

The Fitzrovia News

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All Souls School gains 'outstanding' grade

Education standards authority Ofsted has awarded All Souls Church of England Primary School in Fitzrovia a grade of "outstanding" — the highest possible rating for its teaching, writes *Linus Rees*.

Inspectors who visited in January this year heaped praise on the quality of its work saying that pupils are "rightly proud to attend this aspirational and supportive school".

According to the published report, staff at the school encourage pupils to "persevere to be the very best they can be".

Inspectors commended the school's "broad and rich curriculum", and the variety of sports and social activities on offer.

Pupils perform well in national tests because the school has "the highest expectations" for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, leaving them "very well prepared" for the next stage of their education.

Inspectors found that the school staff work in close partnership with parents, carers, and the community, "to deliver the best possible experience" for all pupils.

They found the children's behaviour to be exemplary — "They are polite and courteous to staff and their peers."

Executive headteacher Alix Ascough wrote to parents to tell them the good news, saying: "I am exceptionally proud of our children, staff team and school community for working together to

achieve this tremendous, outstanding result."

She said the inspection was rigorous, "leaving no stone unturned", but was "overjoyed that so many of our strengths and successes were recognised and acknowledged".

"The inspection team spoke to a great number of pupils, carried out many lesson visits, looked through a vast number of children's books as well as speaking with parents, leaders, teachers and other school staff," she said.

Oxford Street MDA includes huge part of Fitzrovia

Sir Sadiq Khan intends to include a huge part of Fitzrovia in his Mayoral Development Area (MDA) to transform and pedestrianise Oxford Street, according to a public consultation on the proposals.

The MDA would be run by a Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) which would have a number of powers currently under the authority of Camden and Westminster Councils.

The area includes all of the Camden part of Fitzrovia south of Goodge Street bounded by Tottenham Court Road in the east and up to Newman Street in the west. It also includes all the Westminster part of Fitzrovia south of Eascastle Street.

"Once established, the MDC can discharge various statutory functions relating to infrastructure, regeneration, land, requiring the adoption of private streets, business and financial support," states the proposals in the public consultation.

The powers of the MDC would include developing a strategic plan and deciding the outcome of planning applications.

It would also include the retention of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which is currently collected by either Camden or Westminster councils from property development in the neighbourhood.

According to the proposals the existing strategic plans "have failed to realise the full potential of Oxford Street".

A consultation runs until Friday 2 May 2025: haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/oxford-street

Mortimer Street and Wigmore Street open to two-way traffic

Previously one-way sections of Mortimer Street and Wigmore Street opened to two-way traffic in February.

Westminster Council is reminding drivers and cyclists of the changes including a number of banned turns at the junctions of Great Portland Street and Great Titchfield Street. Pedestrians are asked to "look both ways" before crossing the road.

Part of Mortimer Street in Fitzrovia remains restricted to one-way only westbound on a temporary basis.

"Due to works unrelated to the scheme, a lane closure is being implemented by FM Conway in Mortimer Street eastbound between Great Portland Street and Great Titchfield Street. Eastbound traffic will be diverted," says Westminster Council.

Cycling becomes two-way on Foley, Nassau, and Riding House Street

Westminster Council has created cycle contra-flows on three one-way streets in Fitzrovia West to improve cycling permeability across the neighbourhood.

Originally proposed in 2024, the blue and white signage has now been put in place on Foley Street, Nassau Street, and Riding House Street.

Two-way cycling is in operation along the full length of Foley Street and Nassau Street, and between Cleveland Street and Great Titchfield Street only on Riding House Street. The section of Riding House west of Great Titchfield Street remains one-way westbound.

Observer staff to be based in Berners Street

When Tortoise Media begins its publication of the Observer newspaper and news site in the spring this year, staff will be based at its offices in Berners Street in Fitzrovia.

Last month Tortoise put out job adverts for five senior editorial and production staff stating that the new

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recruits would be working at 22 Berners Street.

More than 20 staff of the Observer chose to take redundancy rather than work in Fitzrovia and be employed by Tortoise Media, reported the Press Gazette.

Tortoise announced in September last year that it wanted to buy the Observer, which was owned by The Scott Trust and the Guardian Media Group which publishes the Guardian. This led to a crisis at the two long-running newspapers where staff took strike action over the move. However, the deal to buy the Observer was completed in December.

News in brief

The number of **people sleeping out on the streets in London** is at an all time high. In the City of Westminster, 388 people were recorded sleeping out in the open — a 40 percent increase on the previous year. A nine percent increase was observed in the London Borough of Camden where 132 people were counted sleeping on the streets.

Camden Council called in police officers to remove people from the public gallery at the meeting of the full council on 3 March, after a discussion about rule changes to ban flags and banners met with severe backlash from protesters.

