

# FURZE PLATT FOCUS

Weekly Newsletter - Issue #77.1



#### MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

# Welcome to the 2025/26 Academic Year

It has been a pleasure to welcome students back to FPSS this week for the start of a new academic year. I hope that you and your families had a fabulous summer break and enjoyed some rest and



relaxation, as well as some adventures along the way.

It has been particularly lovely to meet our new students joining in all Year Groups although mostly in Years 7 and 12. We look forward to working alongside students and their families in the next few years.

As we start the year, I have met all students in assemblies and shared some key messages. These have included educational goals as well as embracing every opportunity FPSS has to offer. I have encouraged students to work towards some of the many nominations, prizes and awards this year, not least in gaining as many ACHIEVE points as possible for their Houses. I have also reminded students of the rewards examinations will offer.

In doing so, I have also reminded students of their responsibilities. This has included reminders on behaviour, including phones. I have also shared some of our new foci at the start of the year including the importance of punctuality. We know that if students are late to sessions this impacts on students' grades and teachers' ability to deliver effective learning. Moreover, it is a life skill needed for most jobs. From Monday anyone late to school (without valid reason) will be added to the daily detention list.

My assembly concluded by sharing with students the diverse backgrounds of our students. As a highly inclusive and comprehensive school we are proud to have such diversity amongst our community. I emphasised the importance of recognising this variety and respecting our differences. We are a team and want to ensure all of us succeed.



THU 11 Year 7, 10 & 12 Photographs

THU 2 Early School Finish 12.30pm finish

OCTOBER Whole School Open Evening 6pm - 8.30pm

## SCHOOL TERM DATES

#### **Upcoming Prepare to Succeed Evenings**

Alongside welcoming our students and preparing them for the new year, at the start of the academic year we also like to share information with parents and carers. I look forward to seeing you at our Prepare to Succeed Evenings that start next week.

#### **Celebration Evening**

Thank you to all students and families who attended our Celebration Evening on Thursday. We had much to celebrate following excellent sets of KS4 and KS5 results this summer, but even more so the fantastic contributions students make to our school.

I would like to thank Craig McLaughlin, our guest speaker, who shared his experiences, and I am sure inspired many of us to contribute even further to our community.

#### **Welcome to Our New Colleagues**

Alongside welcoming new students, we have also been joined by new colleagues this week. It is a

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AMBITIOUS COLLABORATIVE HAPPY INTEGRITY ENDURANCE VERSATILITY EXCELLENCE

pleasure to welcome Mr Sam Bates (Head of Progress Year 7 and Science), Mrs Jana Kelly (Maths), Mr Matthew Williams (Head of Media), Miss Izzy Wallis (Geography), Miss Hannah Smith (Psychology and Criminology), Miss Zofeyah Aspinwall (Music), Mrs Deborah Dannatt (Cove), Mr Demari Gumbs (PE), Miss Clara Child (Medical Officer), Mrs Alison Sweetland (Librarian), Mr Tom Faint (History), Miss Isla Taylor (PE), Mr Saquib Mahar (Science) and Ms Chloe Watterston (English).

I am sure that you will join me in welcoming them to the FPSS community.

Take care,

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

#### **PUNCTUALITY AND LEARNING**



At Furze Platt, we value punctuality and the opportunities it provides for our young people to access their learning and ACHIEVE. From Monday 8th September, we will be placing a renewed focus on punctuality to school.

Being punctual to both school and lessons is essential for students to reach their potential and maximise their learning time. Strong timekeeping habits not only prepare students for future education and employment but also demonstrate respect for teachers and peers, build resilience, and drive long-term success.

We ask for your support in ensuring your child attends school regularly and arrives on time each day. Students should be on the school site by **8.30am**, which allows them sufficient time to move across campus and arrive punctually to tutorial.

- The **front of school** is open for pupils from 8.00am.
- The Ostler/Furze Platt Junior entrances open from 8.20am.

Please note that the back gates will close promptly at 8.45am for site security and safeguarding.

