



**Welcome booklet for parents /
carers of children joining us in
September 2016.**

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fortismere

July 2015

Dear parents/carers

A very warm welcome to you and your son/daughter, as you begin on this new and exciting journey! I am delighted that you have chosen Fortismere and hope that the transition project has made the change from primary to secondary school, far easier and less daunting. We have enjoyed meeting and getting to know our newest 'additions' and they have made a great start to their time at Fortismere.

As a school, we place great emphasis on knowing the individual child and personalising the school experience as much as possible, be that through additional support and interventions as required. What we know and understand is that a 'one size fits all' model is not right for our students, your children, and we are excited by the challenge of creating a truly 21st century school. I hope that you will notice changes in the coming year as we re-focus on the quality, purpose and aesthetics of our learning environment. Again, this is something that is very important to us at Fortismere as every part of the school should be a learning space with displays that stimulate and don't simply 'hide the cracks'!

Behaviour in terms of the individual but also, critically, towards one another has a high priority at Fortismere and with our behaviour policy BFL (Behaviour **For** Learning), we make the direct link between behaviours that support and behaviours that detract from learning. Put simply, the former are modelled and nurtured and the latter result in sanctions which enable students to understand that for every action, there is a consequence.

I look forward to meeting you in the coming years and wish you and your son/daughter a very happy and successful start to this shared journey!

Best wishes

Helen Glass
Headteacher

Vision Statement

“Fortismere will be an outstanding, popular and successful school. It will win hearts and minds through adding value to its students and staff, playing a key role in its wider community and leading innovative practice that impacts nationally and internationally. All staff from both teaching and non-teaching teams will share this vision and be committed to a dynamic learning environment which results in significant and measurable year on year improvement in all key stages. Fortismere will have an active mind, a finger on the pulse and a big heart.”

Address:	South Wing & Sixth Form	Tetherdown, Muswell Hill, London, N10 1NE
	North Wing	Creighton Avenue, Muswell Hill, London, N10 1NS
Telephone:		020 8365 4400 (South Wing) 020 8829 4300 (North Wing)
Fax:		020 8444 7822 (South Wing) 020 8883 5583 (North Wing)
E-Mail:		office@fortismere.org.uk sixthform@fortismere.org.uk
Website:		www.fortismere.haringey.sch.uk
Chair of Governors:		Mr S Dunmore
Head:		Mrs H. Glass
Roll:		approx. 1720 including 450 in the sixth form

Enrichment, Pastoral Care and Teaching groups

The 270 students in the year group are divided into ten mixed ability teaching groups. The students will be in these groups for most of their lessons during the first half term of year 7. The curriculum for all the groups is identical.

During year 7 setting takes place in some subjects; please see the “Setting” section on page 7 for further details. The other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups for the remainder of the year. Further setting takes place in Science from the beginning of year 9.

The school site houses the Blanche Nevile unit for pupils with hearing impairment. Some of these pupils are integrated into some Fortismere lessons across the age range.

In September 2012 the School is introduced a system of Pastoral Care known as “Vertical Tutoring” (VT). In VT tutor groups are not made up of students of the same age, as has been the case at Fortismere for some time. Instead, tutor groups are composed of four or five students from each year group (7 – 11). Each group has a tutor. There will also be sixth form students attached to each group.

The school spent some time in training and preparation for this major change in organisation. The decision to move to VT has been based on the expected benefits for students. These include interactive work for students of different ages which develops leadership skills in the older students, improved opportunities for development of the school – home link through the tutor and a greater focus on pastoral work supporting academic progress, to name just a few.

The students meet in their tutor groups every day; a twenty minute session to be known as *VT time*. During the VT time students will engage in a variety of activities which may be led by the tutor, other College staff or members of the group. There will be a College assembly in one of the school Halls once a week.

If you would like more information about the system, please feel free to contact Mr Ward at award@fortismere.org.uk

Year 7 students will also have a session known as Enrichment, which will take place every second Wednesday lesson 5. In Year 7 enrichment, we will be fostering a sense of community between the students and building their resilience; the students will be developing their presentation, research and team-building skills when fundraising for a charity; and in the third term we will be encouraging students to be more mindful to improve their well-being, concentration and ability to deal with stress.

