

Fir

Vale

School

Fir Vale School

Prospectus



Headteacher's Welcome

Choosing your child's Secondary School is an important decision.



“The culture of the school has been transformed.”

School Improvement Partner

You want your child to be happy, settled and safe and receive a good quality education so they can achieve their full potential. I am proud to have led Fir Vale school for the last three years and believe we can offer your child a fantastic education. We provide high-quality teaching and learning and will support your child throughout their time at Fir Vale School. We offer unrivalled pastoral support and give opportunities that will allow your child to flourish and leave with confidence and skills for their next steps in life. Our school is diverse and inclusive; many of our students return as members of staff and we have active alumni. Students regularly come back to give talks and inspire students for the future. Our school values of Determination, Achievement, Respect, Opportunity, Togetherness and Kindness were chosen by our students and they underpin all that we do.

Why not come to see us on a normal working day? To book your tour with me or a member of my team email enquiries@firvale.com or ring the school on 0114 2439391.

I hope to see you soon!

Rachel Smith



“GCSE results have improved every year over the last three years.”

Chair of Governors

Achievement *Opportunity* Togetherness *Determination* Respect *Kindness*

Health and Well-being

Your child's physical and mental health is important to us and we have trained mentors who can help your child whenever needed.

Students can go to The Link to relax and speak to our specialist staff.

Our pastoral staff also work with parents who would like some support.

Your child will be cared for by a year team who are available to discuss your child's welfare and progress with you. Trained student ambassadors also help support and look after younger students.

“Having help from The Link has helped me with my worries, it's a place where I can go and be calm, I can now make good decisions for myself.”

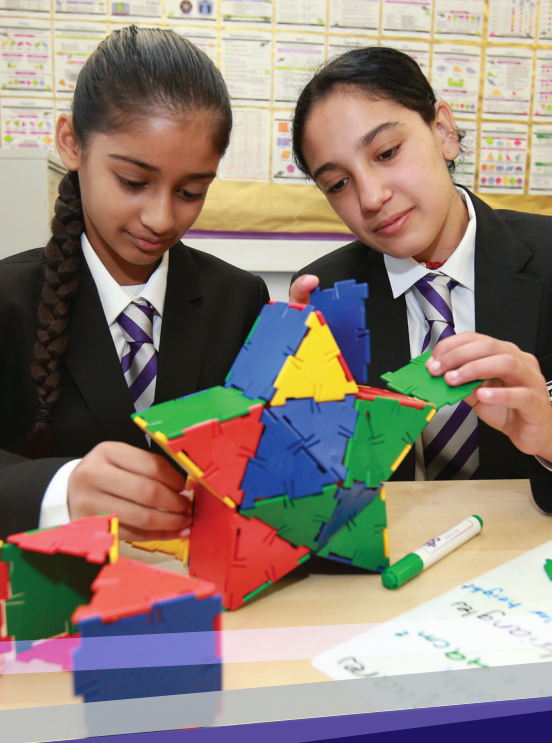
Year 9 Student

Special Educational Needs

In our Learning Zone, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are given the opportunity, tools and bespoke provision to ensure their learning needs are met.

Our Learning Support Assistants are trained to work with students with a variety of learning needs. This may be in one-to-one sessions, small groups or alongside students in the classroom.





Our Curriculum

Our curriculum is truly broad and balanced, encompassing creative and vocational subjects such as Art, Drama and Design Technology as well as 'traditional' academic subjects such as History, Geography, Citizenship and Religious Studies.

Core Subjects

English, Maths and Science are described as 'core' subjects. Your child will be placed into a class that will suit his or her ability, designed to push your child to make good progress. Skills and qualifications in these areas are vital for all future endeavours.

Options

In year 9, students choose their personalised pathway of subjects to study at GCSE level.

We currently offer over twenty GCSE option subjects, including Business Studies, IT, Engineering, Film Studies, Photography and Childcare. We also offer A level Mathematics.

We have the newest and best hair and beauty salon in the city with over-subscribed courses at Key Stage 4.

Community languages are extremely important. All pupils will continue with Spanish from primary school and we currently offer many community languages including Arabic and Urdu with the opportunity for home-language speakers to take exams in Polish, Italian, Portuguese and many more.



“The number of students achieving the highest grades (7-9) has improved by over 40% in the last 3 years.”

Whole School Data

Reading

We want all our students to love reading. Reading fluently unlocks knowledge and joy. Our bespoke reading lessons introduce higher ability students to non-fiction texts and scholarly articles to expand their global education. Students who are not yet fluent readers are immersed in a reading programme to enable them to make rapid progress. Student improvements in reading are measured through reading tests and reported to parents.

Language Fluency

We encourage our school community – staff and students – to expand their vocabulary. With hundreds of thousands of words in the dictionary, all of us should be learning and using new words to increase our fluency and articulacy. Each week a new ‘word of the week’ is introduced so that students can become more articulate. These words are carefully chosen to unlock meaning across the curriculum.

We encourage everyone to speak in a calm, kind manner, thinking carefully about their tone of voice and choice of words.





Fir Vale Standards

We expect students to arrive on time, well-dressed and well-equipped and to treat one another with respect at all times.

All students in year 7 are given their first uniform for free. Students wear their Fir Vale uniform and PE uniform with pride. We run a uniform shop and will help support parents with ensuring their children arrive at school every day in full uniform with a bag and all equipment for the day.

Each year group has a different colour tie that gives them a sense of belonging to a team. That colour stays with them throughout their time at Fir Vale School.

Rewarding good behaviour and attendance

All students gain Recognition points ('R' points) for doing the right thing every lesson. There are many prize draws throughout the year. Students who work hard and attend well all year will have a reward trip or activity in the summer term.



Enrichment

Whilst academic success is important, students need to develop wider skills and experiences.

We are the only Duke of Edinburgh approved Centre locally and our cadet unit is unique in the country. Both of these activities are not just valued experiences that enhance university applications, but are character-building in and of themselves.

We have an extensive electives and extra-curricular programme that runs throughout the year enabling students to access a wide variety of opportunities.

Your child will choose an 'elective' once a week. This will be an opportunity to build skills and widen their experiences. Electives range from

fashion to fishing to football with much in between! Students gain valuable extra experiences and skills such as debating and journalism that could spark an interest in future careers or help form part of those extra experiences valued so highly by universities and future employers.

We encourage our students to represent the school, whether it be in cricket, rounders, football or debating competitions. Some students may choose to take part in the UK Maths Challenge and others might join Pupil Parliament to effect change in School. We recognise and reward our students' activities and achievements within our Fir Vale 9 pledge system.



Careers

Fir Vale is proud to be part of the 'Better Learners, Better Workers' Sheffield Master Cutler Programme.

This gives students an insight into the business world and gives them great practical experience. We have an in-house careers advisor who meets with all students and works in partnership with local post-16 providers.

Academic Success

We work with local and national universities to ensure our highest attaining students have all career paths open to them. Regular assessments, bespoke interventions and tutoring take place throughout the year enabling students to achieve the highest grades.



“Fir Vale teachers are very significant, they are always there so you can achieve your best. There has been a real increase in opportunities recently.”

Year 11 Student

Working together

We will keep you informed of your child's academic progress throughout the year.

Our parent app 'Classcharts' means you will receive live updates of your child's attendance, rewards and behaviour.

There are many opportunities for you as a parent to be involved at school. We have regular parents' evenings and parent 'drop-ins' as well as a parent forum.



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