To reinforce the importance of punctuality, any student arriving on site after 8.45am will be required to enter via **Reception**, where they will be registered by staff and issued with a 30-minute C4 detention. This will take place on the same day from 3.15-3.45pm in room Gen3. In line with our behaviour policy, failure to attend this sanction will result in an internal isolation the following day.

If your child is due to be late to school, due to an appointment, please notify us via StudyBugs. Your child will not receive a C4 detention in such circumstances.

Thank you in advance for your support in helping us to maintain high standards and ensure that all of our students are punctual, prepared, and ready to succeed.

Miss L Lewis, Deputy Headteacher - Safeguarding and interventions

Ms R Lake, Deputy Headteacher - Behaviour and attitudes



#### PREPARING TO SUCCEED EVENINGS

Next week, we will be holding our Preparing to Succeed Evenings for parents, carers and students in Years 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13. Each session will last for one hour and will take place in the School Theatre.

#### Schedule:

- **Year 10** Tuesday 9th September at 6.15pm
- Year 11 Tuesday 9th September at 7.30pm
- **Year 12** Wednesday 10th September at 6.15pm
- **Year 13** Wednesday 10th September at 7.30pm
- Year 7 Thursday 11th September at 6.15pm

Please arrive a few minutes early to ensure a prompt start.

These evenings provide valuable information about the year ahead, including expectations, support, and how families can work together with the school to ensure every student thrives.

- For Year 7, this is primarily an information session for parents and carers, so students do not need to attend.
- For Years 10, 11, 12 and 13, we strongly encourage students to join their parents/carers as they will benefit from hearing the key messages directly. Parents and carers of students in Year 12 and 13 have been sent a link to book via Parentmail.

We look forward to welcoming you at these important events.

Heads of Progress

- Mr S Bates (Year 7)
- Mr C Gill (Year 10)
- Mr N Jones (Year 11)
- Mrs K Kalinowski (Year 12)
- Mr A Colmer (Year 13)



#### **OPEN EVENING**

THURSDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER 6 - 8.30pm

#### Early finish for all students - 12.30pm

Our annual Open Evening is being held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October for prospective students and their parents. All current Furze Platt students will finish at 12.30pm that day; helpers will be invited back before the event starts. More details will be sent out in due course.

#### **INSET DAY**

#### FRIDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER

School will be closed for all year groups.

## SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER

This event will take place from 6-9pm and will be followed by a 9.15am start for all students on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November. Further details will be sent out in due course.

#### **CAREERS FAIR**

#### TUESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER

This event will take place from 6-8pm. Further details will be sent out in due course.

## SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER VISIT

#### THURSDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER

The school photographer will be visiting on Thursday 11th September to take individual portraits of students in Years 7, 10 and 12.

Students will be informed of the schedule closer to the day.

#### STAY HYDRATED



Please ensure that your child brings a refillable water bottle to school each day. Staying hydrated is important for your child's health and well-being, and having a water bottle on hand makes it easy for them to have access to water throughout the day.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us promote good hydration habits among our students.







Parents and carers of new students have been sent a parent code via email for you to access Class Charts as a parent or carer. Class Charts allows you to monitor behaviour, timetable and homework. Attached to the email was a 'Getting Started' guide for parents. Please note that we do not use the Well-being, Announcements or Attendance functions in Class Charts, and all absences are now reported via StudyBugs.

Your child has been issued with a sheet of paper with their code to access Class Charts via their phone or their laptop. Attached are instructions for you to help them to log on. If you have ordered a laptop through the school laptop scheme, these will be issued soon. In the meantime, students can set up Class Charts on their phone or home computer to check their timetable, behaviour and homework. If your child needs another copy of their access code, please ask them to request one from their Form Tutor.

Students were issued with hard copies of their timetable and a plastic wallet to keep it safe and dry.

All students were also issued with a Yondr pouch today for students who intend to bring a phone into school. For those families who choose not to send their child into school with a phone, parents or carers will need to collect an exemption form from reception. This form can also be issued to students to take home. When school photos are taken, students will then be issued with a pass to enable them to enter the school site without delay.

