



## Newsletter for Parents and Carers

Week beginning 18/04/17 Wk 1

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## Message from Mrs Helen Glass, Headteacher

This week we waved off some of our Sixth Formers as they headed to China for a school trip. We look forward to hearing all about their stay in Xi'an. As you will read below, we've recently welcomed back another group from a Classics trip to Athens – as you will see from the picture, they enjoyed weather to make us all jealous as well as a fascinating time exploring ancient sites. It's enough to put one in a holiday mood!

Yesterday afternoon, I joined in the retirement celebrations for a very important member of our wider school community; Veronica Held, Head Teacher of Blanche Nevile. Veronica is retiring at the end of this term after nine years with the school and the messages of support, gratitude and love expressed by her students, staff and governors were truly moving. I will miss Veronica very much as she has become a good friend as well as a colleague Head over the years and we have shared many discussions over cups of coffee when we have popped in to visit each other. Her dedication and passion have shone through over the years and whilst she will be sorely missed, it is undoubtedly true that she leaves Blanche Nevile in a very good place and well set to go on to achieve even greater success in the future which is absolutely testament to her leadership.

Last night I also had the very great pleasure of attending the GCSE Drama exam performances. They were superb and once again I found myself in awe of our students' talent and the extremely high quality of teaching that led to such accomplished performances. I cannot remember laughing as much as I did whilst watching 'The play that goes wrong.' Thank you to all of the performers and staff for a wonderful week of performances.

I hope you all have a lovely Easter break lined up. When we return (at 8.35am on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April), we'll be entering exam season proper so I hope all students have a chance to relax over the next couple of weeks after another term of very hard work.

Happy Easter!

## Message from Mark Chapman, Chair of Governors and Helen Glass, Headteacher

Dear parents and carers

We write with an update on the closure of toilets during lessons. We've received a number of communications from you on this topic; thank you for all your feedback thus far.

We believe that students should be in class during lesson times and that is fundamental. It is also the case that whilst toilets are supervised during break and lunchtimes by duty teams, this is not possible during lessons when the significant majority of staff are teaching classes. The decision to close the toilets was based on the following:

- Specific safeguarding concerns
- Serious vandalism which resulted in considerable damage and associated cost of repair
- Offensive graffiti written about fellow students
- Use of mobile phones

Students who require access to toilets for particular medical reasons are issued with passes and we recognise that for some of our girls, that is necessary if they are having to deal with menstruation that is particularly problematic. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to inform the school of any medical needs so that students are spared any embarrassment they may feel if having to request passes themselves and we understand that youngsters can feel highly self-conscious about a range of issues they

find themselves dealing with. One of several positive outcomes from this change in arrangements has been that we have been made aware of a number of students whose needs had not been flagged up before.

As with any change, we will be reviewing this particular approach and will also be exploring alternatives that can achieve the key goals of:

- Maximising time in class for all students
- Eradicating the possibility of behaviour that is unsafe and/or antisocial
- Minimising the opportunities for students to breach the mobile phone policy

In the Summer term, we will be conducting a full review of this measure. To that end we will be circulating a survey and would value your input to that so that we can incorporate your suggestions in the final agreed procedure for the next academic year. We'll also be suggesting that this topic is again discussed at the Summer term Parent Forum.

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### **Message from Ms Wendy Sloane, Link Governor for Communications**

Just a reminder that the school has a number of published policies concerning social issues, including a Drugs Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Sex and Relationship Education Policy. If you are interested in reading about any of these policies, or more, please see the school [website](#).

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### **Parent Governor Vacancies – Ms Sam Murray, Clerk to Governors**

We recently notified parents and carers of three vacancies on the governing body for parent governors. Mark Chapman and Cara Williams have been re-appointed as parent governors for a four year term of office. There is still one remaining vacancy which will be re-advertised at the start of the autumn term.

