

FURZE PLATT FOCUS

Weekly Newsletter - Issue #78.1



MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Happy New Year!

I hope that you and your families had a fantastic break and some lovely times over the festive period.



Welcoming students back to FPSS this week, I have been keen to reinforce my praise for all the nominations and awards given out at the end of Term 2. I always make time each holiday to read the last newsletter of each term to see the many students highlighted for living our ACHIEVE values and accomplishing so much. In assemblies I have encouraged students to keep up this excellence and seek to get nominations and awards by Easter.

I have also been keen to praise our students for their fantastic contributions to our school. We are incredibly proud of how they develop personally and academically at FPSS. Likewise, I was keen to highlight how lucky our community is to have well-equipped spaces to educate students and some great staff to do so. It is thanks to the dedication and commitment of our staff that we are able to lay on such engaging lessons alongside the array of trips, activities and clubs that occur each and every term.

I look forward to seeing much more in Terms 3 and 4.

Welcomes

This week we have been joined by several new colleagues including Ms Palocsai (History and Assistant Head of Sixth Form), Ms Tong, Mrs Mohamed and Mr Mohammed (Cover Supervisors), Miss Hayers (Behaviour Support Officer) and Mrs Syner (Finance). I wish them well in their FPSS careers.

Alongside our new staff, I would also like to welcome new students and their families to our community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ALL EVENTS

Next Week (Week A)

TUE 6 - FRI 16 JANUARY	Year 9 GCSE Taster Lesson Fortnight
WED 21 JANUARY	Year 11 Photographs
THU 22 JANUARY	Year 10 & 12 Performing Arts Evening
FRI 23 JANUARY	Early finish 2.45pm
MON 26 - FRI 6 JANUARY - FEBRUARY	Year 9 Parents' and Students' Consultation Evening 3.45pm - 7.45pm
THU 29 JANUARY	Late Start 9.15am
FRI 30 JANUARY	Inter-House Sports Week 3
MON 9 FEBRUARY	Year 9 Options Evening 6pm - 8pm
FRI 13 FEBRUARY	Late Start 9.15am
TUE 10 - THU 12 FEBRUARY	School Musical (Matinee to Primary Schools) During day
MON 17 - FRI 21 FEBRUARY	School Musical Evening Performances 7pm
MON 23 FEBRUARY	END OF TERM (TERM 3) 3.15pm finish
	FEBRUARY HOLIDAYS
	START OF TERM 4 (Week 2)

SCHOOL TERM DATES

Adverse Weather

As you will imagine there was much excitement on the first day back to see snow around FPSS. This inevitably led to talk of being sent home early and school closures and I was delighted to share with students that we aim to stay open! Indeed, we have not had a weather closure for a number of years. However, particularly at this time of year it is worth

reiterating that any changes to our normal opening will be sent as soon as possible to parents/carers via Parentmail and shared on the website and our social media pages.

Take care,

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

EARLY FINISH / LATE STARTS IN JANUARY

Early finish: Thursday 22nd January

Late starts: Friday 23rd and Friday 30th January

In preparation for our Year 9 Parents' Evening on Thursday 22nd January, we will be finishing school that day at 2.45pm. This will be followed by a 9.15am start on Friday 23rd January.

We will also have a 9.15am start on Friday 30th January. This is following our Year 9 Options Evening on Thursday 29th January (although school will close at the usual time of 3.15pm that day).



SAVE THE DATE - YEAR 9 PARENTS EVENING

THURSDAY 22ND JANUARY 2026

We are holding our Year 9 Parents Evening for parents and carers of students in Year 9 on Thursday 22nd January. The event will be held in school from 3.45-7.45pm.

This is a key opportunity to meet teachers and discuss your child's progress. More details about booking appointments will be sent nearer the date.



YEAR 9 OPTIONS EVENING



YEAR 9 OPTIONS EVENING THURSDAY 29th JANUARY

On Thursday 29th January, we will be holding our 2026 Year 9 Options Information Evening. This important evening is for students and parents to find out about the options process and to talk to different subject teachers about the wide range of courses that we offer at Furze Platt.