Mr A Wyles, Assistant Headteacher KS3







We would like to remind parents that we have now transitioned to **Studybugs**; a new app that will support our continued efforts for an efficient and secure system when reporting your child's absence or sending other messages regarding their attendance.

**Studybugs** is integrated with our registration system so both you, as the parent/carer, and the school will know right away if your child is unaccounted for.

With a few quick taps or clicks, you can update the school on your child's absences and appointments

Get the app or register now (<a href="https://studybugs.com/about/parents">https://studybugs.com/about/parents</a>)

#### Top 3 reasons to use Studybugs

- 1. It's integrated with our systems so we know right away if your child is unaccounted for.
- 2. It's quick and easy to register and use and automatically reminds you to keep us posted. You will be helping the NHS and other health organisations take preventative action.

The school will use **Studybugs** to communicate all things attendance related, celebrating improvements, notifying parents if their child is late to school etc

For queries please

contact attendancesupportteam@furzeplatt.net

A huge thank you to the teachers and support staff for providing so many extra-curricular opportunities to my child. These activities have created wonderful memories that they will cherish for years to come.

- Anonymous



#### **ENGLISH GCSE - IMPORTANT INFORMATION**



**HOME LEARNING TIMETABLES** 



As part of our GCSE curriculum, Year 10 students will be studying two significant literary works:

- 1. An Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestley
- 2. Macbeth by William Shakespeare

This term, we will begin with An Inspector Calls, and it is essential that your child purchases the playbook as soon as possible to aid in their studies and prepare for their future examinations. Then from January, we will transition to Macbeth, which will also require your child to have a copy of the play on hand. It is crucial for their learning and success throughout the year that they have the correct equipment and text books.

Here are some suggested retailers for purchasing the playbooks:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Inspector-Calls-Heinemann -Plays-14-16/dp/0435232827

#### https://amzn.eu/d/6KBK4rl

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

Miss H Brookling, Head of English

'School leaders are ambitious for the school. They enjoy positive relationships with the rest of the staff and work with them to ensure the success of the school.'

Staff will set the Home Learning on these days to help students and supportive parents to manage and organise their learning at home. As an example on Monday evening, it will always be Maths home learning.

Whilst the issue date on Class Charts will follow this timetable, the due date will vary. Class Charts shows both the issue date and the due date.

Year 7:

			Year 7			For Year 7, ea
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	piece of
Subject	Maths (double home learning)	English	English	Geography	Performing Arts, Art, Technology and Computing projects. PE	homework should be between 20-3 minutes (tota 40-60 mins pe
		History	Science	Languages	PR (each fortnight)	evening)

Year 8:

			Year 8			
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	For Year 8, eac
Subject	Maths (double home learning)	English	English	Geography	Performing Arts, Art, Technology and Computing projects. PE	piece of homework should be between 25-35 minutes (total 50-70 mins per evening)
		History	Science	Languages	PR (each fortnight)	

Year 9:

			Year 9			
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	For Year 9, eac
Subject	Maths (double home learning)	English	English	Geography	Performing Arts, Art, Technology and Computing projects. PE	piece of homework should be between 30-40 minutes (total
		History	History	Science	Languages	

Mr A Wyles, Assistant Headteacher KS3



#### **SCHOOL CLUBS**



#### Term 1: September to October half term

Parents and carers of students in all year groups have been sent e-mail invites to attend clubs for their son/daughter. The email is headed Furze Platt Senior School with the email address <a href="mailto:evolve.furzeplattsnrvisits@edufocus.co.uk">evolve.furzeplattsnrvisits@edufocus.co.uk</a> and the links will be safe for you to click on to confirm your child's attendance. If you have not received an email please check your junk / spam folders.

Students will be sent a copy of the clubs available but parents and carers will need to book the clubs your son or daughter would like to attend. We do encourage them to try as many as they are interested in – with almost 60 clubs and academic clinics we are sure they will find a number of activities they really enjoy!

