



# Newsletter for Parents and Carers

Week beginning: 21/11/16 Wk 1

## Contents:

[Message from Mrs Helen Glass](#)

[Parent Forum: Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December](#)

[Statement on Voluntary Contributions](#)

[Year 10 Options](#)

[Fortismere Team's Bank of England Survey](#)

[Fortismere Christmas Concert: Tues 13 & Weds 14 December 2016, 7.30pm](#)

[Chess Club](#)

[Fortismere Robotics](#)

[Ephesus College Fundraising](#)

[Reminders from the Admin Team](#)

[Careers Information](#)

[From the Library](#)

[FSA News](#)

## Message from Mrs Helen Glass, Headteacher

This week, we have been involved in the launch of the Department for Education's new Mandarin Excellence Programme. The MEP is a new intensive language programme, funded by the Department for Education, which will see at least 5,000 school pupils in England on track to fluency in Mandarin Chinese by 2020. Participating schools, of which we are one of the first – with support from UCL Institute of Education and the British Council – are at the forefront of delivering the programme. By working towards achieving a very high level of Mandarin Chinese, students on the programme are being given an unprecedented opportunity in terms of language provision in schools in England. In being the most widely spoken language in the world, Mandarin Chinese is one of the most important languages for the UK's future – young people on the programme will be getting a head start in life by mastering this vital skill at an early stage, and I am delighted that we can offer our students the chance to take part.

Also this week, staff and students spent some time collectively thinking about visual literacy, ie the way we interpret meaning from images. Led by Mr Holden in the Art Department, we are working on a school-wide theme of the recent Paralympics. Individual class groups are also going to improve the displays in their classrooms. By taking a more consistent approach to our displays, we aim to reflect the quality of the wide range of activities taking place in school.

Finally, huge congratulations to the VEX Robotics teams who performed so brilliantly this week and are through to the National Final of this prestigious competition! Thanks to our wonderful FSA for helping to fund this amazing opportunity. You can read more about it below.

It's hard to believe that there are only four more weeks of term before the Christmas holidays; time is flying by! Wishing you all a relaxing weekend.

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## Parent Forum: Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm, South Wing Hall – Mrs W Sloane, Parent-Governor

The first meeting of the Parent Forum will be on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm in the South Wing Hall.

The Forum is an initiative of the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team. Its aim is to seek and take account of parents'/carers' views, giving you a greater sense of involvement in the life of the school.

Please note that the Forum is not the place to raise issues about individual teachers or students. There is also a process on the school's website for making and handling complaints.

The Governing Body has also decided to reintroduce Governors' surgeries, where individual parents/carers can raise issues of a more personal nature. More information about these will be circulated soon.

We look forward to seeing you at the first Forum.

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### Statement on Voluntary Contributions – Ms Keogh, Business Manager

Please find attached a copy of the letter that was sent to all parents/carers on 1<sup>st</sup> November, regarding voluntary contributions.

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### Year 10 Options – Ms Allaway, Assistant Head

Parents and students are still requesting to swap /drop options. I am afraid we cannot facilitate any more requests.

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### Fortismere Team's Bank of England Survey – Mr Renner, Head of Business Studies & Economics

Fortismere's Shadow Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee team of 6 students would be very grateful if you would spare a few moments to complete a questionnaire on your expectations about inflation and the economy in 2016. The questionnaire link is:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LKYQ3YZ>

Our students would like to conduct [anonymously] a survey of parents, students and teachers to find out what their expectations are of inflation and on the economy in 2017.

We would be very grateful if you would **complete this by November 25**. Bank of England Target 2.0 Competition marks are awarded for primary research and we know this is an area we can work on before the Regional Heat. We need a lot of responses, to make the data more valid. Thanks in advance for your help.

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### Fortismere Christmas Concert: Tues 13 & Weds 14 December 2016, 7.30pm – Ms Ogilby, Head of Music

- Rehearsals continue each week – students must now be attending regularly to participate
  - Auditions began this week – additional dates will be offered next Tuesday lunchtime and Wednesday lunchtime
  - Year 11 students who wish to participate should at least email/speak to music staff to ensure we are aware of their involvement
  - Still possible to JOIN groups next week!!! (last chance)
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## Chess Club – Mr Renner

Meetings occur Thursday/Friday in 13T1 (or outside South Wing Reception if not wet / too cold).

In the World Chess Championship in New York, the score is 2.5-2.5 after 5 draws in the match of 12 games. World Champion Carlsen has been most surprised by the resilience (and stamina) of the challenger, Karjakin. Games 3 and 4 lasted 7+ hours. After Game 5, Carlsen looked tired and agitated – could the underdog win?