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### **Anti-Bullying Policy Update – Ms Judge, Deputy Head**

Please be advised that our anti-bullying policy has been revised and is now on our website. We would like to thank the students (particularly our student leaders) and staff who took part in our anti-bullying policy review. Our Year 11 student leaders have been working on a student friendly version of this policy which they will be launching through assemblies early next term. Please click [here](#) to view the policy.

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### **Student Wellbeing Events for Parents/Carers – Ms Judge and the Wellbeing Department**

We would like to thank all the parents/carers of students in Key Stage 3 who joined us on Tuesday evening in the library to engage with us and with Safer London who delivered a brilliant interactive session on internet safety. We really enjoyed the opportunity to engage in such rich discussion on such a vitally important topic. We are looking forward to more events like this in the coming months and wanted to notify you of our upcoming workshops:



**Mental Health Awareness Evening, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May (times and location to be confirmed)**

We have invited a speaker, Richard Moore, a trainer for the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust to lead a discussion on how young people can be supported when struggling with such issues and how parents/carers can identify warning signs. Please see more information about the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust by clicking [here](#).

**Student Wellbeing Evening, Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June (times and location to be confirmed)**

We will be welcoming Allison Havey & Deana Puccio, local mums and authors of what the Independent Online called one of the Top 10 Parent Books of 2016: *Sex, Likes & Social Media, Talking To Our Teens In The Digital Age*. Offering practical tips and guidance, they will be speaking about how to help our children negotiate a very complex world growing up as digital natives. They will address the laws on sexual assault, consent, how hard core pornography is affecting relationships and expectations, sexting, alcohol, and personal safety when it comes to dating, parties, and travelling on public transport. We hope that you can join us.

We warmly invite parents and carers who have children in all year groups to join us on these evenings. Further information on times, locations and how to book on to these events will be available after the Easter Break.

**Go4Schools Student Logins – Ms Karp, Assistant Head**

After Easter all student logins for Go4Schools will change to: **schoolusername@fortismere.school**

This is instead of: **schoolusername@students.fortismere.org.uk**

**Year 10 Mocks – Mrs Fineberg, Assistant Head**

Please note that a Guidance Document for Year 10 Mocks revision has been sent home via ParentMail to all Year 10 Parents/Carers. Year 10 students are receiving ongoing guidance in lessons in preparation for their Mocks and reinforcement/support for revision at home is welcome. Kindly share the document with your son(s)/daughter(s). Have good Easter break.

**Reminder: Year 11 Hoodies and Prom Tickets – Ms Allaway, Assistant Head**

Don't forget that the Year 11 students' last formal school day is Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May. Prom Tickets are £24 and can be bought via ParentMail. Leavers' Hoodies are £14.95 and can be purchased via this link:

<https://www.schoolleaverscompany.co.uk/shops/SL35209>

In order to secure the Hoodies, please note that monies need to be in by 4<sup>th</sup> April. So that we can secure the Prom venue, monies need to be in by 21<sup>st</sup> April.

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### **Catherine West Summer School – Mr A Johnson, Teacher of History & Politics**

The school has been invited to send a member of the Sixth Form to shadow the local MP Catherine West for a week in July. The objective will be to learn about the role of politics within the context of civil society.

More will be announced soon, so watch this space!

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### **Vex Robotics UK National Finals – Mr Yakup, Head of Enterprise**

I would like to congratulate Year 11s Robbie Buxton, Sam Poirier, Josh Hudson, Felix Black, Jim Tomlin, Year 12s Amira Ibrahim, JJ Style, Joey Gold, and Year 13 Francisco Garcia, for their remarkable achievement and the dedication to Vex Robotics. The students joined me in the school minibus to Birmingham on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March and again on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March leaving at 6am each morning from Fortismere, travelling to Birmingham NEC. The days were long but extremely exciting!