Westminster Council has become the first London local authority to be granted the highest rating by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). The RSH praised the Labour-run council's work in areas including repairs management, its lettings policy and compliance with health and safety requirements across its stock of around 12,000 homes.

Mayor of London Sir Sadiq Khan faced fresh calls last month to “ring-fence funding” to protect the **Royal Parks Police**, amid concerns the entire Operational Command Unit would be scrapped.

Concerns have been raised over the number of **Camden pupils missing school**, as a new report reveals the borough has one of the worst attendance rates in London.

Camden Council has apologised to residents and businesses in Fitzrovia for **noise and air pollution** from production crews during a film shoot in Fitzroy Square in February. Drivers of crew vehicles parked in **Warren Street** and **Whitfield Street** were told to turn off their engines on Friday 14 February after a complaint was made to Camden Film Office, which is run by Film Fixer on behalf of Camden Council.

Planning applications

Camden Council planning applications in Bloomsbury ward during February, includes: Conversion of two flats into one at **38-40 Windmill Street**; Details and alterations to listed building at **69 Gower Street** (three applications); Siting of hot tub on private roof terrace at **36 Tottenham Street**.

See: planningrecords.camden.gov.uk

Westminster Council validated planning applications during February in Fitzrovia West, includes: Redevelopment of Latimer House, **Hanson Street**; Alterations at **30-32 Mortimer Street** Alterations at **2A Middleton Place**; Lighting and other additions at **8 Mortimer Street**; Entrance works at **93 Newman Street**; Listed building alterations at **214 Oxford Street**.

See: idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk

Licensing applications

Westminster: 160 Great Portland Street, seeks alcohol licence; **4 Winsley Street**, seeks extension of licensable activities until 6am on Friday and Saturdays; **15 Great Titchfield Street**, seeks alcohol licence from Monday to Sunday. See: idoxpa.westminster.gov.uk

Camden: The Wheatsheaf pub, 25 Rathbone Place, seeks later hours on Friday and Saturday. See: camden.gov.uk/public-licensing-register

Advice for responding

Residents should check Camden and Westminster's websites for the latest applications.

In Westminster residents can contact licensingadvice.org for free advice, and should also email the Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association fna@fitzrovia.org.uk

In Camden email the Charlotte Street Association at csafitzrovia@yahoo.co.uk where you can also seek advice.

It is also a good idea to contact your ward councillors well before the closing dates with your concerns about any planning or licensing applications.

This news-sheet is produced usually four times or more a year and is available from outside Fitzrovia Community Centre, 2 Foley Street. More news, features and comment on our website: fitzroviaanews.com
Subscribing to our free email newsletter: fitzroviaanews.substack.com

Free housing and welfare advice for residents

The Fitzrovia Advice Service, run by Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association, is able to help residents with private and social housing problems, housing and council tax benefits, disability benefits, Universal Credit and Job Seekers Allowance, pensions and Pension Credit, Working and Child Tax Credits, fuel poverty; and help with benefit, passport and other forms.

Advice is available to Camden and Westminster residents by telephone, email and in person, for speakers of English, Bengali, Sylheti, Urdu and Hindi. Contact 020 3984 6364; or email: advice@fitzrovia.org.uk

Cost of living support

Camden has help at camden.gov.uk/find-support-in-camden
Westminster has help at westminster.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support

Neighbourhood listings

Covid-19 vaccine information is available from Camden and Westminster councils. See camden.gov.uk/coronavirus and westminster.gov.uk/coronavirus

Local councillors serving Fitzrovia on the **Camden** side are: Adam Harrison, Sabrina Francis, and Rishi Madhani; telephone: 020 7974 2792. On the **Westminster** side they are: Tim Barnes, Paul Fisher, and Patrick Lilley; telephone: 020 7641 5377.

Fitzrovia Community Centre has activities available, and a community garden. fitzroviacommunitycentre.org
Visit 2 Foley Street, call 020 7580 8680.

All Souls C of E Primary School, Foley Street takes children from ages 3 to 11. See allsoulsprimary.co.uk for more.

Fitzrovia Youth in Action is a local charity for young people. See fya.org.uk or call at Basement 66-68 Warren Street or call 020 7388 7399.

Rainbow Angels Nursery Fitzrovia 54A Whitfield Street. More information at rainbowangels.co.uk

Little Raccoons Day Nursery, Holcroft Court, Carburton Street, Fitzrovia, London W1W 5AL. See their website or email info-fitzrovia@littleraccoons.co.uk

Age UK provides services for people over 50 years old. In Camden call 020 7239 0400 or visit ageuk.org.uk/camden; in Westminster call 020 3004 5610 or visit ageuk.org.uk/westminster

American International Church offers services including a soup kitchen for the homeless and those in need. See amchurch.co.uk, call 020 7580 2791, or visit 79A Tottenham Court Road.