There will be two talks explaining the options process, one at 6.00pm and the other at 6:45pm, with 2 Houses attending each talk (details of House timings below).

After the talks have finished, which should last for approximately 30 minutes, you will then be able to visit each subject stall in the English/Science block where you can ask any questions you may have and find out more about how different subjects are taught and assessed.

The timings for the talks are as follows:

6.00pm: **Eagle** and **Falcon** Houses
6:45pm: **Hawk** and **Osprey** Houses

I look forward to welcoming you on Thursday 29th January, in the Theatre. The evening is due to end at 8:00pm.

Miss L Stirling



Don't forget to explore our 2025–2026 curriculum plans, including subject-by-subject overviews of what students will study throughout the year:

[CLICK HERE TO SEE OUR CURRICULUM PLANS](#)



PTFA MEETING
MONDAY 26TH JANUARY



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILDREN

Our next PTFA (Parents, Teachers and Friends Association) meeting will take place on Monday 26th January at 7.30pm in the Library.

Whether you're a regular supporter or new to the school, everyone is welcome! It's a great chance to hear about the PTFA's work, share your ideas, and find out how you can get involved - however much or little time you can spare.

Thanks to your support, the PTFA has funded a wide range of initiatives, from the Science Fair and Speech Day prizes to the new Sixth Form kitchen, prom night photobooths, and more. Regular fundraising activities like the Nearly New Uniform Sale and the 200 Club make a real difference to our students' experience.

We'd love to see as many of you as possible - please do come along, even if it's just to listen in.

MEET A GOVERNOR - JOSH REYNOLDS



Josh Reynolds
Governor

"I joined the Furze Platt Governing body in the summer of 2024.

I am currently the Member of Parliament for Maidenhead, a role I've held since July 2024. A Councillor for Furze Platt Ward since 2019, I was recently the Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure at RBWM.

My professional background was in retail, managing a chain of supermarket stores in the South of England.

In my spare time I enjoy baking and trying out new recipes with my family.



Having been a student at Furze Platt from 2010-2017, I have seen the school from the 'other side' and it is an enormous privilege to give something back to the school that taught me so much."

More details of our governors can be found via the link below:

[FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR GOVERNORS HERE](#)

SCHOOL DROP OFF AND PICK-UP SAFETY MESSAGE

Please read the attached letter from RBWM regarding school drop-off and pick-up safety, as the safety of our students is of the utmost priority.



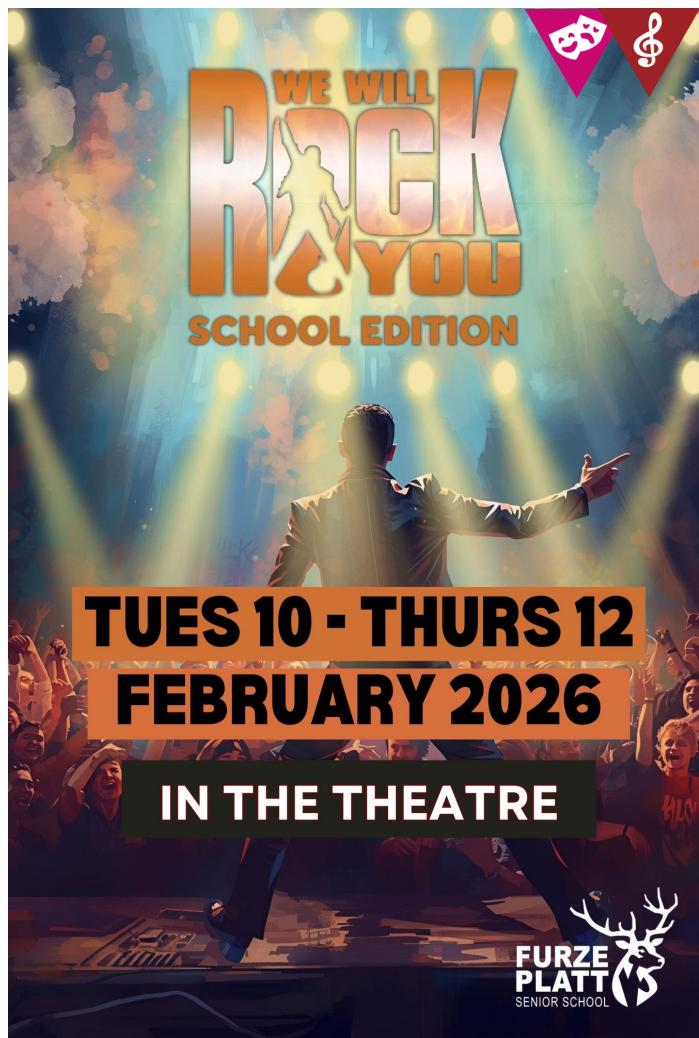
[CLICK HERE TO READ LETTER FROM RBWM](#)

