



# Newsletter for Parents and Carers

Week beginning: 20/02/17 Wk 1

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### **Message from Mrs Helen Glass, Headteacher**

Well, here we are, approaching another half-term! It has been as busy as ever at school since January and so much has been accomplished by students and staff during that time. You can read about some of our recent activities below.

In particular, I'd like to congratulate our PE students – Fortismere is still the top school in Haringey in the sports league tables! Well done to everyone taking part in the wide variety of sports on offer, often practising after school and in their spare time. Then we've got the VEX Robotics competitions for all those budding engineers, the ongoing brilliance of our Mandarin students and the many drama performances that take place throughout the year: there truly is something for everyone. Even if taking part doesn't result in prizes and accolades, I am so proud that we can offer such a wide range of activities to inspire our students.

It was good to see many of you at the Year 12 Parents' Evening on Tuesday. I hope you found the event useful.

We look forward to seeing what the next half-term brings! In the meantime, I hope you all have a relaxing week. See you on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February!

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### **Message from Mr Mark Chapman, Chair of Governors**

In May, three of our positions for Parent Governors are up for renewal. Parent Governors are chosen by you, by election if more than three candidates stand. All parents and carers have a vote. Successful candidates serve a four-year term.

We'll be communicating in a bit more detail very soon, as to the process and what it entails to be a Governor here. Meantime, why not start to consider whether you might be a candidate for the job? Although we're always mindful of having a diverse range of skills and experiences on the Governing Body, by far the most important attributes of successful Governors are a passion for the success of our students, and the time and capacity to share in a broad set of tasks and responsibilities.

My colleagues and I are always available to have a chat if you're thinking of putting yourself forward. Just contact us at [governors@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:governors@fortismere.org.uk). We won't pull any punches; it's a tough job sometimes but highly rewarding, and you'll be making a meaningful contribution to the work of our school.

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### **Message from DC Chappell, Metropolitan Police**

Haringey Police work in partnership with Fortismere School to safeguard and support students within the school environment. There have been a number of reported incidents recently involving Fortismere students and those from nearby schools which police are investigating. Parents and students are reminded that public disorder/assault constitutes a criminal offence. Police are working with schools to identify those involved and ensure appropriate action is taken. We ask for your support at this time and assurance that your child understands the consequences of being involved in such activities.

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## Student Access to Toilet Facilities During the School Day – Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

We wanted to communicate with parents/carers about arrangements for access to toilets during the school day.

There is an expectation that students manage their visits to the toilets by using the facilities during their breaks and at lunchtime. By and large, students should not be accessing the facilities during lesson time unless they have a specified medical condition (which school should be aware of) or in a real emergency. Please note that if either of these situations occur we would want to reiterate that our toilet facilities are accessible all day.

There is a slightly different arrangement for North Wing. The toilets will be locked during lesson time but in the event of an emergency or for students with a medical need students can go to the North Wing Reception and someone will unlock the toilets.

Please be advised that we have arrived at this decision for the safety and welfare of our students and also to ensure that students are where they should be during lesson time: the classroom. It has been evident that some students have been finding reasons to go to the toilets to use their mobile phones during lesson time which is obviously a breach of policy.

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## Requesting Leave of Absence - SLT

A reminder that if you need to request time off during the school term for any reason, you need to complete the Leave of Absence Form in advance. This is available on our [website](#) or paper copies can be collected from either South Wing or North Wing offices.

On completion, please return the form to your Head of College. They will then attach an attendance report for your child to the form and pass it to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will then make a decision and you will be informed by letter of the outcome.

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## Students Late/Returning to School during the Day – Ms Greenwood, Attendance Administrator

Can students be reminded that, if they are late or returning to school after an appointment, they need to come in through South Wing Gate (on Tetherdown) even if their current or next lesson is in North Wing. Thank you.



We have started the Place2Talk self-referral service at Fortismere, offering KS3 students the opportunity to have short lunchtime chats with a trained counsellor about any issues on their mind. On average, about a third of students in Place2Be's schools take advantage of this service every year. Students may use the space to talk about friendship issues, difficulties at home, bullying, exam stress or any other worries.

Place2Talk sessions can be arranged by speaking to Sejal Chad, leaving an appointment slip in one of the Place2Be boxes, or emailing [Sejal.Chad@Place2Be.org.uk](mailto:Sejal.Chad@Place2Be.org.uk). The sessions will usually take place during lunchtimes on:

- Tuesdays – North Wing Meeting Room
- Thursdays – South Wing Meeting Room 1

[Contact the school](#)

020 8365 4400 [office@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:office@fortismere.org.uk)

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## Year 9 Options – Ms Allaway, Assistant Head

The Options Form is now live on our website. Please click on this link, [Year 9 Options Form](#), or go to Learning – KS4 – Options and scroll down for the Options form. The deadline is 23<sup>rd</sup> February so there is still plenty of time to talk to teachers. Please be aware that forms cannot initially be changed once submitted.