Student Check List

To our new students;

During your first few weeks at Fortismere you will find it both exciting and tiring. It is a good idea to make sure that you are really well organised. Check your timetable every night and pack your bag for the next morning, then you will not end up forgetting things or carrying books and equipment to school that you do not need. Make sure you have:

- Completed Homework
- Exercise Books (the ones you need)
- Pens/Pencils/calculator/ruler (Please see the *Presentation Pledges* at the end of this document)
- PE Kit
- Musical Instruments
- Sandwiches / packed lunch if applicable (no nuts, please)

The organisation of the school day

8.35 – 9.35 lesson 1,

9.40 – 10.00 VT time

10.00 – 10.20 break

10.20 – 11.20 lesson 2

11.25 – 12.25 lesson 3

12.25 – 1.15 lunch

1.15 – 2.15 lesson 4

2.20 – 3.20 lesson 5

The timetable follows a two week cycle of 50 lessons.

Curriculum

The curriculum is broad, balanced and coherent, with challenge, opportunity and support where necessary. Smaller groups enable better learning, with teaching groups averaging 27 in Year 7. A change in status has seen Fortismere moving forward as a specialist Maths/Computing and Music college, with Modern Foreign Languages as a 2nd specialism since September 2007.

The timetable consists of 50 lessons per 10-day timetable cycle. Each lesson lasts for 60 minutes.

The taught programme in Year 7 aims to deliver the National Curriculum (NC) and to provide a broad and balanced education.

Pupils will be taught the following subjects in year 7:

NC Core Subjects	NC Foundation Subjects	Additional Subjects
English Mathematics Science	Art & Design Geography History Music Physical Education Technology Information Technology Modern Foreign Languages (French, Spanish, Mandarin)	Well Being Drama

Pupils will also experience work which relates to the 5 NC cross-curricular themes

- Careers
- Citizenship
- Economic and industrial awareness
- Environmental education
- Health education

Setting

In line with a strong focus on academic excellence, structures are in place to enable setting by ability in Key Stage 3 in some areas of the curriculum.

Setting will only occur in Maths during Year 7. Setting in Modern Languages takes place in year 8 and in Science from year 9.

Mathematics Setting Policy

The Mathematics department has implemented a differentiated scheme work in Key Stage 3 for Mathematics; the most effective way of teaching the subject is through ability setting. The students will be set by ability for Mathematics as early as possible in September.

The setting for year 7 will initially be based on their baseline test score completed the first week of term combined with the Key stage 2 results. The setting process will be reviewed at half term in the first instance after the completion of three units of works and subsequently at the end of each term.

Progress at School and Communication with Parents

There is a continuous cycle of assessment and target setting throughout the year.

As part of this cycle, all Year 7 teachers will be asked to set challenging end of KS3 National Curriculum target levels for the students they teach.

Progress towards these targets and information about effort and behaviour will be shared during the year in a variety of ways.

As part of the implementation of Vertical Tutoring (VT), we have introduced a "Learning Conversation". This involves an extended meeting with the child's tutor, who will discuss information regarding progress to targets and other academic issues based on information available on our live information system.

The first meeting is planned for students in year 7 on 7th October to discuss how well student are settling in and have an early opportunity to identify any issues that may affect progress.

In the Spring Term parents / carers will receive a Full Report in which subject teachers give more detailed feedback and In the Summer Term there will be a Parents' Evening where teachers will give further feedback in a brief meeting.

We have an on-line system which allows parents / carers to book appointment times with their child's teachers; further information will be provided nearer the time of the parents' evening.

Homework

The school places great importance on the setting, marking and completion of homework. To support students, homework clubs are organised by individual departments on various evenings after school as well as a regular homework club in the Library. As students progress through the school they may expect the amount of homework to increase substantially. Please see the Homework Policy on the School Website.

Homework tasks are set using the Go4Schools website. Students and Parents / Carers are provided with a username and password to enable them to access the go4Schools website, where they will be able to view the homework activities that have been set. Year 7 students will be shown how to asset up their log in during lessons in the first week of the Autumn term.

