

YEAR 7 ADMISSIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

Admissions

Q: How can I see if we are in the catchment area for the school?

A: This link below shows the map for our catchment area;

<https://bcc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=1fe0937af5534246876efa6d64e78722>

Q: Does it matter where I put the school on my 3 school choices?

A: Advice would state that you should prioritise your choices from most favorable.

Q: Will I get a place at Fairfield High School if I am outside of the catchment area?

A: The distance from the catchment area is considered when allocations are made by the council. If you receive a decision you are unhappy with, you have the right to appeal an admissions allocation by an independent panel.

Q: Will we be offered a place from more than one school?

A: You will be offered a school allocation from a school within your catchment area. This is not always one of your three choices. The council will attempt to give families one of their three choices but that is not always possible.

Q: Does SAT exam results affect the chances of getting a place at FHS?

A: No, SATs do not have an impact on places. Parents/guardians apply to FHS directly through Bristol City Council. Places at Fairfield are not allocated or reserved based on any prior attainment or any other attribute except for those legally reserved (Looked After, Previously Looked After and those with an EHCP where Fairfield is named on the provision).

Transition

Q: Will we be able to come see the school in person this year?

A: Unfortunately, due to COVID restrictions, we are unable invite anyone into the school building at present. We have put together a selection of videos to show you around the school and give you an insight into what life is like at Fairfield High School;

<http://fairfieldyear7transition.moonfruit.com/an-inside-look-at-fairfield/4593955201>

Q: What is the provision for transition?

A: When we are able, we run a fantastic Summer School which gives opportunities for students to meet one another, some of their teachers/tutors, and to become more familiar with the school. Students who have identified additional needs also generally have an additional transition meeting to enable student and families to tour the building.

Q: Do tutor groups stay with the same tutor throughout their time at Fairfield?

A: Once placed in a tutor group Pupils will remain in that tutor group for their time at FHS.

Q: Is there opportunity for children to be grouped with children they already know?

A: Once you have accepted your place at FHS you will receive a welcome email and have the opportunity to state your child's preference of being in a French and Spanish or French and German speaking tutor group. You can also name pupils you feel would work well with or child or have a negative impact on their progression. We will do our best to accommodate any requests, but we also encourage making new friends within their new school setting.

Q: Will you keep twins together?

A: This is normally down to the preference of the family if twins stay together or are split between tutor groups. It also may be dependent on space in tutor groups and the other pupils they may wish to be placed with.

Curriculum

Q: Do you operate 'Setting?' If so Which subjects, how many levels, how are they set and how often are they reviewed?

A: All subjects studied at KS3 are taught as mixed ability sets within tutor groups. In KS4, Science and Maths are set based on students GCSE target and their progress in KS3. This is reviewed frequently/continuously, however, we rarely move learners down sets as we prefer to address under-performance with extra support. We do often move learners up sets.

Q: What is a typical class size?

A: Approximately 25-30 students. Although this can be less for certain GCSE option classes.

Q: How many classes are there per year?

A: There are 8 tutor groups per year. There are also 4 different house groups which are split across the year groups.

Q: When do students choose their GCSE options?

A: Initial Options are chosen in Term 1 of Year 9. Final options are then chosen in Term 2. Students then start studying their chosen options in Year 10.

Q: Can students study more than one language? Do they get to choose which language they study? Can the choice of which language be made beforehand?

A: All Year 7 students will study French, alongside either German or Spanish. Requests can be made and we will do our best to accommodate them. In Year 8 students decide which subject they want to continue to study in Year 9, and this can include Arabic.

Q: Is Art taught in Year 7?

A: Year 7 Students do 4 lessons of Art per fortnights, on rotation with Design Technology and Computer Science.

Q: Is photography on the curriculum or is it integrated into Art?

A: At GCSE Photography is a separate option to Art, but at KS3 it is part of Art.

Q: Can students do a Music GCSE? Are lessons available?

A: Yes, we offer GCSE Music. We also offer additional music lessons at a cost with a specialist tutor.

Q: What is the drama department like in your school?

A: We are proud to have a thriving drama department where a high number of our students from all backgrounds and experiences enjoy being involved in our school production and galas, whether it be acting, singing, dancing, directing, stage management, lighting operation and sound. Our most recent annual musical, Aladdin, was a huge success with a record number of over 120 students being involved. We pride ourselves on giving our students a high-quality education in performance and theatre whilst giving them life-long fun and happy memories of being involved in school productions. We also give our students as much insight as we can to the professional world of theatre with

numerous trips to watch local and global companies and by having professional drama practitioners and dance artists delivering exciting workshops right here at Fairfield.

Q: Do you teach Computer Science?

A: Yes, at KS3 is taught in rotation with Art, and Design Technology. In KS4 it can be chosen as an Option.

Q: What sports do you offer? Does my child get to choose what sport they participate in?

