


Friday 1st December 2023

School Leadership Messages	Contents		
<p>Late Start Today</p> <p>We apologise to all our families for the late start today. We needed to reboot our heating and it was too cold to have students in classrooms in the South WIng until the boiler was functioning.</p> <p>After-school Detentions</p> <p>Late detentions and the Friday SLT Behavior Session will continue during the winter months.</p> <p>Dressed for winter</p> <p>Students are not permitted to wear outdoor clothing in lessons. A significant number are arriving in school with just a tee-shirt under their coats. Please could students wear layers during the colder months. We have explained about cardigans but they look mystified. Jumpers, hoodies or sweatshirts are perfectly acceptable. Crocs are not.</p> <p>Positive Points</p> <p>Well done to the following students for getting 10 or more positive points this week:</p> <p>Tamar Goldberg; Leo Bell; Nicholas Chau; Evelyn Gormley; Max Gray; Lora Vida; Jamie charlton; Julian Gonzalez Lanata; Carl Peanberg King; Vivienne Alice Wood; Maia Zombosco; Sarla Frahm; Max Cooper; James Spyrou; Oscar Shortall; Zach Whittaker; Rafael Tancred; Lyra Gardiner; Euan Hacking; Maeve Gaia Curry; Anushka Rosenberg; Lola Currie; Saoirse Edwards; Zani Mutebi; Isla Daniels</p>	CoHeads’ Weekly Roundup		
	Fortismind		
	Departmental Notices		
	LINC News		
	School Events		
	Holiday Camps		
	Safeguarding information		
	Calendar		
	6.12.23	Y7Y Parents Evening	
	7.12.23	Christmas Jumper Day	
10.12.23	Winter Fair 11-5pm		
12.12.23	Christmas show: “Twilight”		
18 & 19.12	Christmas Concert		
<div></div> <p><i>Advent begins today</i></p>			

Co-Headteachers

Weekly Roundup

As mentioned in the last couple of weeks, Fortismere has been hosting Stand Up! In school. They have been delivering a series of workshops tackling anti-semitism and Islamophobia and are due to finish next Monday. The Senior Leadership Team has been supporting the sessions and Co-Heads have been fortunate enough to be included. The sessions have been excellent: they challenge stereotypes, provide accurate information that counters social media and also provide a safe forum for students to give their perspective. Stand Up! works with partners including Slides not Sides, CST and Maccabi GB which enables them to give well rounded and representative workshops. Given the significant rise in both forms of racist abuse, we are very fortunate to have been able to book them.

Mr Huxley gave the Co-Heads an update on the activities and competitions run by Fortismere's five houses: Franklin, Keats, Turing, Selvon and Wollstonecraft. So far this term students have been invited to participate in competitions for Drama, PRE, castle building and Renaissance painting in History, Science, chess and Scrabble. This will all culminate in a Christmas quiz at the end of term. The House system enables students to work across year groups and to participate in unusual and enjoyable activities. It is a great way to really get to know the school and increase enjoyment while widening students' social circles. We would urge more of our students to get involved - healthy competition is an important part of what we do in school and in a very large school like Fortismere, houses provide a child-sized sense of belonging. Our student journalists, working in the 'Press Gang' club with Ms Brooks, will help the Heads of House report on events and competitions for the Newsletter.

December is always a busy and exciting month for us. We have the Christmas Fair coming up, swiftly followed by the Christmas show and the following week, two Christmas Concerts. These are the first Christmas concerts led by our new Director of Music, Mr Watson. We know that all our productions are fabulous and we are looking forward to seeing many of our parents and carers at these events. For the students, the end of term is a time of celebration. The hardwork and exemplary behaviour of so much of our school is recognised through subject awards and a celebration with the Co-Heads, always one of our highlights of the term. We will be sharing the many successes of our students in the Newsletter and look forward to spending time with the students.

The cold has replaced days of wind and rain and the site looks beautiful in the frost. However, given the nature of our students' commute between wings, sensible winter clothing (no crocs!) is essential. Please see the message above for a plea from Fortismere for winter clothing. We wish all our parents and carers a warm, snug weekend.

Fortismind - Supporting Mental Health at Fortismere

Top Tips for Good Mental Health

We've got more tips for good mental health this week, given to us by our Mental Health Ambassadors...