#### **MY EVOLVE**

In addition, parents and carers may wish to sign up to My EVOLVE for an overview of clubs, what's on etc – you can do this from the club or academic support clinic emails sent to you in two easy steps:

- 1. Click on the link in the email as usual to see clubs/ clinics
- 2. Click 'create account' button.

#### Please note:

- All bookings for Term 1 must be made through the original email invitation
- once in the list of clubs or academic support clinics, click on the name of the activity or session you wish to book, choose the dates and scroll down to press confirm
- please do not duplicate club bookings per session
- bookings for Fitness Club these have been limited for safety for students in Years 7 and 8 due to space restrictions and will be rotated but please be aware that your son/daughter may not have a place each week. You will be notified when they are to attend.
- students in upper years may see invitations to academic clubs that are not part of their specific academic programme; emails are sent to year groups so please only choose sessions that are relevant to your son/daughter

#### **CLUBS LIST FOR NEXT WEEK**

#### SCHOOL MUSICAL AUDITIONS

Students from all year groups are invited to come along and audition for this year's School Musical!

Previously we have enjoyed superb performances of Oliver Jr, Sister Act, The Addams Family, Matilda and many more. If your son/daughter is a budding musical artiste or actor please encourage them to apply!



#### **FURZE PLATT CAFÉ**



Please see the menu for this term below, which is on a three week rotation.

#### **MAIN MENU**







#### SINGING / INSTRUMENTAL LESSONS



Furze Platt Senior school is proud to offer a varied range of instrumental lessons including Singing.

These lessons are available across the whole school, from Year 7 to Year 13.

Instrument	Teacher	Details
Singing	Elin Da-	Musical Theatre, Pop, Classical
	vies	
Piano	Elin Da-	Pop and Classical
	vies	·
Piano	Celia	Pop and Classical
i idilo	cena	Top and classical
	Arm-	
	strong	
Guitar/	Max	Rock/Pop/Classical
Bass Gui-		
tar/	Randall	
tary		
Ukulele		
Drumming	Neill	https://
	Ettridge	www.berksmusictrust.org.uk/
		music/music-lessons/
		Externally administrated
		•
Ctrings	Maestros	through Berkshire Maestros
Strings		<pre>https:// www.berksmusictrust.org.uk/</pre>
(violin, vio-	teacher	music/music-lessons/
la, cello)		inusic/music-iessons/
		Externally administrated
		•
		through Berkshire Maestros

As with most schools, we have to charge for these lessons and fees are payable at the start of the term in advance. The internal music teachers have their own rates which are around £17 for 20 minutes or £22 for 30 minutes (2024/25 rates) Berkshire Maestros have their own rates, terms and conditions.

Notice periods are one (half) term so if a student decides to discontinue lessons, deadlines are the last Monday of Term 1 for finishing at the end of Term 2; the last Monday of Term 2 for finishing at the end of Term 3 and so on. Full terms and conditions are explained in the letters when a student signs up for lessons.

It is expected that students practise between lessons on their own instruments at home. While the Music Department has facilities and resources, home learning is just as important as the lessons themselves. Music shops in the area have a variety of schemes to hire or buy instruments as well as online sites for new and pre-owned instruments.

As well as Music lessons, there are a wide variety of clubs for enrichment in the Music Department. We would love to have singers for the two choirs that run and students are welcome to join any of our clubs.

Miss M Barraclough, Head of Music



Details of trips have been sent out via Parentmail:

#### Costa Rica

There are a few spaces available; please see Parentmail for details. This is only for students in Years 11 and 12.

#### **Wales**

The deposit deadline has been extended to Friday 12th September.

#### Greece

Payments can now be made via Parentmail for the next instalments.

#### Longridge

Details of how to book the Year 7 trip to Longridge will be sent out in due course.

