



Maria Fidelis
Catholic School FCJ

Frequently Asked Questions

TEACHING, ASSESSMENT AND RESULTS	
How large are the classes?	Our average class size is about 27.
Which subjects are studied in Year 7?	English, Maths, Science, R.E., History, Geography, French or Spanish, Art, Drama, Music, Technology, PE and IT. More able students study Latin in addition to their other subjects.
What is the frequency of communication with parents through reports, parent/teacher meetings, open evenings, newsletters, website?	Parents will receive a short report indicating whether their child is on target at the end of each term. There are also Parents' Evenings for each Year group including extra ones to give guidance on options, beginning Year 7/Sixth Form. A newsletter is available through the website each term and other events/updates posted regularly throughout the year.
How are children put into classes, how will my child be assessed?	<p>Year 7 are put into mixed groups. Groups are regularly reviewed and adjusted at the end of each academic year. Maths and Science set more rigidly as the students progress up the school. We use a range of data to make decisions about groupings: KS2 data, other externally verified tests plus our internal tracking and assessment throughout the year.</p> <p>All students are regularly assessed in every subject. Their progress is tracked and interventions put in place if necessary. This is for all ability groups who are underachieving.</p>
How do you ensure more able students are appropriately challenged?	In addition to ability groupings, more able students have their own programme designed to support their later admission to high level universities. This includes sessions for those students identified as having higher learning potential in one or more subject areas, as well as enrichment trips and activities. Some departments offer further support for students with exceptional ability. Our ultimate aim is to derive the very best from all children and ensure that they make the best of the opportunities available to them.
What are the recent exam results and predicted results for the next academic year?	GCSE Results in Maths and English are consistently above national averages. Details of results are on our website.
What is the latest Ofsted grade?	Our last Ofsted inspection was in December 2021. The school was graded 'Good'. Our Diocesan inspection in 2020 rated the school 'Good' overall with 'outstanding' for Catholic Life of the school.

<p>How do you support students with learning needs?</p>	<p>We have staff who are trained to offer appropriate support in many different areas of learning needs. Staff at the school have training with professional agencies to ensure support offered is current and can be personalised to individual children.</p> <p>We work closely with educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, counsellors and the Catholic Children's Society.</p> <p>The school liaises with primary schools to find out what difficulties students may have before they arrive at Maria Fidelis. The students will also sit a reading and writing test when they start at the school which will show areas where support may be required. Once at the school, students are regularly monitored by staff to check for any additional needs they may have.</p>
PASTORAL SUPPORT AND DISCIPLINE	
<p>What sort of pastoral support is available?</p>	<p>Each year group has a Head of Year responsible for academic progress. We also have a large pastoral support team who monitor and support students throughout the day and contact parents promptly when problems arise. We always aim to respond quickly to parental concerns, organising meetings in a short time frame. We work with other support agencies, including XLP, the Catholic Children's Society, CAMHS and the Mental Health Support Team</p>
<p>Will my child be safe at school? Do you have people monitoring the site?</p>	<p>Student and parent surveys have always indicated that our students feel very safe at Maria Fidelis. Staff monitor the site at all times and also the school gates at the beginning and end of the day. We are a small school with a strong sense of community and individualised care. Bullying does occur but when reported is dealt with quickly.</p>
<p>What is the school's attitude to discipline? Will my child be expected to stay behind for detentions without notice?</p>	<p>Maria Fidelis believes that a well-ordered environment allows all students to learn and do their best. Students who fail to complete an acceptable amount of work in a lesson will have to remain in school that day until it is complete. Parents will always be informed. Parents will not be routinely informed if their child is kept for a short period of up to half an hour, for example for lateness. Any repeated breaches of school discipline will result in parents being invited in for a meeting. Disruption to learning is rare but not tolerated. Any student repeatedly disrupting a lesson will be removed to work in the St Ignatius Centre. (Details of our Behaviour Policy are available on our website.)</p>
<p>What is the uniform policy?</p>	<p>We are a strict uniform school because this raises self-esteem and aspiration. Students who arrive at school in incorrect uniform are sent home to change and parents informed. Staff are on the school gates every morning to enforce the rules.</p>
<p>What is the school's policy on homework?</p>	<p>Students are set homework on a regular basis from Year 7. Most evenings they will have at least two subjects; the length of time spent on homework rises as they progress up the school. Parents should check students' diaries regularly and inform the school if they have any concerns. Homework is also posted on the school website.</p>
<p>How many students go onto higher and further education?</p>	<p>Nearly all students in our Sixth Form progress to Higher Education, a significant number to some of our best known universities: UCL, Kings' College London, LSE, York, Warwick, Bristol and Cambridge.</p>

SPORTS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR

What sports and extra-curricular activities are offered?	The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including dance lessons, boxing, public speaking opportunities, football, fitness training, theatre trips, ski trips, university visits, musical instrument lessons, science competitions and fundraising events.
What is the policy on competition generally and competitive sports?	At Maria Fidelis, we believe that competition is a healthy part of school life and we run a wide range of activities through our House system. We also compete in a range of sporting activities through the Camden Shield and our students regularly perform well in the Jack Petchey public speaking challenge.

ADMISSIONS

What is the school's admissions policy on accepting students of different faiths?	We are happy to offer places to students of other faiths but Catholic applicants are given priority. The Catholic population in Camden is much smaller than in the past so we are able to offer some places to non-Catholic applicants. When applying to our school, families must feel able to fully support our Catholic ethos. (See Admissions Policy on our website.)
What is the distance cut-off from last year's admissions?	Distance is our final criterion and it has not been necessary to use it in recent years. There is no 'cut off' but proximity to the school could be used as a 'tiebreaker'. We do not have a catchment area.
Does my child have to sit a test to gain entry to Maria Fidelis?	No. At present our admissions work well to admit a good balance of ability into our school.