative**
- being **Happy**
- having **Integrity**
- showing **Endurance**
- showing **Versatility**



All of which lead to **Excellence**

CHANGES AT FURZE PLATT



So, how much has changed over the years?

Well, the first thing you may notice is our school uniform and PE kit. In previous years, our girls wore a blue aertex shirt for PE which has been updated to the school colours and along with the boys' kit, looks very smart. The blazers have our current logo on which was designed by a member of our staff, updated from the previous logo, which was a winning entry from a student in a competition for our 25th anniversary in 1988.



Previous Head Boys and Head Girls may feel slightly envious about our current Student Leadership team, which also includes a Deputy Head Boy and Girl. We also have a number of additional Student Leaders with differing responsibilities to help with the many leadership tasks they take on.



Daniel Juden
Head Boy



Gemma Higley
Head Girl



Daniel Brant
Deputy Head Boy



Hollie O'Neill
Deputy Head Girl



A-LEVEL RESULTS 2019

97% PASS RATE

26%
OF GRADES
ARE
A*-A

53%
OF GRADES
ARE
A*-B

80%
OF GRADES
ARE
A*-C



Our school site has changed considerably over the years. As well as our new three storey Science and English block, we will be adding a new Main Hall/Theatre. The old Gym has been demolished, and we have the luxury of a fantastic Leisure Centre on site which offers fitness equipment to our students during the day and for after school clubs, and is open to the public during evenings and weekends.

Our Drama studio has been fitted with sound and lighting technology but our new Main Hall/Theatre will offer even more chances for students to really shine, whether it be in school productions, musical concerts or as part of the tech team for those who prefer a behind the scenes approach.

Our Humanities department can now be found in what was the old English block; we have a Shine department that supports children with autism; our Science department has had a very necessary upgrade; our Year 7 playground has also been refurbished to make break times more fun; and it does not seem so long ago that our Maths block was the new building in the school!

You can see a drone video here of our new English block which shows the extent of the building work recently completed.

VIDEO OF NEW ENGLISH BLOCK

You may have seen our crowdfunding campaign in the local press. As part of the RBWM expansion project, and with the help of our Governors, we hope to make the new Main Hall/Theatre a state of the art facility. Our PTFA have been asked to raise the final £34,000 of which almost £20,000 has already been donated.

If you would like to help us with our project, we would be very grateful for any support you could give. To donate, or to see more about our plans, please visit the link below.

NEW MAIN HALL/THEATRE CAMPAIGN



I remember... "my fabulous teachers, Cathy Higgins, Mr Fagence - and stone picking from the 'new' sports field behind the science block."

Cont. on page 3

Those of you who attended Furze Platt between 2004 and 2018 will definitely remember our next contributor!

MESSAGE FROM MS WHITE

HEADTEACHER 2004 - 2018

Thank you for inviting me to contribute to your first alumni newsletter. I feel honoured! I can hardly believe that nearly eighteen months have passed since saying a fond farewell to everyone.

So what have I been up to? For the first twelve months I did very little apart from enjoy myself and do some of the things I was looking forward to doing with more time. I have read more, slept more and seen more of friends and family. I have taken the opportunity to do things that were never possible because they occurred during term time. For example, I finally got to visit the Chelsea Flower Show which I had wanted to do for some time (very beautiful but far too crowded!). However, most importantly for me, I have been able to travel more. Since leaving FPSS I have travelled around Sri Lanka, toured Andalusia, explored the south of France and had breaks in Valencia and Porto. By the time you read this I will be in Cambodia.



Now that I have enjoyed my 'gap year' my thoughts have turned to ways in which I can make a positive contribution. I took a little while to establish what I might do, and then to find the right opportunities, but things have suddenly started falling into place. I have become a trustee of a local community library, which is in the process of setting itself up after the withdrawal of council funding, and I am also supporting a charity which has secured significant lottery funding to provide mentoring to students at serious risk of exclusion in secondary school. A topic close to my heart. In addition, I started Spanish lessons last September. My challenge now is not to become too busy again!

I always think fondly of my time at Furze Platt and I am really looking to finding out more about others who have this shared connection via the newsletter.