#### **SCHOOL LOCKERS**

School Lockers will be allocated to Year 7 students from Tuesday and to the rest of the school from Friday next week. A Parentmail has been sent to Year 7 parents today and will be sent to the rest of the school on Wednesday.

IMPORTANT: Any unauthorised locks found on school lockers will be cut off without warning and the contents put in Lost Property.

As usual, our Year 7 students will have priority booking for school lockers before it opens up to the rest of the school. The £10 annual fee can then be paid via Parentmail via the Payments tab.

Students will be allocated a specific locker number and area which their form tutor will give them.

Please ensure your child has a suitable padlock (6+mm shackle) and puts this on as soon as they are allocated a locker.





EVERY DAY COUNTS

How much learning could YOU be missing?











#### **HOUSE CAPTAINS 2025 - 2026**

We are seeking House Captains for this academic year. This is a fantastic opportunity open to students across all year groups.

#### Why should students apply?

- Provides opportunities to be a role model
- Chance to develop leadership and teamwork skills
- Contribute towards the school community
- Develop personal growth
- Be an ambassador for your House
- Increased confidence
- Sense of pride and accomplishment
- Gain House points
- Can be used for UCAS/ DofE volunteering

#### How to apply

We encourage everyone to apply. Please click the link below to be considered for this role.

#### https://forms.office.com/e/31EF6tkA51

The deadline to apply is Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September.

Miss D Carty (Head of Falcon House)

Mr D Tipp (Head of Eagle House)

Dr M Graham (Head of Osprey House)

Mr K Sankey (Head of Hawk House)









#### PE - THE INTRODUCTION SESSION

Lesson 1 as students gather for their expectations and orientation of PE.

Many years of enjoying sport and exercise to go!





#### **FACEBOOK GROUPS**

Each year group has a Facebook page set up which moves up with students every year.

Year 7 parents and carers can find this at

https://www.facebook.com/ groups/4049705051970760







We are delighted to confirm that we will be running the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards to students in years 9, 10 and 12 this academic year. Further information will be distributed this term so please keep an eye on school communications with sign up instructions.

To those who worked towards completing the award during the last academic year, please can I take this opportunity to remind you to submit any outstanding assessor reports asap.

#### Please ensure:

reports have been submitted in the correct format (please check emails for information)

start and finish dates match what has been recorded on EDofE

Next steps for existing participants:

log onto EDofE to check the status of their programme of activities

when all assessor reports have been uploaded and approved, the account will be passed onto the **Award Verifier** 

participants will receive an email upon successful completion of their DofE award

certificates and badges will be distributed next term

Miss Carty is based in AR3 this year so please feel free to pop in during break times if you need any support.





# SAFE & COURTEOUS COLLECTION OF YOUR CHILDREN AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY



Many of you will have observed how busy and congested the front of school is at the end of the school day. Whilst we fully appreciate your frustrations, this has led to some inconsiderate behaviour. It has also raised some valid complaints from the wider local community.

Ideally, we would ask that fewer of you drive your sons and daughters to school, and would encourage more to either walk, cycle, or take the train (to Cookham & Bourne End) – as the vast majority of our students live within walking/cycling distance. We would also like to take the opportunity to remind parents that entering / exiting over our playing fields via the Furze Platt Junior School gates (onto Oaken Grove) or the Ostler Gate (to the Cranbrook estate) is a good option for students who live in the Belmont / Pinkneys areas.

Our number one priority remains keeping your sons and daughters safe, including when they make their way into school in the mornings and home every afternoon. Please could we therefore make the following requests of all parents who drive to drop-off or collect their children (most specifically those who collect at 3:15):

- Please do not park, or even stop to let your child in or out, on any double yellow lines at any time. The double yellow lines are in areas where it is potentially dangerous to stop – most specifically in the entrance and exit. Please always pull in to one of the two lanes before stopping to let your children in or out of the car.
- If all the parking bays are full, please keep looping round. Stopping in one of the lanes (or even parking your car there and getting out) causes a complete jam, results in cars queuing out onto the road and increases the risk of an accident.
- Please, under no circumstances, park on any pavement or raised area. These are the pathways for your children to enter / exit the school site. Parking on those pavements blocks them and forces your children onto the road.
- Please note that hooting horns doesn't speed anything up.
- Whilst parked, please turn your engines off to preserve air quality.
- Please do try to stay near your car rather than congregating round the school gate. We have a lot of students leaving through the gate at 3:15 and it is important to try to keep it as clear as possible to assist with their safe travels.
- When traffic is built up at the traffic lights at the Furze Platt Road and Switchback junction, please consider turning left from the school gates and travelling via Pinkneys Road.