A: Rugby, Football, Basketball, Cricket, Athletics, Netball, Hockey, Rounders, Badminton, Gymnastics, In years 7-9 pupils will follow a set curriculum, in years 10-11 pupils can choose the activity they participate in on a termly basis.

Q: Does the school run food tech?

A: Food & Nutrition is studied in Year 9, and can be chosen as a GCSE option.

Pastoral Support

Q: What type of pastoral care do you provide?

A: Each year group has an Achievement Coordinator and Achievement Manager who oversees the year group. We are on hand for Pupils/Parents to speak to if an issue arises and support year groups if there is a need. Referrals can be made for extra support if required to other agencies. Support is given to pupils in all areas from behaviour concerns to pupils who have a high level of anxiety.

SEND and Interventions

Q: What provision and support do you offer students with dyslexia?

A: We aim to complete a 'dyslexia check in' with every dyslexic pupil which is provided for by support staff and shared among teachers. The checklist includes asking each student which resources work best for them and is entirely student led. We will introduce various strategies and resources to each student before we ask them what supports their learning most effectively. If possible, we may also have the capacity to provide your child with 1:1 dyslexia intervention that takes place for an hour a week for 1 term. This intervention aims to provide students with severe dyslexia a more intensive and thorough support for them in and out of the classroom.

Q: What is the SEN provision like in your school?

We seek to provide an inclusive, supportive and challenging approach to teaching pupils with SEND. We believe that we must have the highest of expectations for ALL pupils, including those with SEND. Where a pupil has additional barriers to their education, we seek to reduce these barriers through differentiation and through targeted interventions of support.

Pupils with SEND are able to access all the wide ranging activities that are provided by the school, in addition to curriculum based activities. We endeavour to ensure all activities provided by the school are fully accessible and inclusive, including residential and overseas trips.

Q: Can separate meetings be set up with the school's SENCO to go through questions we have re support for children with EHCP.

Support for pupils entering the school in Year 7, often begins during the pupil's time in KS2, with contact made with both primary school and where necessary the parents/carers of a child with special educational needs.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Director of SEN; Mr. Lee Mead – lmead@fairfield.excalibur.org.uk <https://fairfield.excalibur.org.uk/curriculum/send/>

Extra-curricular

Q: Do you have a school football team across all years?

A: Yes, we have a Football team for each year group that plays competitive games against other schools in Bristol. Each year group will have a Football, Netball, Rugby, Basketball, Athletics, Hockey, Cricket and Rounders team.

Q: How does FHS support someone who is talented in sports?

A: They will receive two hours of high quality P.E teaching a week as well as extra curricular support and access to competitive fixtures. We can also help to signpost pupils and parents to local sports clubs pupils will be able attend to further their progression as well as submit pupils for District trials.

Q: What extra-curricular activities are there?

A: We offer wide variety of clubs ranging from chess and drama to art, creative writing and book clubs.

For Sports we run a club each night after School for each year group, these include; Rugby, Basketball, Football, Cricket, Netball, Rounders and Athletics. We also allow pupils in each year group to use the Sports hall one day a week at lunch.

Q: Will there be any trips taking place when lockdown is over? What kind of trips do you normally do?

Just a selection of the trips we have offered in recent years are; Visiting Austria for a ski trip, to the Old Vic to watch plays, and to the Bristol Zoo. Each year there is an opportunity to watch the Bristol Flyers, Bristol Bears, Bristol City and England Football team.

General

Q: Could you please tell us about the Library?

A: The Library is open for students from 8 in the morning until 4.30. Our collection which includes over 7,000 fiction and non-fiction titles is carefully curated to represent authors from diverse backgrounds. We also stock a large collection of Dyslexia-friendly titles, striving to offer interesting and enticing books for every reader. In February 2021 we launched our 24-hour eLibrary featuring nearly 2,000 eBooks and over 900 audiobooks for students to enjoy stories at any time, wherever they are.

We invite authors for workshops and hold our own book events, like Harry Potter Night and World Book Day. We also visit local schools for collaborative events.

We run regular reading promotions, engaging readers in new genres and formats, such as our annual graphic novel competition.

Fairfield High School works collaboratively with local schools to hold the Bristol Teen Book Award, an annual event to promote diverse fiction. The initiative encourages students to read and vote for their favourite shortlisted title, culminating in an exciting awards ceremony with activities and workshops with shortlisted authors.

Q: Could you please tell us a bit about the school facilities – particularly sports/music/drama?

A: Sports – We have grass pitches, a flood lit astro turf, a full size football pitch, 3x5 a side pitches, cricket nets, tennis courts, and 4 badminton court sized sports hall.

Drama- We have purpose-built dance and drama studios with sprung floors and excellent sound equipment. The drama studio boasts brand new theatrical lighting (bought in 2019) together with a modern and comprehensive lighting desk and new LED lamps to inspire our students and create visually stunning effects in our productions. It allows students to understand and develop skills in other aspects of theatre including design and direction and not just performance. We have recently purchased brand new head microphones and sound equipment to enhance the quality and professionalism of our performances and allow us to perform outside during our Summer Gala.

