



Newsletter for Parents and Carers

Week beginning: 16/01/17 Wk 1

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Message from Mrs Helen Glass, Headteacher

It has been a mixed week here at Fortismere. We received the very sad news that the owner of our local pub, the Clissold Arms, George Karageorgis has passed away. George and the Clissold team have been huge supporters of the school, and I know that this wonderful member of our local community will be hugely missed. Our condolences go to his friends and family.

We experienced a power outage on Wednesday which meant we lost heating, lighting, IT systems and telephones. Even the school bell didn't work! Staff and students coped remarkably well but we inevitably took the decision to close school early that day for health and safety reasons. Unfortunately, the situation was completely beyond our control and I appreciate your patience. In particular, I am sorry for the Year 13 students who were in the middle of their mock exams; they coped with the disruption admirably.

In more positive news, we are currently at the top of the Haringey schools' sporting leader board, having won competitions in everything from table-tennis to swimming! This is a tremendous achievement – well done to our sporting stars!

Finally, it was good to see so many of you at the Year 11 Parents' Evening on Tuesday. I hope you found the opportunity to talk to teachers in this critical year valuable. Year 11s will be preparing for their GCSEs in the coming months, and making decisions about life beyond Fortismere. There is lots of support available for them at this important time, so if anyone has questions or concerns, please do refer them to their Tutors in the first instance.

Wishing you all a relaxing weekend – let's hope the weather doesn't get worse!

Governors' Surgery – Mr Mark Chapman, Chair of Governors & Ms Wendy Sloane, Link Governor for Communications

This will take place on Tuesday 17th January at 5.30pm in South Wing Hall. It is your opportunity to meet with parent governors in a one-to-one setting and voice any ideas, issues or feedback that you might have.

Please bear in mind that this is not a substitute for engaging with the school in the usual way to voice concerns you might have to do with your child. But come along if you want to discuss anything - or even just meet your governors and have a chat! If you can't make it, look out in future for dates of more surgeries in the Newsletter.

Parent Forum Working Group

This group will meet directly after the Surgery, from 7.30 - 9pm, also in South Wing Hall. Any parent/carer is invited to come along and join this group, whose aim is to foster communication between parents and the school. We will also decide a date for the next Parent Forum at this meeting.

Hope to see many of you there!

Term Dates 2017-18 – Ms Davey, Deputy Head

The list of term dates for the next academic year, 2017-18 can now be found on our [website](#). More details will be added over the coming months.

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy Review, December 2016 – Ms Judge, Deputy Head

We would like to feedback to parents and carers on the review of the mobile phone policy which was undertaken at the end of last term.

Firstly, thank you to all parents who took the time to share their views. Parents were mostly in favour of keeping the policy but made some very useful suggestions to us about developing it. We also surveyed our staff and students as part of the review. Staff were very positive about the new policy – recognising the significant impact they could see on the improvement of classroom behaviour and approaches to study since its introduction. Students were less positive and still, on the whole, would like to have continuous access to their phones. However, the survey did evidence that a significant number of students saw the benefits of not having their phones with them during the course of the school day, including socialising without the use of the mobile phone!

There were a number of comments about process which we have taken note of and, as a response, have made a few adjustments to the policy. Additionally the review highlighted the need for some further clarifications over process.

Developments to *Fortismere School Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy* following its review in December 2016:

- We have adjusted the policy so that it accepts that mobile phones may be present in **bags** but must be switched off and not accessed at all times while students are on site. This does NOT mean that students can carry mobile phones or electronic devices in their pockets (points 3.1, 3.3 and 3.4 in the revised policy)
- Where students are persistently breaching the policy Fixed Term Exclusion may be considered as a sanction (point 7.5 in the revised policy)

Points of clarification for the administration of *Fortismere School Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy* following its review in December 2016:

- **After school clubs** - Mobile phones cannot be used and should not be seen on the site at any time in the day. This includes at clubs after school hours. Should a student wish to contact home after hours we would expect them to request permission to do this via the supervising teacher or member of staff. That member of staff will either allow them to gain access to a school phone for this purpose or make a phone call on their behalf (point 3.5 in the revised policy)
- **Collecting phones following confiscation** – Should a phone be confiscated, if a parent is unable to collect at the allotted time, after a period of 48 hours parents may nominate another adult to come and collect the mobile phone on their behalf. For parents wishing to do this they would need to contact the school office (mentioned in the email they receive) who will ask them to identify who will collect the device, and provide a disclaimer to cover any issues that might occur with the device once it is handed over to that person. We will ask to see I.D. from anyone who is not a parent who has come to collect a device (point 7.2 in the revised policy)

Improving communication

We will shortly be publishing a revised timetable for after-school clubs including locations and timings of the sessions. Any parent who urgently needs to communicate with their child while they are in attendance at a club should contact the school office.

We are currently planning to create meeting points across the school site so that students can organise to meet up with friends at break and lunchtimes. We hope this helps students find their friends easily during social time as they raise this as a particular concern in the student survey.

Please find attached to today's Newsletter a summary of parental responses to our Mobile Phone Policy review which you may find interesting to read.