- Please try to avoid parking on local verges or blocking neighbouring roads (from Cranbrook Drive to Deansfield Close).
- And finally, please do be courteous to the staff who are out on duty at the front of school. We are all there to help keep your children safe.

Please do try to support the school in keeping all your sons and daughters safe by adhering to the above guidelines.

Thank you very much in advance for your help.

Mr J Sheppard Deputy Headteacher

#### **SPORTING SUPERSTARS!**







Jenson Jones (Year 11) had British championships in Nottingham during the summer and finished top 10 in GB for age group in quads and doubles - a brilliant end to the season!

Congratulations also to Lucas Bryant in Year 11 who over the summer holidays competed in the Swim England Nation Age Group Championship to retain his open water title in his age group even when the distance was increased to 7.5km from 5km.

He also had 2 solid swims at the Aquatics GB Next Gen Championship 2025 to come 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 1500m Freestyle and the 800m Freestyle for his age group and adding 2 sliver medals to his ever growing collection.

Lucas's younger sister Chloe, who has just joined us in Year 7, also got in on the action as Medal Bearer at all the events.







# KS4 & 5 ART STUDIO

Wednesday afterschool I 15:15 - 16:00 I AR2

Art intervention for GCSE & A Level Art students



## Elevate Education's Autumn Term

# **Parent Webinar Series**

Elevate Education delivers high-impact workshops to our students that help to develop their study skills, motivation, and exam preparation. Over the next term, you're invited to join their parent webinar series, where you can help support your child at home by reinforcing the skills they're learning at school.

How to Get (And Keep!) Your Child Motivated

16th September 6:00pm (BST)

How You Can Help Your Child Manage Their Time 30th September 6:00pm (BST)

How You Can Help Your Child Set Up for Success in Exams 14th October 6:00pm (BST)

How You Can Help Improve Your Child's Memory 18th November 6:00pm (GMT)

How You Can Build Resilience in Your Child 2nd December 6:00pm (GMT)

How to Help Your Child Alleviate Stress
16th December 6:00pm (GMT)



Register today at: https://go.elevateeducation.com/ukschoolwebinar

#### SPECIAL OFFER FROM MOVE HAPPY FITNESS

**Introducing Move Happy at FPSS — Empowering Women Through Fitness** 

Did you know that we hire space each Saturday to Move Happy Fitness?

Move Happy is a women-focused fitness organisation that supports women to build strength, confidence, and long-lasting fitness habits — in a way that feels good and fits real life.

We have a Special Offer for FPSS Female Parents, Carers & Staff - £10 off your first month's membership with the exclusive code: FPSS10 - Just visit <a href="https://www.movehappyfitness.co.uk">www.movehappyfitness.co.uk</a> to sign up and use the code at checkout.

Whether you're brand new to exercise or looking to lift heavier, Move Happy offers group training, personal training, and workshops designed to support every stage of your fitness journey.

Why Move Happy?

- Expert coaching in a supportive, inclusive environment
  - Tailored sessions for all fitness levels

A focus on empowerment, not intimidation

Follow us on Instagram: @movehappyfitness

#### FITNESS AND STRENGTH FOR WOMEN

## AN INTRODUCTION TO STRENGTH



WEDNESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 6PM - 7.30PM

ST EDMUND CAMPION SCHOOL STUDIO, MAIDENHEAD



WWW.MOVEHAPPYFITNESS.CO.UK