Warmest regards to all,

Tanya White, Headteacher (2004 – 2018)



ALUMNI SUCCESS

We have had many successful Alumni at Furze Platt. Our website has details of some of those who are well known; here are more sporting successes from our recent leavers.



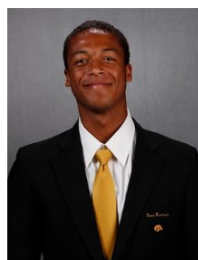
After completing my A levels whilst juggling high performance training to race at the World Championships for GB, I came to the decision to take a year out of education and trialling for the squad before I move over to the States to row for a university out there.

I am currently coaching rowing as a PE teacher at Borlase school whilst working in a local company in Maidenhead and training in preparation for America.

Furze Platt as a school were crucial in allowing me to proceed in my rowing career. Without my history teacher Mr Colmer, I don't think I would've left Furze Platt with any A levels.

There was a big jump for me from going from a student to coaching students and I now have a new understanding and level of respect for all the staff that helped me through my 7 years at Furze Platt.

By Izzie Bird



Since leaving Furze Platt Senior School, **Oliver Okonkwo** has achieved a very impressive tennis career at the University of Iowa.

Oliver, who has two younger brothers at Furze Platt who are currently in Years 10 and 11, has forged his way as a notable player in both singles and doubles.



MORE NEWS ON OLIVER'S SUCCESS

I remember..."very happy times at Furze Platt, although not keen on French! Particularly fond memories of Mr. Attwell, Mr. Jones, Mr. Mason, Mr. Dryzmalski and Miss Eden...some great fundraising events (24 hour sponsored football and hockey) and some fun performances (Oliver springs to mind). I was actually sad to leave, although went on to have the most fantastic three years at Royal Holloway College in Egham (BSc Zoology)."



Cont. on page 4

By **Sophie Hurst**



I'm an ex pupil and attended Furze Platt Senior School 2010 – 2017 and was Head Girl 2016/2017 (after attending the Juniors, Infants and even Little Fishes Nursery on Furze Platt Road!).

I have many fond memories of the school throughout my years, from involvement in the many school concerts to endless hockey, netball and athletics competitions. Favourite subject was English by far; Mrs Hardiman was a great asset to the department and helped me tremendously throughout GCSEs. I quickly realised that essays were my forte, so my A Level subjects of Psychology, Philosophy and English Lit were an easy choice! During my year as Head Girl, George (Head Boy) and I were involved in organising open days, charity events and end of year celebrations such as the Prom and ever-famous muck-up day! (Pirate theme for us!)

During my Sixth Form years, I began working at Furze Platt Leisure Centre on site, shortly after it opened in 2015. I progressed from helping out on reception, to Fitness Instructor and then Duty Manager during these two years, and developed a love for the fitness industry. I would say Miss Hussey, Miss Richards, Mr Randall and Mr Djaelani from the PE department also helped spark my love for fitness over the years. I'm very grateful for my years at FP!



Since then, I have completed my Level 2 and 3 Personal Training Diploma, Exercise to Music professional and Level 4 Diet Specialist in Nutrition courses.

I am now a self employed Personal Trainer based at a Health Club facility in Marlow where I train lots of lovely women looking to become fitter, stronger and healthier. I also work in the Membership Sales department and have been based here for 3 years. My job is versatile, rewarding and differs day to day. I've learnt many life skills one might not expect at 20 years of age (such as submitting tax reports!).

My involvement in the fitness industry has led to a few personal fitness goals of mine, the biggest one coming up this year for me is an Ultra Marathon over the August bank holiday weekend – running 100km (2.5x marathons) in one go.

'Good luck Sophie!'



Calling all Alumni from school years

2003 (Year 7) - 2010 (Year 13)

In the summer of 2020 it will have been 10 years since the Sixth Formers of 2003-2010 left Furze Platt. To mark this occasion they are organising a 10 year reunion for all the students in that year (including those that left after Year 11) and any teachers, TAs and staff members that are interested in joining.

Many of the year group are still in contact and enjoy reliving memories, from meeting everyone on day one of Year 7 to all the exciting science experiments, numerous school trips, water fights on the sports field and parties at the Cookham Dean Cricket club.

We all have our fond memories of our time at Furze Platt and have travelled our own paths for 10 years...let's celebrate our success!