Ms Karp and Ms Allaway will then work on grouping and the timetable – please be patient it is a long process! Should any anomalies be seen with the forms students may be called in for a second guidance meeting. Option choices will be made available at the latest in May.

Guidance meetings should all have been completed by half-term. Please inform Ms Allaway if this has not been the case.

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## Music Notes

Can all students who have paid for lessons please check the timetables on the music noticeboard on the first day back for their lesson times, and re check before the day of their lesson. The music administrator Lorna Johnson has now left Fortismere and we are finalising the timetables. All lessons resume the first week back, but students will need to check and re-check the music noticeboard on the ground floor of the Music Block in North Wing, in case there are changes. Times/dates can be written down on the green record cards which should be used as a 'pass' to and from subject lessons, as usual. The record card will also be signed by the instrumental/vocal teacher as confirmation of attendance. If there are any anomalies please email [sogilby@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:sogilby@fortismere.org.uk) for the first week. The new music administrator will be in touch thereafter.

Also, a reminder that instruments should be taken home and not left in the Music Department as there is no insurance for instruments to be left overnight, and they can often block the music corridor if left on the floor. There is of course a chance they could also get accidentally damaged.

Reminder: GCSE Music Practical Exams Year 11 – these take place after half term (2<sup>nd</sup> week back) for solo and ensemble exams 30%.

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## Vex IQ and EDR Robotics – Mr Yakup, Head of Enterprise

Fortismere will be competing during half-term at Highgate School in both the Vex IQ and Vex EDR Robotics regional event over two days. Having secured places at the UK National finals already for both Vex IQ and Vex EDR, the teams will be eager to ensure all our remaining teams also secure places in the Nationals. The competition at Highgate will be very exciting, with over 33 teams taking part in Vex IQ and 26 in VRC, including 6 teams from China!

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## Year 12 Drama and Theatre Studies Exam Performance Evening – Ms Overs, Head of Drama

This is taking place on Tuesday 28th February at 6pm in North Wing Hall. Some performances may contain adult themes and are recommended for Year 11 and upwards. Tickets are £4 and are non-refundable - available on ParentMail now!

## Visits from Drama Professionals – Ms Overs

The Drama Department have been really busy for the last fortnight reaching out to the professional industry and giving our students an opportunity to learn from very experienced practitioners. Billy Barrett, artistic director of award-winning Breach Theatre Company, came into school to work with our Year 12 Drama students. Billy attended Fortismere, leaving in 2010 and after studying Theatre Studies at Warwick University went on to win several awards and publish work. His first published play *The Beanfield* is being studied and performed by our Year 12 students on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February in the North Wing Hall.

Hamish Pirie, Associate Director at The Royal Court came in also to work with Year 12 students and his workshop on the recent Royal Court play *The Sewing Group* was invaluable. A lucky group of Year 8 students were doing some research and development with renowned playwright Ella Hickson and musician from band, Noah and the Whale, Charlie Fink. They were advising on character development and their opinion of musicals in order to help Ella and Charlie write a brand new musical based on a famous children's book.

If any parents or member of our community feel that our students could benefit from your advice working within the industry the Drama Department would love to host a visit. Please do get in touch with me at [lovers@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:lovers@fortismere.org.uk)

## Sporting Success – Mr Cox, Head of PE

Congratulations to the U13 boys' Handball Team (pictured) who have just qualified for the London Finals after winning the Haringey and North London qualifying rounds. They will now play at the Copperbox on 24<sup>th</sup> March, home to England Handball and the venue of the 2012 Olympic Handball Finals!



Also, congratulations to the U13 boys', U13 girls' and U15 girls' Indoor Cricket Teams who have *all* won the Haringey and North London competitions and have progressed through to the next round of the London Finals!

Fantastic effort, performance and achievement from everyone. It means that Fortismere is still the top school in Haringey for sport, which is great! Well done!

## Mandarin Competition Winners! – Mr Rainey, Head of Modern Languages

Many congratulations to our five students who recently came first in the HSBC/British Council National Mandarin Speaking Competition! They've won themselves a trip to China at Easter!

Following a number of heats across the country, 11 schools were selected to take part in the final of this prestigious competition, sponsored by HSBC. Taking place at the British Museum, and introduced by Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for Education (who remembered us from the 2015 visit of Madam Peng), the competition involved the students in a variety of tasks. The grand finale was the 'Judge Bao' group performance, about Bao Zhen (999-1062), a famous judge from the Song Dynasty. Students presented a routine about him which included singing and martial art, and it won them the



[Contact the school](#)

category!

The five students were: Hector Farr, Esme Whelan, Maya Sutton-Patel, Lulu Betteridge and Oryna Goichuk.

It was a fantastic event and the students were wonderful. Coming first was a huge achievement and we hope they enjoy their trip to China! Thanks also to Ms Huang and Ms Li for guiding the students to success.