Go4Schools

Go4Schools is a web based resource that the school uses for its real time tracking and recording of student events, assessments and progress. Parents / Carers have access to the site to enable them to view details about their children's progress and attainment. The site is also used to record and inform parents and carers of positive achievements (Core Values) and C3 detentions. If an event is logged on the system, a notification e-mail is sent to parents / carers that evening to ask them to log in to Go4Schools to view the event(s). It is also possible for parents / carers to see their children's homework tasks (see the Homework section above).

The Library and Learning Centre

Situated between North and South Wings, the Library is open from 8.00 am till 5.00 pm daily, including break and lunchtimes. A huge range of fiction and non-fiction books is available, as well as DVDs, audio books, magazines and newspapers. There is a photocopier and two colour printers, and a small stationery shop selling essentials at cost price. 32 computers support the increasing emphasis placed on students to develop independent learning skills.

Years 7 and 8 have one library lesson a fortnight and the Accelerated Reader Scheme, with its quizzes, recommendations and rewards, inspires students to read for pleasure.

Reading events take place throughout the year with games, outings, workshops and visiting authors. There are reading clubs to suit all age groups, even parents and teachers, and booklists of recommended reading for each year are constantly updated. Library visits organised by all departments help students to know where books are shelved, how to access the right information and which books to choose. Experienced librarians are always on hand to support the students.

Fortismere Library provides a calm and pleasant space for work and relaxation.

Curriculum Extension and Extra Curricular Activities

The school is noted for its wide range of extra curricular activities; these are considered a vital part of the development of the whole individual as well as providing opportunities to nurture and develop talent and creativity.

Extensive provision is made in dance, drama and music where students have opportunities to be involved in a spectacular range of shows and concerts, art exhibitions and visits abroad, book week, fashion and food, film and theatre; national engineering awards, mathematics competitions and master classes and science weeks. The school has a long and proud tradition in a wide range of sports, with particular strengths in athletics, cricket, cross-country, soccer (full Saturday programme) and tennis. In recognition of the quality of this provision, the school was awarded the 'Sportsmark' in 2003.

Journeys, Visits and Fieldwork

An annual programme includes a variety of educational and outdoor pursuits holidays, both at home and abroad, day and residential field courses in Art, Biology and Geography; exchange visits to France, Germany, Spain and China, numerous day visits to galleries, lectures, museums and theatres etc., usually in connection with the pupils' school work. Residential journeys are organised to Pendarren House, the Borough's Residential Centre in Wales for outdoor pursuits. Several parties visit Pendarren during years 7 and 8.

Parents are asked to complete a form giving formal consent to visit local places of interest such as the library, shops and park or other studies within the locality and also sporting activities which can take place after school or over the weekend. For all other visits and trips separate letters will be sent to you to complete reply slips. The School Governors' policy statement on charges and remission of charges for such activities can be obtained from the school office. The School Association (FSA) provides the Head with a special fund to help towards the costs for pupils whose parents are experiencing financial hardship.

We have introduced "Parentpay"; an online method for making payments for school trips and would encourage all parents / carers to make use of this system. It is easier for staff to manage and means that students do not have to carry cash and remember to hand it in! Please contact the school office for further details.

Special Education Needs

Fortismere believes that every child is special and that the school has a responsibility to create opportunities to nurture and develop every child in a holistic sense. Where children need additional support for learning or for English as an additional language, it is normally provided through in-class support or through individual/small group work, so that students are helped to achieve their full potential. The site is also the base for the Secondary Department of Blanche Nevile School for the deaf and hearing impaired, a number of who are integrated for some of the curriculum.

The school has recently re-organised the provision of support for students and has created a new Inclusion Department based in the Tetherdown building.

Wellbeing and RS at Fortismere School

Wellbeing is a bespoke subject at Fortismere and is one of the subjects in a faculty of other related subjects, these are: Religious Studies, Philosophy, Sociology and Psychology. The faculty is called Social and Philosophical Enquiry because in all of these subjects, and in Wellbeing students are asked what it is to be a human, what is the best way to be, how we live together and how we can flourish. Wellbeing at Key Stage 3 draws upon ideas from the major world religions, philosophy, personal and social education and positive psychology. At Key Stage 3, all students will have Wellbeing on their timetable and will have three lessons over the two week timetable.