We would also ask that you turn off your engine whilst waiting for your child, as this will help to reduce the emission of fumes and improve air quality around the school.



Your cooperation in these matters is greatly appreciated. Together, we can ensure a safe and secure environment for all of our students.

Thank you for your understanding and support.



TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM MONDAY AT 5PM!

Our talented students would like to invite you to this year's production in February - **We Will Rock You** - a high-energy, feel-good musical that celebrates individuality and the power of live music, set to the iconic songs of Queen.

Picture a dystopian future, where originality, free thought, self-expression and live rock music are forbidden. How will the Bohemians, a rebellious group of young people, change this world? Dare they believe that music holds the power?

Come and join them on their quest to rediscover the lost art of real music, challenge authority and prove that imagination, creativity and standing up for who you are truly matters!

With a live band and outstanding student performances, we can't wait to welcome you!

You can see a taster rehearsal video below:

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH REHEARSAL VIDEO](#)

DUKE OF EDINBURGH
AWARDS TRAINING DAY

YEAR
9

YEAR
10

DE

Saturday 17th January 9am - 4pm

This is a **mandatory** Year 9 and 10 D of E training day for Open Bronze and Silver candidates.



FURZE PLATT
SENIOR SCHOOL

We will meet in the Main School Hall at 8.50am for a prompt 9am start on Saturday 17th January.

Students will need to bring a packed lunch and drinks. Some of the day will be outside so please dress accordingly.

Please note: this is only for students who do DofE as an Extra Curricular activity. Students that complete DofE as a curriculum subject with Miss Carty do not need to attend.



Year 11 Revision and Academic Clinics – Term 3 at FPSS

At Furze Platt Senior School, we're supporting our Year 11 students to achieve Excellence in line with our ACHIEVE values.

This term's academic clinics offer extra help and focused revision in key GCSE subjects: English • Maths • Science • Geography • Computer Science • Spanish • Art • Textiles • Philosophy & Religion and more! Booking details can be found on the next page.



POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS IN PSHE



Furze Platt School is delighted to continue our partnership with Flooglebinder, who have generously provided reusable water bottles for our Year 7 students.



Flooglebinder

SCHOOL CLUBS

Term 3: January - February

Parents and carers of students in all year groups will have received invitations to book clubs for their son/daughter next term.

The email was headed Furze Platt Senior School with the email address evolve.furzeplattsrvs@edufocus.co.uk. If you have not yet received an email please check your junk / spam folders.

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 3 must be made through the original email invitations
- * once in the list of clubs or academic support clinics, click on the name of the activity or session you wish to book and press confirm
- * please do not duplicate club bookings per session
- * 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
- * if your son or daughter wishes to be removed from a club completely, please email enrichment@furzeplatt.net and provide as much notice as possible to allow time for that place to be allocated to someone on the waiting list.

Thank you.

SCHOOL CLUBS LIST

On Wednesday, during PSHE, Year 7 students took part in an assembly focused on sustainability and the impact our choices have on the world around us. This important aspect of Personal Development encouraged students to reflect thoughtfully on environmental responsibility. The students engaged positively throughout the session, demonstrating integrity by contributing confidently to discussions and showcasing their understanding of this vital topic.