### **SEX FM Update – Ms Arrowsmith, Head of SPE**

Many thanks to the Year 9s who were well behaved and enthusiastic during the SEX FM drama productions on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February. A special thanks to those students who bravely participated in the forum aspect of this production.

This is also a reminder that we will be covering further aspects of Sex and Relationship Education after half-term in Wellbeing and RS lessons.

### **Fair Funding for Schools Campaign**

There will be a meeting about this at Coleridge Primary School on Tuesday 21st February – everyone welcome. Please see attached flyer for more details. You can also find out more about the Campaign on our [website](#).

### **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!

### **Reminders from the Admin Team**

**Student 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](mailto: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.

**Access to Site:** to support our Safeguarding, parents/carers/visitors will not be allowed onto the school site unless they have an appointment about which the office has been informed in advance.

## From the Library

Harry Potter Night on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February was once again a huge success; everyone who came (professors, students and muggles alike) had a wonderful time and went home full of good food and magical thoughts. To see a report of what we did, take a look at the school website under News and Events or under the Library tab. Mischief managed.

After working on “flash fiction” creative writing with a group of Y9s and Y10s on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February, our Patron of Reading SF Said told us that he had never experienced such phenomenal writing from students before. To quote his much liked and retweeted tweet, “I am constantly inspired by the creativity of young people. These (Fortismere School) kids wrote such INCREDIBLE stories today!” A Year 8 class also gave us some brilliant work. As usual, this will all be bound into a book to keep in the library for all to see and admire for posterity. And SF will be publishing some of the stories on his blog shortly – watch this space.

Competition time for our poets! 140 Characters of Slow – take a look at this link <http://bit.ly/2kNBriM> Well, you’ve got nothing better to do over half term than write poetry and read...!

A little reminder that stationery can be purchased from the library at cost price, including filled pencil cases for £3. And we also sell tissues for 10p a pack.

## Recommended Read of the Week

As it’s coming up to Valentine’s Day, the media has been stuffed with lots of romantic suggestions for everything from food to books. So here’s a totally non-romantic recommendation that will be loved by boys and girls: *Mind the Gap* by Phil Earle. It’s gritty, funny, sad and full of hope and, as it’s published by Barrington Stoke, accessible to readers of all abilities.

## FSA News

It’s always welcome news to hear how the money raised by the FSA helps create wonderful memories for our students. The recent Harry Potter Night was one such activity and we are delighted to hear that it was a great success! Do look on the website to read all about it.

## Quiz Night: Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March Doors from 6.30pm in North Wing Hall (Creighton Avenue)

Get your tickets for this brilliant event before half-term and tick another task off your to do list! Don’t take our word for it about Pauline, our host for the night: here are some of the reasons why we know she’s going to make the Quiz a night to remember:

*"I've been standing up since...well, a long time ago. Now doing it in front of audiences."*

FINALIST Colchester New Comedian of the Year 2016  
SEMI-FINALIST Leicester Square New Comedian of the Year 2016  
QUARTER-FINALIST Amused Moose Awards 2016  
SEMI-FINALIST Funny Women Awards 2015

*"Funny Women is always seeking out new talent like Pauline Eyre. She excels as a stand-up and we have recently encouraged her to MC. The result is that this role plays to Pauline's natural level of warmth and comic ability. She instinctively engages with the audience and creates an environment that is welcoming and fun for them and the other performers. A true skill."* Lynne Parker, Founder and CEO, Funny Women

*"Hilarious jokes, impossible poses from this original act" Heavenly Comedy*

Tickets are £10 per person to make up teams of 8-10 people. Smaller groups will be arranged to make up a full team. There will be a bar but bring food to share with your team. The event is kindly sponsored by Sola Kitchens.

Tickets – [www.fsaevents.moonfruit.com](http://www.fsaevents.moonfruit.com)

We are going to have an auction/raffle if you have anything to contribute – please contact: [markskirsty@gmail.com](mailto:markskirsty@gmail.com)

We hope to see you there!

**fortismere**  
**School Association**  
charity number: 801227

sponsored by SOLA\*KITCHENS

# Quiz Night

Designed and hosted by  
Pauline Eyre, "Fabulous, funny  
and brilliant!" Fitzroy Club

Saturday 4th March  
Doors 6.30 for 7pm prompt start

North Wing Hall, Creighton Avenue Entrance.  
Tickets £10 per person to make up teams of 8-10 people.  
Smaller groups will be arranged to make up a full team.  
Licensed bar. Bring food to share but please don't bring your own alcoholic drinks.  
Tickets online from [www.fsaevents.moonfruit.com](http://www.fsaevents.moonfruit.com)



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**FULHAM**  
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020 3004 0899

[www.solakitchens.com](http://www.solakitchens.com)

## Date for the Diary:

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 19.00 – 21.00: Planning for our next fundraising events. If you have any ideas or are interested in helping out come along to South Wing Conference Room.