*Further details will be shared on the Facebook page in the near future but please contact **George Bond & Caroline Masterman-Smith** via the link below if you are interested in hearing more about the reunion.*

CLICK HERE TO CONTACT GEORGE AND CAROLINE

Sam MacGregor, now 21, was awarded Best Male Presenter at the National Student Radio Awards, which was held at the O2 in London in November.



He attended Furze Platt before he went to university where he now studies Human Geography at Cardiff. Of his time at Furze Platt, Sam said: "I always was, and remain, exceptionally grateful for the experiences and opportunities that Furze Platt provided me with during my time at Sixth Form".



Photo by Niklas Rahmel and Matei Parascen.



Cont. on page 5

1977

I remember..."running around the fields over the road on x Country and hating it. The best chicken curry ever at lunchtime. Mr Spiers, Mr Barnes, Miss Souris the French teacher, Mrs Collins the English teacher... Oh I could go on and on. Then I came to work at the school as part of the site team. These were also very happy days I will remember fondly."



Keep in Touch



In addition to our school website, we have a strong social media following on our school Facebook and Twitter accounts, and our Alumni Facebook page.

Have a look and please do follow us for up to date information and school news.

Each year we have a number of alumni come into school who offer to talk about their experiences at university or in the workplace.

2020



We are very grateful to all those who have participated in our Alumni engagement. The advice offered and information given during these sessions has proved invaluable to our current students.

Thank you. Please keep in touch!



**TEACH
MAIDENHEAD**
The best schools - The best pupils - The best teacher training

Teach Maidenhead is the foremost teacher training provider west of London. For the next academic year we are offering unsalaried secondary School Direct places. We are partnered with an outstanding accredited provider, the University of Reading, ranked 8th in the UK for Education (The Guardian University League Table 2019).

Successful trainees gain PGCE, QTS and 60 Masters level credits. There are five schools in the Teach Maidenhead partnership of which Furze Platt Senior School is the Lead School.

For more information please visit our website:

TEACH MAIDENHEAD

PTFA
Parents, Teachers
& Friends
Association

THE PTFA - WHAT WE DO

THE PTFA - EMAIL

2019

I remember..."fantastic teachers and a great support system for students. The school offered many opportunities, both in and out of Furze Platt, academic and otherwise."

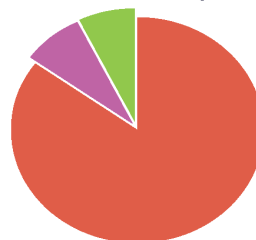
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SIXTH FORM DESTINATIONS