Make some art - Art makes me calm. It can help me take my mind off any worries or fears I might have. When I draw, my mind takes me on a journey of imagination and builds a new story in my head. In my free time, I draw to empty my mind and relax myself. I recommend you try drawing as an option to help your mental health. All art is a form of expression and no art is bad. If somebody says your artwork is not good

enough, remember that there is no such thing as bad or good art and that, truly, everything can be experienced as art and self-expression. *Year 7 student*

Try meditating - I would recommend taking a break from any pressured or stressful work you have and instead take part in meditating to help you feel calm, peaceful and balanced. Meditating has many benefits for both your emotional wellbeing and your overall health. It helps me when I lose my focus doing homework and need a short rest. I usually find myself doing mind controlling activities like meditating, taking a walk or reading. Personally, I like to play piano which helps me to relax and cope with stress by refocusing my attention on to something I enjoy rather than worrying about my work. A huge amount of published research suggests that meditation can facilitate neuroplasticity and connectivity in brain regions specifically related to emotional regulation and attention. Therefore, it always puts me in a good mood. *Year 10 student*

Take a break - When I am struggling with my mental health it helps to remove myself from stressful situations and give myself breaks. For example, if you are trying to revise for a test and your mental health is causing you to be unfocused, it is a good idea to give yourself time to calm down and to get yourself in the right frame of mind for doing school work. There is a lot of proof that the “Aha moments” come more often to those who take regular breaks. Recharging and refreshing your mind increases your energy, productivity, and ability to focus. Although it may seem better that you carry on working and power through any of the stress you are feeling, you are more likely to perform better if you take regular breaks. *Year 9 student*

Plan ahead and avoid pressure - Some days I struggle to cope with my homework - it can just be a bit too much, and I can feel overwhelmed. I have found a few things I can do to help me cope better. It really helps if I talk with my family about my homework, and they help me to plan and prioritise all my work. I also spend plenty of time researching the homework, and I will start ahead of time to ensure that I do not have to work under pressure. *Year 7 student*

Ask for help - I cannot stress enough how important it is that you ask for help or talk to someone. I understand about feeling embarrassed or shy to talk, even to people you trust, but once you make that first step, things will start to get better. For example, you could go to counselling or therapy, either in school or out of school, or talk to your GP. It will never be as hard as you think it is to say how you're feeling because pretty much everyone has felt or known someone who has felt what you're feeling. Even if you only say a few words, that is still a first step in helping yourself. I have been going to therapy for a couple of years and I promise you that it does get better. *Year 11 student*

Miss Jones
Mental Health Champion

LINC Department Notices

Meet the Team

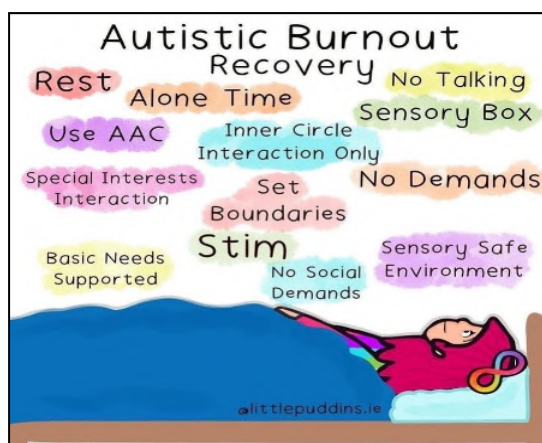
The LINC team member we're introducing this week is **Paisley Nicholls**, one of our Higher Level Teaching Assistants and Social Lead.

Why did you want to work in the LINC department? When I was in sixth form, I had a teacher that changed the course of my life. She identified me as someone who needed extra pastoral support, listened to me and nurtured me. She worked hard to break down barriers and enhance my relationship with education so that I could have similar opportunities to my peers. It was around this time that I knew that I wanted to work in education and be a support to young people, especially the most vulnerable. I am hoping that

through nurturing, working to support specific needs and providing an environment for progress, that I too can make a difference to students' educational experience.

What's the best thing about your job? Watching a child gain the skills to become more independent and more confident. I have seen students that started at Fortismere requiring wraparound care become independent young adults managing their own day to day activities and taking responsibility for their education. I also enjoy just talking to the students; getting to know them, hearing their stories, and laughing with them.

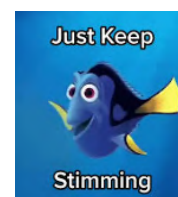
What information would you like to share with the school community this week? I would like to talk about **autism in girls** and **the importance of stimming**. People often believe that autism is significantly more common among boys than girls but this is a misconception and the result of many girls being under diagnosed because of how their symptoms manifest and how they cope with their difficulties. Girls with autism tend to mask their difficulties, and therefore are less likely to receive a diagnosis compared to males with autism. For example, within a social context, girls tend to try to fit, acting in a way that masks their autism. The stress of masking social and academic difficulties can cause 'autistic burnout' and also present as anxiety resulting in many girls being misdiagnosed as having issues with their mental health.