The curriculum consists of 6 themes and is a spiralling curriculum which means that each year, students revisit the same themes and explore them in more depth and build on their previous knowledge and understanding.

The six themes of Wellbeing at Fortismere School are

- Reason, Knowledge and Purpose
- Character and Virtue
- Physical and Mental Health
- Sex and Relationships
- Morality and Meaning
- Being a Citizen

Students will have to show progress in terms of their knowledge and understanding of these themes but they will also be assessed through their team work and participation skills, their skills of being an independent enquirer and their skills in speaking and debating.

Wellbeing is an academic subject where students must use critical thinking skills to evaluate a whole wealth of content, but the subject also seeks to empower students to know who they are, be confident when facing challenges in their daily lives, learn about and practise good habits for physical and mental health and to learn some strategies to help them manage their own wellbeing for life.

If any parents are interested in reading up further on this subject and supporting the Wellbeing of their children at home, these books are recommended

- Ian Morris – Teaching Happiness and well-Being in Schools
- Martin Seligman – Authentic Happiness
- Martin Seligman – Flourish
- Jonathan Haidt – The Happiness Hypothesis

P.E. Kit

The school has changed its supplier for our PE kit. The new kit is of better quality and more modern design. Please note our old suppliers (www.justteamsports.co.uk) will no longer be providing PE kit. For all new orders of PE kit, please use the link below to the new suppliers website (the supplier is called School Trends).

Flyers showing the new PE kit are available from Reception, and we also have a selection of the new kit in SW Reception should you wish to view it.

<http://www.schooltrendsonline.com/schools/FortismereSchoolN101NE>

Student Voice

There is a student leadership system that “mirrors” the Senior Leadership of the school. The senior students in the sixth form will lead students in younger year groups in organising meetings and providing a voice for the student body on the Leadership Team of the staff and in the Governing Body.

Pupils and staff together support local and national charities and pupils make a valued contribution in the local community including helping the elderly or disabled.

Appearance

There is no school uniform - a decision made jointly by parents, students and staff when the School opened. Part of the Fortismere philosophy is that students should develop their individuality – that includes taking responsibility for their appearance. They are expected to wear clothing which is clean, tidy and inoffensive; they should be suitably dressed for work in school and for the changes in weather which may occur during the school day. We do have a “dress code”; guidelines for students to ensure that their clothing is appropriate. This forms part of our Behaviour for Learning Policy, which is available on the school website.

Behaviour

Pupils are expected to work in a friendly but disciplined atmosphere for learning. Arrangements governing behaviour in school are displayed prominently in school diaries and around the school. Such guidelines are kept to a common-sense minimum but are effectively enforced. Great stress is laid upon the importance of self-discipline, consideration for others and care of the school environment. The school has a very low tolerance for pupils whose attitudes and behaviour interfere with their work, and that of others; they can expect their parents to be informed and requests made for the behaviour to be modified. This is most commonly undertaken by the Tutor or Head of College, but other Senior Staff are involved in more serious cases. There is a clear structure, with a tariff system, for the management of students whose behaviour is unacceptable and those who persist in causing low level disruption. Threatening or violent behaviour, disrespectful treatment of staff and involvement in substance abuse always results in very serious consequences. Opportunities for counselling are provided. In order to facilitate good behaviour and good learning, you will be asked to sign a Home/School Agreement.

Behaviour For Learning (BfL)

BfL is our behaviour management system with a small number of clear rules and a school wide system of implementation of 'consequences' (referred to as Cs) for students when their behaviour impacts on their learning or the learning of others (in the classroom) or when their behaviour around the school is unacceptable.

There is a whole school system including a school detention (C3) after school every day. The detentions are for 45 minutes and students will only be excused from detention for pre-arranged medical appointments. Parents / carers are notified of C3 detentions by a notification from our "Go4Schools" system; please see the Go4Schools section on page 9.