<https://worldchess.com/nyc2016/>



Note: There are no longer chess adjournments after move 40 (as occurred in the 5 famous matches of Karpov vs Kasparov from 1984 to 1990) due to the computer era. Each game nowadays must be concluded on the day and helps to explain why only 12 games are played, compared with the usual 24 games played previously (or the record 48 games played in 1984/85).

## Fortismere Robotics – Mr Yakup, Head of Enterprise Faculty

Three Fortismere Robotics teams were entered on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at the East Barnet Vex Regionals. Two teams entered for VEX IQ (Key Stage 3) and one team entered for the first time in VEX EDR (Key Stages 4 and 5).

It was a very long day and it was well worth it – two Fortismere teams out of the three gained places to the UK National final. What was really impressive was the VEX EDR team's game play and strategy - it was outstanding – remodifying the robot and reprogramming on the fly to play to our strength in an alliance with an East Barnet team to beat last year's National Champions (The John Warner School) was a wonderful achievement! As it was our first time, we were out resourced by all the other teams and inexperienced, but our EDR team showed true resilience in the face of adversity and were exceptional.

Vex IQ winners were Fortismere and East Barnet  
Vex EDR winners were Fortismere and East Barnet



The atmosphere between the schools, East Barnet, The John Warner School, Henrietta Barnet, and Grieg City, in sharing each other's experiences and knowledge between them, made the day very welcoming, friendly, productive and collegial.

The FSA funding and support has been an essential element in resourcing and encouraging the students (and myself) to participate in one of the most prestigious Robotics competitions in the world – and now with the taste of success, the students have their sights set on the World final.

[Contact the school](#)

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

If you would like more information or would like to sponsor the Robotics teams or know of any businesses or organisations that would like to sponsor t-shirts or advertise on the robots themselves please contact Mr Yakup [myakup@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:myakup@fortismere.org.uk)

### Ephesus College Fundraising – Ms Mangan, Acting Head of Ephesus

Congratulations to Ephesus ambassadors who raised over £110 in 10 minutes selling doughnuts for our college charity, Noah's Ark!

### 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

**Absences:** please remember to report your child's absence before 8:35am by calling 020 8365 4429 or email [attendance@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:attendance@fortismere.org.uk)

**Appointments:** please remember to send an email to [office@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:office@fortismere.org.uk) to report your child's appointments, and copy in their Tutor (Doctors, Dentist etc....)

**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

Fortismere's Patron of Reading, SF Said spent the afternoon of Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November with some of our Year 8 students. He met them all last year as Year 7s, when they concentrated on reading (culminating in the wonderful Reading Champions evening in June). This year he is working on their creative writing skills. Each class had a short time to write, non-stop, something they would like to read. SF talked about his own efforts to re-draft (and re-draft, and re-draft...) which the students then did. Year 8s produced some imaginative "flash fiction", some of which SF will be publishing on his blog (watch this space for the link). It wouldn't be an SF visit if he didn't mention the importance of reading! As he says, a writer is just a reader who has taken the next step to creativity!



Baileys Prize nominated author Jemma Wayne told me that her adult sessions usually only last 20 minutes, so when she talked on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November to 70 Year 12 students for nearly two hours she said she was amazed and impressed by the way they listened so intently. After studying Social and Political Sciences at Cambridge, Jemma became a journalist and she gave the students lots of hints and tips about university life and the world of work. In her latest novel, *Chains of Sand*, she explores the suffering on both sides of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, feminism, anti-Semitic feelings in England and issues of personal and national identity. These are huge issues which she discussed with her audience as well as reading

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some thought-provoking and occasionally harrowing scenes from the book. An interesting, moving and enriching visit for our 6<sup>th</sup> formers.

Don't forget that next meeting of CoverUp (our parent/staff reading group) is next Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November, 7pm in the library. We're discussing *Chains of Sand* by Jemma Wayne! It was great to welcome several members of the group to meet Jemma so we are expecting some added insight... If you haven't read it or haven't finished it, come anyway as we always end up having a general bookish chat (and we do still have some copies of the book for sale at a reduced price if you are inspired to read it after the discussion). New members always very welcome.



Exam time – do remind your offspring that we have all the stationery they need, including clear pencil cases, at cost price in the library. Filled pencil cases with everything in - 12 items - are an amazing £3! (And calculators £6.50. And packets of tissues 10p).

Film of the Week in our film corner next week is *The Producers*.