After day one Fortismere were ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> place out of 40 teams (a super achievement for our first UK National Final). On the second day we had an unfortunate glitch and an alliance partner that seemed to malfunction bringing our overall ranking down to 6<sup>th</sup> place after a total of 130 qualification tournament matches. This meant unless the top rank teams (1-5) picked us for the knock out stages, we would have to play against them. The top ranking teams did not choose us and so we were left to choose an alliance partner from rank 7 down to 40. The team chose to ally with Henrietta Barnet Girls (rank 7) and Grieg City Academy (rank 27). We made it through the first knock out stage but only as far as the quarter finals. We also just missed out on 1<sup>st</sup> place for the UK National Final skills place. Overall, the students were brilliant team players, great ambassadors for the school and now have a great deal more experience for next season!

Any new students interested in taking part in Vex Robotics please contact Mr Yakup.

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### **Middlesex Futsal Finals – Ms Vangucci, Teacher of PE**

Congratulations to Esther Morgan, Poppy Dawes, Lirian Silva Santos, Maya Sutton Patel and Jada Puliga they represented Fortismere at the Middlesex Futsal Finals on Friday. They played brilliantly only losing the title on goal difference by 2 goals!

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### Classics and Philosophy Trip to Athens – Mr Strathdene

We had a fantastic trip to Athens recently. The students were wonderful, as was the weather. It was a joint trip with Alexandra Park School which was a real success: it meant it was cheaper because there were more of us but, more importantly, it was great for the students to spend time with those studying their subject in another school.



*Group picture in front of the Acropolis*

### Chemistry Champions – Dr Shah, Teacher of Chemistry

Leonardo Cherin, Luke Ellington, Cecilia Godinho-Montagnier and Ra'eesah Mahmood from Year 8 recently represented Fortismere at the Salters' Chemistry Challenge at University College London. They competed against 20 other teams and came second in the UCL Challenge, winning a chemistry modelling set for the school! This is an amazing achievement and we are really proud of our chemistry champions!



### Voluntary Contributions Update – Ms Keogh, Business Manager

As you will be aware, last term we asked parents/carers to consider making a voluntary contribution to complement the school's budget which is under significant pressure from increased costs and the National Funding Formula. You will have received a letter about this, via ParentMail, in January and it is available on our [website](#), in case any parent/carer wishes to make a donation.

## Careers Information – Ms 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! In particular, you might be interested in the following:

- **Coca Cola Engineering Apprenticeship** – Open Day on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April
- **Tech City College STEM Open Evening** on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April
- **Apprenticeships and courses at CONEL College**

Full details of these events, and more, can be found on our [website](#).

## Reminders from the Admin Team

**Student Absences/Appointment:** please remember to report your child's absence due to sickness 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. (Please note that absence known in advance should be made via the Leave of Absence request form, available on our [website](#)).

**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

Edie Fassnidge was kayaking when the Boxing Day tsunami of 2004 hit. Her mother died, her sister was never found and Edie suffered terrible injuries. She came to Fortismere library on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March and spoke to some classes from Year 8 and Year 9. She was articulate and down to earth and responded with absolute candour to the thoughtful questions she was asked by the students. Her beautiful and simply illustrated book *Rinse, Spin, Repeat: A Graphic Memoir of Loss and Survival* is now available in the school library. It's quite outstanding.



It's been a busy few weeks with our book clubs, but what a wonderful way to spend lunchtime...

- 1) We have 25 reviews on our Carnegie Shadowing site already; our Year 8 shadowers are really getting into the shortlist. Please look at our group page which changes every week <http://bit.ly/1Qp8ckW>.
- 2) Members of the (Year 7) Haringey Children's Book Award group are getting excited about their forthcoming trip to Heartlands High School for the Award ceremony in April; we'll be spending the day there, participating in workshops and meeting students from other schools around the borough. And, of course, all the shortlisted authors plus ones that turn up just because it's an amazing day!

- 3) Mr Stewart from the history department has now sent off all the reviews written by our Young Quills group. These will be used by the Historical Association to judge the best historical fiction novel written for young people.
- 4) Our students are taking the Reading Champions competition very seriously, searching the library for books on the reading list. We'll be starting the presentations in May when every Year 7 student will be championing their favourite book.