We expect that any after school activities / appointments arranged by parents / carers will take this into account. We would ask all parent / carers to read and discuss the school's behaviour policy, available on the school's website, with their children.

Please note that the school is currently reviewing its policy regarding mobile phones and similar electronic devices. A separate communication will be sent to all parents / carers before the start of the new academic year.

There are also changes in our system regarding isolation (C4). These changes will be explained in an updated version of the Behaviour policy, which will be posted on the school's web site before the beginning of next term.

Please also see the "Presentation Pledges" at the end of this document.

Student Attendance

The attendance of pupils is checked by class teachers / tutors each lesson using electronic registration.

If your daughter / son is absent from school for any reason, please contact the school on each day of absence by email: attendance@fortismere.org.uk (please copy in your child's tutor) or by phone on 020 8365 4429.

If a student has to leave the premises during the day, a note will be required in advance for signature by the tutor and for reception to see before signing out. Students in years 7 – 9 should be collected by a parent or other nominated adult; the reception staff will not usually give permission for a Key Stage 3 student to leave alone.

The school has a text message system which automatically sends a message to parents if a child is marked absent in the morning.

If a child is taken ill during the school day, they will be cared for in the medical room and if necessary a member of the team will contact a parent / carer to arrange for the child to be collected from school.

We are very aware of the close link between attendance and achievement and set high targets for attendance. Please note that parents / carers should apply in advance for permission for their children to be absent from school for reasons other than illness / medical appointments (Leave of Absence). Such permission is at the discretion of the Headteacher and only granted in exceptional circumstances. Please see the Attendance Policy on the school website for further details.

Buildings and Playing Fields

There are playgrounds and social areas in both Wings of the school with wooden seats outside which the students may use in good weather. Students may come into the buildings before morning school or during break and wait in particular areas. There are designated indoor and outdoor areas for students who bring a packed lunch and at lunchtimes access is also available for use of the library, club activities and toilet facilities. The playing fields may be used at break or lunchtimes during dry weather, though this is normally only possible during the summer term. Students are expected to use break times to move between Wings and be ready to be taught before the start of the next lesson.

School Lunches

The school runs a cashless catering system. Parents add funds to students' accounts online. These funds are debited using a biometric finger scanning system in the canteen (or a PIN number system, if preferred). There is a limit to the amount any student can spend on any one day and it is possible to monitor what is being consumed. Information and instructions can be found on the school's website. Please contact the school office for further details or for help with the online funding.

If your child qualifies for free school meals, you should apply through the local authority, who will then liaise with the school.

Equipment

Pupils are expected to bring pens, pencils, ruler and rubber to class; felt tip pens or pencils for colouring will be useful as is a calculator for Maths And Science lessons. Mathematical instruments will be needed from time to time; usually these items are provided by parents but the school will make provision upon request. Please also see the "Presentation Pledges" at the end of this document.

Money and Personal Possessions

The school has cashless systems and will not be held responsible for pupils' money and they are discouraged from bringing large sums of money into school. Mobile phones and other electronic equipment should not be brought to school and the school accepts no liability for such items. We do not encourage students to cycle to school and they should not bring scooters, skateboards or similar items. The school is not insured against the loss or theft of personal belongings and does not accept responsibility or liability for them.

Lost Property and Lockers

The school cannot accept responsibility for articles lost on the premises but if possessions are clearly marked return of lost property, when found, is possible. If property is lost please contact the Welfare Officer. The Fortismere School Association has provided a number of lockers for each year group.

Weekly Newsletter

The Headteacher sends a letter to each parent/carer and pupil every week containing information about forthcoming events and other matters relevant to the school community. This is sent using the Parentmail system and is also available on the school website; www.fortismere.haringey.sch.uk.

If you have not signed up for Parentmail, please contact the school office as this is our major method of communicating news and information.

Fortismere School Association (FSA)

The Fortismere School Association was founded in 1983. All parents, students and staff are members without subscription. Parents of new Year 7 pupils are particularly encouraged to become involved with the group who work hard and harmoniously together for the benefit of the students at the same time as having a lot of fun! The Association holds educational and social events, raises substantial sums of money, and provides refreshments at parents' evenings or school functions.