We would like to remind parents that should their son/daughter breach policy and their phone is then confiscated the resulting sanctions are clear to them. We expect our staff to follow procedure and if a student is found in breach of the policy they are wholly accountable for their actions.

Once again, we would like to thank our parents/carers for the overwhelming support they have given the school as we have implemented and reviewed this policy.

Harry Potter Evening: Friday 3rd February 2017 – Ms Bhabra, Teacher of DT & Mrs Ward, Senior Librarian

Fortismere Library and the Design and Technology department would like to invite 50 Year 7 and 8 students to an evening of Harry Potter-themed fun and frolicking! It will take place on Friday 3rd February 2017 between 4.45pm and 9.30 pm. The places will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis.

Pupils are to meet outside the Library in their Professor of Hogwarts costume, or their best muggle attire (warm and appropriate), and bring a pair of slippers and a blanket. Broomsticks must be left at the door, and wands must be ready!

There will be readings from the series of the Harry Potter books by pupils and teachers alike as well as loads of other Harry Potter activities - the Sorting Hat Ceremony, Professor Sprout's Greenhouse of Horrors, Diagon Alley Hunt... and more. The night will end with a showing of one of the Harry Potter films voted for on the night by the attending pupils. We will provide an evening meal of a Vegetarian Pasta Bake and Garlic Bread.

A letter with more information will be sent to Year 7 and 8 parents/carers shortly. Please return by Owl or by hand the completed permission slip by Monday 30th January to either Mrs Ward in the Library or to Ms Bhabra in North Wing DT only.

Extra-Curricular Music – Ms Ogilby, Head of Music

Only the guitar group (Matt Lomas) and Gospel choir (Collette Allen) are running next week.

The orchestra and other choirs will be called in preparation for the end of year show in due course.

Charity Band Night: auditions will take place during week beginning 23rd January! Parents/carers, and local community bands can also perform – please get in touch if interested sogilby@fortismere.org.uk. Only single item performances rather than ‘sets’ this year please! All proceeds to charity! (Last year we raised £1,000 in a night!)

Girls’ Cricket Success – Ms Vangucci, Teacher of PE

Congratulations to our Year 7 and 8 Girls’ Cricket Team who are through to the Under-13 Regional Indoor Borough Finals which take place next week!



Celebrating Achievement – Ms Topping, Head of Creative Arts

The Creative Arts and PE faculties have decided that, with so many of our students accomplishing remarkable feats outside of school, we should have records of these achievements displayed publicly in school for more students, staff and parents to appreciate.

We would like to invite all of you very proud parents to email us information about your child’s successes. This could be passing a music exam, performing with a professional company, providing an art/photography piece for a public exhibition, winning trophies and medals or signing with a sports team. The list is endless!

Please email all information (plus a photograph if possible) to your relevant subject teacher from either the Creative Arts or PE faculties. There is no deadline for this information as we realise students are winning prizes and awards every week!

Careers Information – Ms N Phillips, Careers Advisor

There is lots of information being added to our website all the time about open days and opportunities that might be of interest to our students, so don’t forget to take a look!

Parents/carers and students should be aware of the following local Sixth Form Application Deadlines:

- Woodhouse College - 16th January
- Highgate Wood School - 20th January
- Fortismere - 27th January
- Alexandra Park School - 31st January
- Henrietta Barnet School - 1st February by 5pm

[Contact the school](#)

020 8365 4400 office@fortismere.org.uk

Reminders from the Admin Team

Absences/Appointments: please remember to report your child's absence/appointment before 8:35am by calling 020 8365 4429 or email attendance@fortismere.org.uk and copy in your child's Form Tutor.

Lost Property: ideally, label your child's possessions so that if they do get mislaid, they can be returned. Alternatively, don't forget to regularly check Lost Property in both Wings for missing items.

From the Library

We will be starting the Carnegie Shadowing group with our Year 8 students in April. In the meantime, take a look at the books that have been nominated <http://bit.ly/2dFhksp> and see if you've read any. The longlist will be published in February and we're getting excited already!

Our wonderful students have once again written superb book reviews which have been published in the TES. Take a look! <http://bit.ly/2hmgVu5>

If you are collecting used postage stamps, do drop them in for our Hearing Dogs for the Deaf collection.

Recommended Read of the Week

Shades of Dr Who's weeping angels and Mike Revell's *Stonebird* in a wonderful tale of alchemy and adventure by Cathryn Constable – *The White Tower*.

FSA News

Could it be you?

The FSA are looking for a **Quiz Master** to design the next parent quiz and present it on either Saturday 25th February or Saturday 4th March. We have a great template for you to follow to ensure success! We also have a fantastic compere lined up to support you on the night. The event is a chance to relax, meet new parents and most importantly to have fun!

If you feel this is right up your alley please contact: markskirsty@gmail.com



Dates for Diaries

Wednesday 18th January, 19.00 – 21.00, South Wing Conference Room: Planning for our next fundraising events. If you have any ideas or are interested in helping out come along!

Other Ways to Fundraise for the School:

- Donations to the FSA for the school can be given at <https://www.justgiving.com/fortismereschool> – also allowing us to benefit from Gift Aid!
- The Giving Machine – go to www.thegivingmachine.co.uk for more info and to register. Our sign-up code is: 4427.