2019



40 Different Universities
78 Different Courses
121 Students



85% University/College

8% Gap Year

7% Apprenticeship

Gap Year



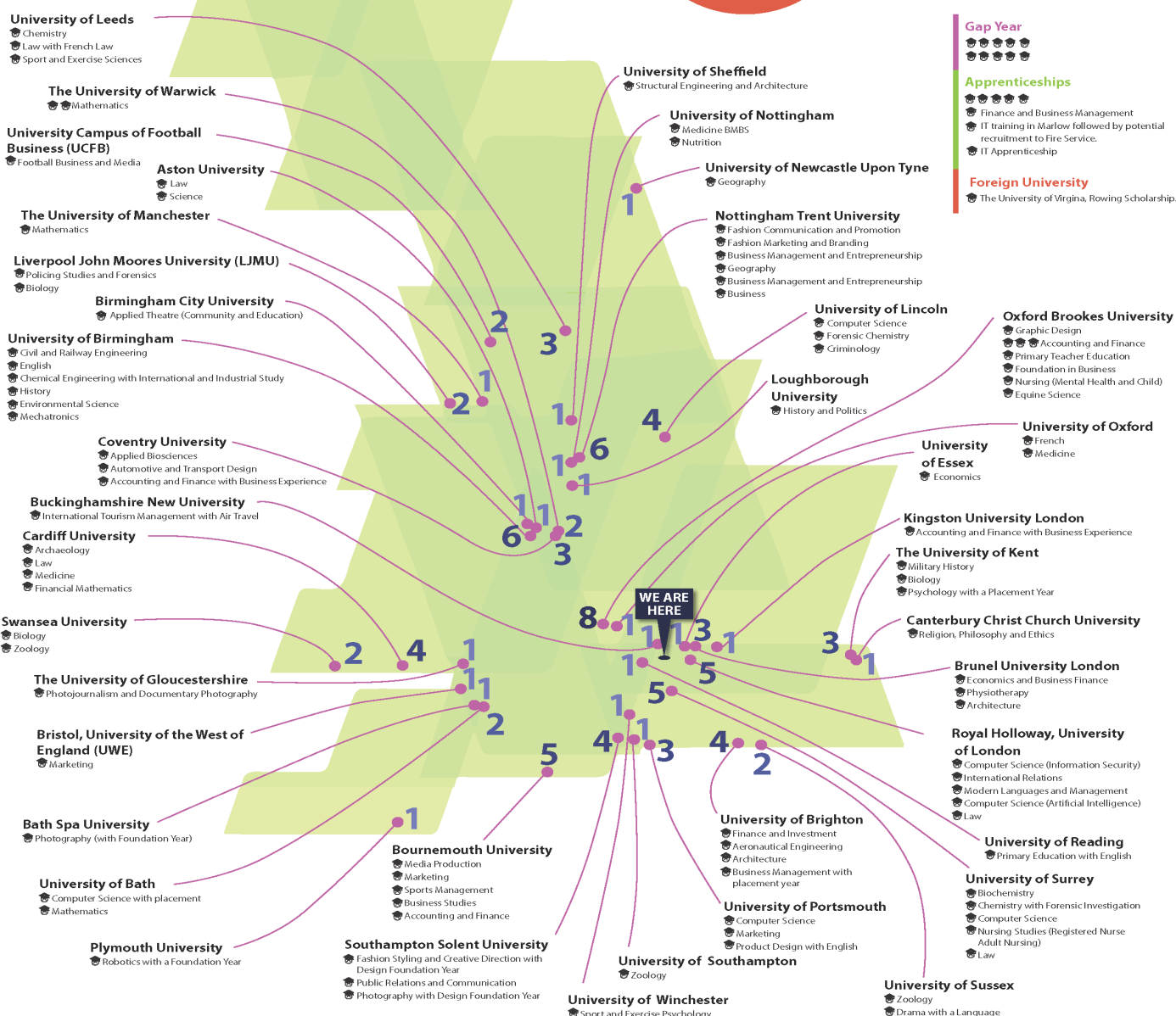
Apprenticeships

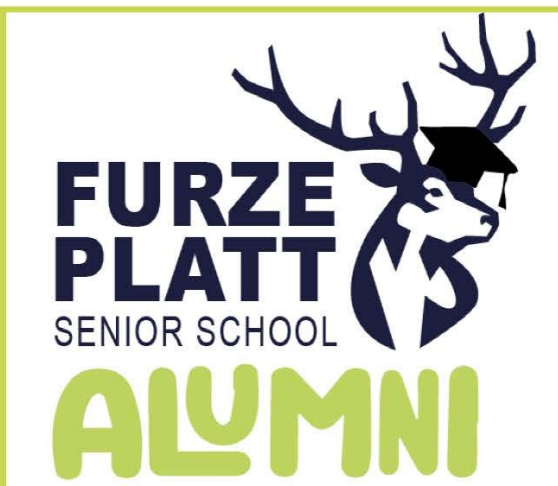


Finance and Business Management
 IT training in Marlow followed by potential recruitment to Fire Service.
 IT Apprenticeship

Foreign University

The University of Virginia, Rowing Scholarship.





WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED OUR FIRST ALUMNI NEWSLETTER!

If you would like to submit anything - for example your achievements, awards, quotes, photographs, memories, articles etc - please email Catherine.Johnstone@furzeplatt.net or do so via the link below (if you have not currently signed up to our Alumni list). (Please be aware that for any photographs to appear in future editions we must have the written consent of all pictured.)

JOIN OUR ALUMNI

Thank you to all our fantastic contributors in our first edition!

FURZE PLATT SENIOR SCHOOL ALUMNI PAGE

We would like to keep in touch with as many Furze Platt Senior School alumni as possible - we would be very grateful if you could share this link with anyone else who you know attended our school in any capacity.

Thank you.