Following the assembly, students returned to their tutor groups where they were each presented with a reusable water bottle. This initiative supports their ongoing sustainability journey and helps reduce the amount of single-use plastic used both during the school day and beyond.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Flooglebinder for their continued support and collaboration with us.



SCHOOL UNIFORM

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are very proud of our school and of our students, and we firmly believe that high standards of uniform, behaviour, being properly equipped and regular attendance give every student the very best opportunity to learn well and achieve their full potential.

Unfortunately, last term some of students have not been meeting our high expectations regarding school uniform. In particular, we have noted students wearing false eyelashes, trainers, skirts that are too short and jewellery that is not permitted.

Time that should be spent focusing on learning and celebrating achievements is currently being taken up reminding students of basic uniform expectations.

We would like to thank the many parents and students who consistently follow the Uniform Policy and take pride in their appearance. This term, **regular uniform checks will be conducted**. We ask for your support in maintaining our high standards by ensuring that your child has the correct uniform and wears it appropriately every day. Please also ensure that all items are clearly named so that any lost property can be returned to its owner.

Please note that we reserve the right to confiscate items that do not form part of the school uniform, and students may be sent home to change if their uniform is deemed unacceptable.

We have worked closely with our suppliers to ensure that our school uniform is practical, affordable and of good quality, and we appreciate parents' support in maintaining these high standards. The guidance below is intended to help ensure that inappropriate items are not purchased. If you have any queries, please contact the school before making any uniform purchases.

Compulsory Uniform

- **White Shirt** May be purchased from any retailer but must have a top button that can be fastened. Shirts must be worn tucked into skirts or trousers.
- **School Tie*** House colours, Years 7–11. Must be purchased from Hawkinsport.
- **School Blazer*** Blue blazer with the school crest.
- **School Skirt*** Must be purchased from Hawkinsport. The official school skirt is the only permitted style and must reach to just above the knee.
- **Trousers** May be purchased from any retailer but must be plain black, straight-leg and smartly tailored. Denim, cotton jean-style, ribbed, skinny-leg or flared trousers are not permitted.

• **Shorts** Plain black, straight-leg and smartly tailored knee length shorts. Denim, cotton jean-style, skinny-leg or flared shorts are not permitted.

• **Socks** Dark colours only.

• **Tights** Black or natural only.

Shoes Black, smart-style shoes only. No logos, trainers or trainer-style shoes, canvas shoes, heels, boots, crocs or backless shoes are permitted.

*Items marked with an asterisk are available from **Hawkinsport, Bourne End**. [Click here to see the online shop](#). There are free weekly deliveries to school on Thursdays during term time. Please place your order and state the student's name and form at checkout.



We would also like to remind parents and carers that any **acrylic or false nails, coloured nail varnish or false eyelashes** applied over the holiday period must be **removed prior to students returning to school**. As outlined in our policy, nail varnish must be clear, and nail extensions or false nails and false eyelashes are not appropriate for the school environment and can pose a safety risk, particularly during practical lessons such as PE. We appreciate your support in ensuring that students return to school ready to learn and fully compliant with our policy.

Any student not meeting these uniform standards (for example, wearing inappropriate skirts, trainers, leggings or jewellery) will be asked to rectify this promptly. Your cooperation in ensuring that your child arrives at school in the correct uniform is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support.

REMINDER: LAPTOP-ONLY DEVICES FOR LEARNING

As a reminder, our school is a *laptop school* for learning. iPads and tablet devices are **not permitted** for use in lessons.

Please ensure your child leaves their iPad or tablet at home and attends school each day with their **laptop and charger**, fully prepared for learning.

Thank you for your ongoing reinforcement of our school standards which will help support your son/daughter in their lessons.



DT Highlights – Year 8 Mechanical Games

Let's look back at some brilliant work from Terms 1–2. These photos showcase our new Year 8 mechanical games project, where students designed and built their own games using gears and levers to meet a design brief.

For the first time running this project, the results have been fantastic with great creativity, problem-solving and engineering skills on display. Well done, Year 8!



Year 7 DT – Phone Stand Project

Our Year 7 students have been busy designing and making their own phone stands in Design & Technology, and the results are fantastic! From creative designs to thoughtful functionality, they've shown great skill and effort throughout the project.