Music – The Music Department has recently expanded and now has 2 full-time specialist teachers covering a wide range of Musical styles and traditions including specialism in orchestral / classical composition / rock / pop / jazz and music technology / production. We have 5 Mac based recording studios and 2 fully-equipped classrooms with keyboards / PA / mics etc. / drumkits (electronic and acoustic) guitars / ukuleles / PCs with MIDI keyboard controllers and 16 Ableton Push controllers. We also have a professional mobile PA and professional Sennheiser wireless microphone rig (10 mics) which were recently purchased along with studio lighting and facilities linking Music with Drama and Dance for a cohesive and well-resourced Performing Arts Faculty.

Q: How do students pay for lunch and trips?

A: Parents can top up lunch accounts and pay for trips using a system called Parentmail. Students can then purchase lunch or a break time snack with any funds on their account.

Q: How much does the FHS uniform cost?

A: The compulsory uniform is £23 - £27 for our school jumper and tie depending on size. All other items can be purchased from other retailers if necessary. The PE tops are compulsory and cost between £11 and £22 depending on size and style. Tracksuit bottoms, shin pads, trainers and socks will also be needed. We will always try to support families in need where we can.

Q: Do students generally wear their PE kit to school?

A: Due to covid restrictions, students are not permitted to change into their PE kits on site, so if they have PE during the day, they are asked to wear their uniform into school.

Leadership and Policies

Q: How long has the leadership team been at the school?

A:The leadership team are an experienced and diverse group of colleagues, with time spent at FHS ranging from 5 to 18 years at the school.

Q: How much interaction do you have with other Excalibur Academy Trust (EAT) secondary schools? If yes on what type of things?

A: EAT encourage cross school-working in terms of professional development, training, and curriculum planning and implementation. Every academic year all colleagues from all EAT school with join for a day or training, support, well-being, curriculum building and sharing of key information including school progress.

Q: How do you deal with poor behaviour?

A: FHS have a detailed behaviour policy to ensure fairness and transparency. The ethos is a restorative approach, students have staff can report incidences, they are investigated by trained staff and based on the evidence provided a decision is made by a member of SLT. Please use the link below to review our behavior policy in full;
<https://fairfield.excalibur.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Behaviour-Policy.pdf>

Q: What is the school's policy on mobile phone use in school?

A: Mobile phones are permitted in school. Students can use them during social time: break and lunch times. There are occasions when a teacher may incorporate mobile phone use in a lesson. However, there are students without mobile phones, and this is taken into consideration when they are being used in the classroom.

Q: What opportunities are there for parents to get involved in school life?

A: As a school we actively encourage parental and guardian participation both in an academic and social sense. In terms of discussing academic progress: discussing students work, attending parents' evenings, attending progress review days, and engaging with the curriculum. Also, attending our winter and summer galas, our in-school production but to name a few events. There is also a Fairfield Parents Network that have an active role in supporting students and engaging with school-based events. They have recently raised over £6000 to buy IT equipment such as laptops to conquer the digital divide that some of our community may have experienced. Those donations are making a real difference right now and every day to students and families in our community.

School Day and Social Times

Q: How long are break and lunches?

A: Morning break is 30 minutes long and lunch time is 45 minutes. Break times are staggered to allow to bubbles to move around the school safely.

Q: Are students allowed to leave the school site at break and lunch?

A: No students must stay on site for the duration of the school day.

Q: What equipment is there for students to play with at lunchtime?

A: At Lunch time pupils can play Football outside on our courts, or they can play basketball or Badminton when it is their day in the Sports hall.

Q: How much are the breaktime snacks?

A: They range from 50p to £1, and include hummus and veg sticks, mini pizza's, and fruit.

Q: How much is a school lunch?

A: Currently we offer a packed lunch of a filled sub roll, lentil chips, drink, fruit and a cake as a treat on Fridays. These cost £2.35.

Covid-19 Situation

Q: Are there any changes you have put in place due to Covid that you are planning to keep?

A: The Senior Leadership team are currently planning what, if any Covid-safety features may be implemented into the functioning of the school. As soon as decisions are made they will be shared.

Q: What methods did the school use to deliver home learning to children during the Covid19



**Fairfield
High School**

Achieving Excellence



schools' lockdown? Was there any live online teaching? What were the expectations of the children? What learning has the school taken from this experience, and are there things you would plan to repeat or change in the event of similar lockdowns in the future?

A: We were prepared to execute online lessons when we entered the third national lockdown. We use teams for lessons, and have had extremely positive feedback from students and parents on the execution and quality of the learning provided.

All students are expected to attend lessons as normal, including tutor time as this is a great time to connect with students and ensure their wellbeing. Students can contact tutors and teachers for support during this particularly challenging time.

Over 150 laptops have been made available to give all students the best possible chance to have a consistent learning routine and to further minimise the disruption to their education.