### Recommended Reads of the Week

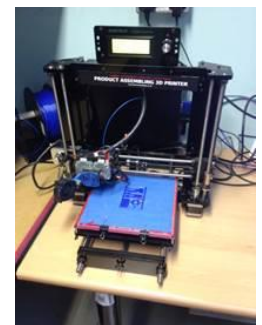
Will I be the first to mention the C word? Please don't judge me... There are some great Christmas books out at the moment. Matt Haig has just launched *The Girl Who Saved Christmas*, a beautifully illustrated book (Chris Mould) and a delightful story – a follow up to *The Boy Called Christmas*. Both are suitable for younger readers. *I'll Be Home For Christmas* is a book of short stories by some phenomenal YA authors, including Benjamin Zephaniah, Marcus Sedgwick and our own Sita Brahmachari. At least £1 from every copy sold goes to the charity Crisis; older readers this time. All Recommended Reads are available to borrow from the library!

### FSA News

#### Bids Allocation

As much as we'd have loved to have given each department the amount they requested, it was of course never going to be possible! With the cooperation of different departments we managed to get the total requested amount down to £94k, we then had £64k to allocate to the different bids. The decision-making process is not an easy one and we thank the people who provided their opinions before and, of course, those who turned up on the evening. The bids allocation breakdown can be found [here](#)

This week Mr Liggett sent us this photo of the 3D printers he bought with last year's bid allocation for the Design & Technology Department.



#### Christmas Fair

We are now getting excited about the Christmas fair! You are going to be able to have lunch, shop for all your Christmas Gifts and not have to cook dinner on the 11<sup>th</sup> with all the food you'll be able to buy! A reminder that the stalls are £35. If you are interested in taking a stall, please email: [markskirsty@gmail.com](mailto:markskirsty@gmail.com)

A teaser of some of the stalls who will be there on the day – each image represents a different stall:

[Contact the school](#)

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



We are, however, still not finding it easy to get some entertainment so if you know of any orchestra/choir/entertainer who would like to perform at the fair please email:

philippastonebridge@hotmail.com

A reminder on how to win Stella & Dot vouchers at the Christmas fair:

**stella & dot**

**A chance to win some gorgeous jewels & accessories by style icons Stella & Dot!**  
 How ? Simply shop the Fortismere Xmas Market link BEFORE Sunday 11 December: <http://www.stelladot.co.uk/ts/4odpn1> OR shop with our Stella & Dot stylist Amanda Allen on the day of the Christmas market.... at her sparkly pop-up shop!

**The prize pool!**

- Once total purchases on the Fortismere link reach £300, one lucky winner will earn a £30 Stella & Dot gift voucher PLUS an option to purchase any two items at 40% off. OR....
- Reach £500 total purchases, two lucky winners will earn each a £40 Stella & Dot gift voucher PLUS an option to purchase one item each at 40% off OR
- Reach £650 total purchases, two lucky winners will earn each a £50 Stella & Dot gift voucher PLUS an option to purchase one item each at 40% off OR
- Reach £800 total purchases, three lucky winners will earn each a £50 Stella & Dot gift voucher PLUS an option to purchase one item each at 40% off.

**One entry in the prize draw for each individual transaction. Transactions over £50 receive 2 entries in the draw.**  
**You'll also be able to shop top selling items at 50% off, once your total purchases reach £50. All details on the link: <http://www.stelladot.co.uk/ts/4odpn1>**

**Dates for Diaries:**

- Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> Nov, 19.00 – 21.00: Continued Christmas Fair planning – South Wing Conference Room
- Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> Dec, 19.00 – 21.00: Final preparations for the Christmas Fair - South Wing Conference Room
- Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> Dec, 12.00 – 16.00: **Christmas Fair** – North Wing Hall!!!

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P.S. Don't forget donations to the FSA for the school can also be given at <https://www.justgiving.com/fortismereschool> – also allowing us to benefit from Gift Aid!

Another easy way you can help raise money for the school is by using **The Giving Machine** – a simple and effective option when you shop online. More information on how to sign up [here](#)



**Superpower your shopping**

Raise free donations for  
**FORTISMERE**

every time you shop online  
Use our unique sign-up code  
**4427**

John Lewis amazon ebay Sainsbury's

The image is a promotional graphic for 'The Giving Machine'. On the left, a young boy is dressed as a superhero, wearing a red cape and a mask with large, round lenses. He is wearing a blue and white striped shirt. To the right of the boy, the text reads: 'The Giving Machine' logo at the top left, followed by 'Superpower your shopping' in orange. Below that, it says 'Raise free donations for FORTISMERE' with 'FORTISMERE' underlined. Then 'every time you shop online' and 'Use our unique sign-up code 4427' with '4427' underlined. At the bottom, it lists partner retailers: 'John Lewis amazon ebay Sainsbury's'.