Cont on next page



Year 10 Product Design in Action!

Our Year 10 Product Design students have been also busy, creating fantastic wooden boxes and developing a wide range of practical skills along the way. These projects included mitre, butt, dowel and finger joints, wood fabrication and finishing, and working with softwoods, hardwoods and manufactured boards, as well as universal fittings such as screws and nails.

Each box was carefully designed for a specific user, with compartments made to suit a particular item - a great example of thoughtful, user-focused design.

Fantastic work from our Year 10 designers!



Year 11 Textiles – Creativity and Individuality

It's amazing to see what our Year 11 Textiles students have produced using the same white cotton fabric and the same dress templates. Through dyeing, cutting and embellishing, they've transformed identical starting points into completely unique and creative outcomes.

Innovation, skill and imagination all successfully coming together. Well done, Year 11.



Year 10 GCSE Fashion & Textiles – Lampshade Project

In addition, Year 10 students have created these stunning lampshades as part of their GCSE Fashion & Textiles work. Using upcycled lampshade frames, found materials and old pieces of jewellery, they've transformed everyday items into beautiful, creative designs.

Showcased here in imagined spaces, the finished pieces look fantastic and are a brilliant example of creativity, sustainability and craftsmanship. Well done, Year 10!





Well done to our top ten Sparx Science students this week and to our top Term winners!



ELEVATE WEBINARS

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD IMPROVE THEIR NOTE TAKING



Tuesday 13th January 6-7pm

The next free webinar for parents and carers will take place on Tuesday. On the night Elevate will cover how to:

- Help your child to structure their notes effectively
- Help your child remember what they learn
- Use deliberate practice with your child to improve their grades quickly

Parents and carers can register for the above webinar via the link below..

[REGISTER HERE FOR FREE WEBINAR](#)



EAGLE



FALCON



HAWK



OSPREY

HOUSE CHALLENGES THIS TERM



HOUSE ACTIVITIES

TERM 3 EVENTS

- Humanities Quiz
- Taskmaster - Furze Platt style
- Year 7 - Penalty Shootout
- Year 8 - Kahoot
- Year 9 - Bottle Flip
- Year 10 - Head to Head Debate
- Year 11 - Chess Challenge

PANCAKE RELAY

- Year 7 - Thursday 29th January
- Year 8 - Friday 6th February
- Year 9 - Thursday 5th February
- Year 10 - Thursday 12th February
- Year 11 - Friday 13th February



GARDENING CLUB UPDATE

Gardening Club kicked off 2026 by examining and cleaning out Mrs Cook's solitary bee house with resident mason and leaf cutter bee larvae. Pollen mites and a spider were evicted.

We then made 'seed snails' from wild flower seeds we collected in the autumn and some from those kindly donated by Mrs Avery.

Once the seeds grow we will unroll the snails and be able to transplant the seedlings with minimal root disturbance.







FOR MORE DETAILS ON BECOMING A TEACHER WITH TEACH MAIDENHEAD, SEE PAGE 12



WORKSHOPS HOSTED BY THE AUTISM GROUP

The following two workshops are aimed at parents and carers of primary and secondary aged children. All available courses are also listed on the GEMS website:

[GEMS WEBSITE](#)

Autistic Burnout

Wednesday 4th February 7.30-9.30pm

This workshop explores what autistic burnout is, how it differs from general stress or exhaustion, and why it happens. Families will learn to recognise early signs of burnout in children and young people, understand the impact of masking and overwhelm, and explore ways to support recovery through rest, regulation, and realistic expectations.

[BOOK HERE FOR AUTISTIC BURNOUT SESSION](#)

Barriers to School - Can't go, not won't go

Wednesday 25th February 10am - 12 noon

To understand what EBSA/ERSA is. Recognising potential early signs in our children. Exploring strategies to support our children. Encouraging questions and sharing experiences.

Places are very limited and we can only allow parents and carers to attend whose child is experiencing school avoidance.