### Recommended Reads of the Week

After the fascinating and informative Safer London talk to our parents on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March, a couple of books that touch on the pros and cons of social media. *The Last Leaves Falling* by Fox Benwell actually tells a beautiful tale of friendship through message boards, emojis, text messages and letters. Bali Rai's *Web of Darkness*, as the name implies, dwells on the darker side of social media.

### FSA News

#### Comedy Night – Harry Hill – TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Let us entertain you with another brilliant line-up at Fortismere's Comedy Evening! This year we will be at The Palace Suite, Ally Pally on Thursday 4th May. Put the date in your diary!

Now the really exciting bit: we are over the moon to announce that the wonderful Harry Hill will be headlining the evening!! And the good news doesn't stop there...

Mark Maier will be our MC and our fantastic line up will include Bob Mills, Raymond & Mr Timpkins & Pauline Eyre.

Doors will open at 7pm - there will be a bar to get you into the mood and the show will start at 8pm.


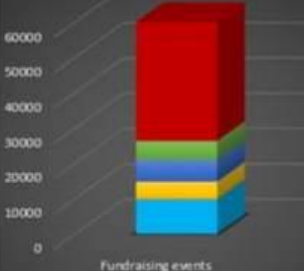


Tickets are £25 and can be bought from [www.fsaevents.moonfruit.com](http://www.fsaevents.moonfruit.com)

All profits will go towards our fundraising for the school.

Book early to avoid disappointment!





 <p><b>GREASE</b> sing along!</p> <p>Fortismere School Association</p> <p><b>is the word</b> <b>GREASE OUTDOOR MOVIE NIGHT</b> Sat 22nd of April, on Fortismere School Field Patron with every ticket! Hot chocolate, sweets and food stalls. Bring your own chairs, blankets, etc. (please leave to be on the night). Presents with the best dressed group and song. ENTRANCE £7 on the gate. Free for under 15s. £5 in advance from the library and www.fsaevents.moonfruit.com</p> <p><b>Auto</b> www.stakaluk.co.uk</p>	<p><b>Grease Movie Night</b> Sales still worryingly slow – please buy your tickets! We desperately need a <b>compere</b> at the start of the event for the karaoke – contact: <a href="mailto:markskirsty@gmail.com">markskirsty@gmail.com</a></p>	<p>Fundraising figures Sep – March 2017</p>  <p>60000 50000 40000 30000 20000 10000 0</p> <p>Fundraising events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Still to fund raise</li> <li>Donations YTD</li> <li>Phil the bag</li> <li>Year 7 Parent's Evening</li> <li>Quiz Night</li> <li>Christmas Fair</li> <li>Fireworks</li> </ul>	<p><b>Financials</b> 2017 target £60k. Raised to date £26k. With parental support for Movie Night, Comedy Night and Fortitude this target can be achieved!!!</p>
 <p><b>FORTISMERE FOOD MARKET</b> Opening Sunday 19th March 2017</p> <p>EVERY SUNDAY <b>11 - 3</b> Fortismere Secondary School, Tetherdown Road, Muswell Hill, N10</p>	<p><b>Food Market</b> See you there this Sunday!</p>	 <p><b>Muswell Hill Primary School</b> <b>CHILDREN'S JUMBLE &amp; BIKE SALE</b> SATURDAY 22 APRIL 10 - 4 pm Bicycle donation collection Donations only</p>	<p><b>Muswell Hill Primary</b> are having a jumble and bike sale on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April. If you have a bike to donate, esp. bigger bikes, can you please contact: <a href="mailto:jamesandcamilla@yahoo.co.uk">jamesandcamilla@yahoo.co.uk</a></p>

For more information go to the FSA website – [www.fortismereschoolassociation.com](http://www.fortismereschoolassociation.com)