The Association's website is www.fortismereschoolassociation.ning.com

Governing Body

The Governors of Fortismere are a highly committed group of seven elected parents, three elected members of staff, four nominees of the Council, five community Governors, co-opted by the Governing Body, and the Headteacher, as well as two student associate Governors. They take a very keen interest in all aspects of school life, including: new initiatives, curriculum evolution, pupil welfare, finance and premises, staffing and personnel, and are a key force in the continued success of the school. Parents are invited to contact the school should they wish to discuss any matters with a Governor.

Parents' Vehicles

In the interests of safety, parents are asked not to drive on to the school premises before, during and immediately after school, including lunchtimes. If you drop your children off at school, please do not park on the mandatory yellow lines at school entrances at all times.

Changes of address / contact details

Please notify the school immediately of any change of contact details by emailing admissions@fortismere.org.uk Please also copy your child's tutor into your e-mail.

Term Dates, Closures and Parents' Evenings

School Term Dates 2016-2017

Autumn Term 2016

	Starts	Ends
	Tuesday 6 th September	Friday 16 th December
Half Term	Monday 24 th October	Friday 28 th October

Spring Term 2017

	Starts	Ends
	Tuesday 3 rd January	Friday 31 st March
Half Term	Monday 13 th February	Friday 17 th February

Summer Term 2017

	Starts	Ends
	Tuesday 18 th April	Friday 21 st July
Half Term	Monday 29 th May	Friday 2 nd June

Early closures 2016 -2017

Students will be dismissed at 12.25pm on the following dates;

Wednesday 21st September 2016 (Open Afternoon for year 6 students)

Friday 16th December 2016 (end of Autumn Term)

Friday 31st March 2017 (end of Spring Term)

Wednesday 28th June 2017 (Tutor meetings with year 6 students)

Friday 21st July 2017 (end of Summer Term)

...and at 2:15pm on Friday 7th October (year 7 Learning Conversations)

Late starts to allow time for learning conversations

Students should arrive at school ready to start lesson 2 at 10.20am on the following dates;

Monday 17th October 2016 (for year 8 learning conversations)

Tuesday 28th February 2017 (for year 10 learning conversations)

Thursday 16th March 2017 (for year 11 learning conversations)

Wednesday 7th June 2017 (for year 9 learning conversations)

Whole day closures for Staff Training

Monday 5th September 2016

Thursday 6th July 2017

Parents' Evenings (Always on Tuesdays)

Year 7; X bank 25th April 2017 South Wing

Year 7; Y bank 9th May 2017 South Wing

Year 8; X bank 7th March 2017 South Wing

Year 8; Y bank 21st March 2017 South Wing

Year 9; 6th December 2016 North Wing

Year 10; 1st November 2016 North Wing

Year 11; 10th January 2017 North Wing

Year 12; 7th February 2017 North Wing

Year 13; 22nd November 2016 North Wing

I hope this document has been informative and useful.

Further details about the curriculum will be presented at the Year 7 information evening on 13th September.

If you have any further queries please contact Mr Ward, Assistant Headteacher.

award@fortismere.org.uk

updated 20th July 2016

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Students' Presentation Pledges

1. I will take pride in my work and present it **neatly**

2. I will treat my books with **respect** therefore **will not**

- graffiti
- doodle
- scribble
- tear out pages
- leave blank pages

3. I will have a pencil case in my school bag containing at least the



following items:

1. **two** black or dark blue pens
2. one green pen
3. a pencil and sharpener
4. a rubber
5. a ruler
6. a calculator
7. a glue stick
8. a protractor

4. I will **underline the date and title** in my **covered** exercise books or folders

5. I will use a **black pen** for writing unless my teacher asks me to write with

a pencil



6. I will use a **ruler** for underlining



7. I will use a **pencil** for drawings or diagrams



8. I will use a **green pen to correct** my work before handing it in



and **proofread** it

9. I will ~~cross out~~ errors neatly with one line and not use correction fluid

10. I will **glue** my worksheets into my exercise books or store them



where my teacher says