[BOOK HERE FOR CAN'T GO NOT WON'T GO SESSION](#)

SAFEGUARDING YOUR CHILDREN ONLINE

This year Furze Platt has purchased access to an online safeguarding information platform for all parents. Our Online Safety Hub provides parents with a wealth of information including in the following areas:

- How to keep your child safe online
- How to ensure best safety features are implemented on social media platforms
- Understanding different social media platforms and their potential risks
- How to manage screen time with your child
- How to safeguard your child from online predators
- How to monitor your child's online activity

[CLICK HERE FOR ONLINE SAFETY HUB](#)

As part of this platform parents also all have free access to parental controls on 2 devices within your home. These devices are advised to be mobile phones and/or home laptops, the company advise against placing on laptops brought into school as it may conflict with the filtering and monitoring systems used on the school network.

This can be accessed via the link below and will enable parents to:

Filter content

Monitor your child's online activity

Set time limits for online use

[CLICK HERE FOR FREE ACCESS TO CONTROLS](#)

We hope you find these resources useful for supporting your child with their use of the internet.

Miss L Lewis, Deputy Headteacher - Interventions and Safeguarding



TEACH* MAIDENHEAD

The best schools - The best pupils - The best teacher training

In partnership with the
Institute of Education

University of
Reading

TRAIN LOCALLY
TO BECOME A
SECONDARY
SCHOOL TEACHER



Thinking about a career in teaching?

Whether you're a **new graduate** or looking for a **career change**, Teach Maidenhead offers an excellent local route into teaching.

Gain classroom experience in **two of Maidenhead's secondary schools**, while earning your **PGCE** with our '*Outstanding*' (Ofsted, June 2024) partner — **The University of Reading**.

✓ What You'll Need

- A 2.2 honours degree (or higher) in the subject you wish to teach, or a closely related field
- A genuine **passion for working with young people**

£ Tax-free bursaries and scholarships are available in selected subjects — worth £5,000 to £31,000 to help cover training costs.

Now Recruiting for

2026-27

Subjects available:

Art & Design • Design & Technology • PE • Biology • Chemistry • Physics • Maths • English • History • Geography • MFL (French, German, Spanish)

FIND OUT MORE

WWW.TEACHMAIDENHEAD.CO.UK

TEACH.MAIDENHEAD@FURZEPLATT.NET



FREE FUN GIRLS SESSION

SUN JAN 25TH 2026

1.00-2.00PM

Bike and equipment will be provided and 10 girls can be accommodated, so places are limited. If it's successful we will aim to run more sessions throughout 2026.

Girls need to be able to ride an ordinary bike and stand up and pedal.

Girls also need to wear long trousers, ideally jeans. **NO** Leggings.

- ✓ Girls Only Session
- ✓ BMX exercises
- ✓ Skills & BMX techniques
- ✓ Fun games & mini laps



HAWKS
BMX
CLUB



HAYES HAWKS BMX TRACK

Lake Farm Country Park, Dawley Road, Hayes, UB3 1EJ



Registration via email

hello@hawksbmx.co.uk

The Free Session will be run by a Female Coach, Harriet Alexander



SPACE TO THRIVE

COMMUNITY MUSIC CENTRE

A BERKSHIRE MUSIC TRUST AND SLOUGH MUSIC SERVICE PARTNERSHIP



Calling all Young Musicians!

Let's Play Orchestra

Saturday 10.15-11.00am

Open to any instrument from beginner up to Grade 1. Explore making music with others through easy parts, beat & melody games, and ensemble fun.

Fees: £70.00 per term

HALF PRICE THIS TERM for new members:
£35.00 for TEN SESSIONS

Initial Orchestra

Saturday 9.00-10.00am

Open to any instrument Grades 1-3. A more adventurous orchestral experience focusing on holding your own part, reading rhythms, and collaborating as a musical team.

Fees: £79.50 per term

HALF PRICE THIS TERM for new members:
£39.75 for TEN SESSIONS

[Click here for a free trial orchestra session on Saturday 17 January](#)

[Click here to attend the launch event on Saturday 10 January](#)

Any Questions? contact laurabridger@berksmusictrust.org.uk