I also wanted to touch on **the importance of a diagnosis**. Girls with autism can suffer from poor self-esteem, depression and can become vulnerable to bullying. An early diagnosis provides an opportunity for intervention and support through schools, outside agencies and local professionals such as Haringey's Language and Autism Support Team. While early identification is ideal, even a diagnosis later in life can have a positive impact on the individual and their sense of self. Television presenter Melanie Sykes was diagnosed with autism at the age of 51. She describes this revelation as "life changing", stating that things had finally started to "make sense".



And lastly, **Stimming**, this is a repetitive behaviour or motion that is commonly used by those with autism. It can help someone to self-regulate, is a tool for self soothing, supports sensory processing, and can reduce anxiety. Unless stimming becomes dangerous or injurious, ideally it shouldn't be stopped as this is a coping mechanism for that individual. A student once told me that her way of coping and self-regulating included stimming. She explained that before her diagnosis, when she was in nursery, her stimming was often referred to as "naughty", which made her self-conscious about using it as a coping mechanism. This student wanted people to be more aware of stimming and the benefits that it can have for everyone, but especially neurodivergent individuals. **For more information on girls with autism, autistic burnout and stimming see [National Autistic Society](#) and the [Haringey Autism Hub](#)**



Please Leave LINC Some Feedback

Thank you to all those who attended our Information Evening yesterday on Access Arrangements and we hope you found it helpful. We would really appreciate your feedback as this helps us to plan future LINC events - please [complete the questionnaire here](#) Thank you.

Ms Carim

Access Arrangements Assessor/Coordinator

Extra-Curricular Clubs

Chess Club News

Congratulations to the Fortismere Chess team in qualifying for the National Secondary Schools Competition. There were fine team performances after a shaky start, with Y7 students Mia Wang and Sam Murphy playing key roles in the last two rounds of matches of the Pre-Qualifying Tournament held at Highgate School. National rated Frankie Badasconyi and Stanley Badasconyi won all three of their games. We're practising hard for the next round of the competition which will be the knockout stages.

We are looking for new players to develop our squad/reserves and have a second team ready in September 2024, in addition to a girls team of 6 to enter the Girls Championship.

A reminder that the Chess club meets Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays lunchtimes in S05.

There are chess courses for improving Beginners / Intermediate and Advanced Players available via g2zoaai on gclassroom.

Mr Renner

Sixth Form Notice

French Department Trip to Marseilles

The French department is pleased to report that they have had a very successful trip to Marseilles with Year 12 and Year 13 students. The students attended a concert, expanded their understanding of Mediterranean culture at the MUSEM museum and took in the sights around Marseilles and Aix-en-Provence. On our last day we had a guided tour around Marseilles to learn more about the city's vibrant rap scene. A big thanks to our Year 12 and Year 13 students for their exemplary engagement throughout this trip.

Mr Lewis



House Notices

Christmas Jumper Day - Thursday 7th December

It's Christmas Jumper Day next week - so please remember to wear your Christmas jumper and bring in £1 (or more) to help the **Selvon Ambassadors to raise money for Save the Children!** The Selvon House charity is still yet to be announced, but in the meantime, the Selvon ambassadors will be raising money for this worthy cause. If you would prefer to donate online you can visit our Just Giving page using this [this link](#)

Thank you for your support. Ms Garnett



Careers & Work Related Learning Notices

Careers Trip to Columbia Threadneedle Investments

This week a group of Fortismere Economics students attended a careers event at Columbia Threadneedle Investments, a global asset manager of almost \$500 billion. This insight event was hosted by Investment 20/20 for students from Fortismere School, Cardinal Pole Catholic School, The Charter School North and East Dulwich, and Central Foundation Boys School. Students discovered the diverse and exciting career paths in investment management and learnt about various asset classes, such as property, fixed income, and equities.

They also heard from some recent Investment 20/20 trainees, who shared their insights and experiences of joining the sector. Students also had the chance to participate in a property investments activity and tour the office and trading floor. Students enjoyed the trip and gave positive feedback.

Mr Renner



Careers & Work Related Learning Information & Links

NHS Careers Untapped has been developed by London NHS Trusts working in partnership to showcase clinical and non-clinical careers and lesser-known roles in the NHS. The next webinar takes place on **Wednesday 6th December** from 4.30-6.00pm. Topic is **Primary Care Careers (Y9-Y13 students)**

[Register for the webinar here](#)

Next Steps in London is a useful guide to support students who are choosing or thinking about their next steps into the world of work and beyond school. It's published by the four London Careers Hubs - you can

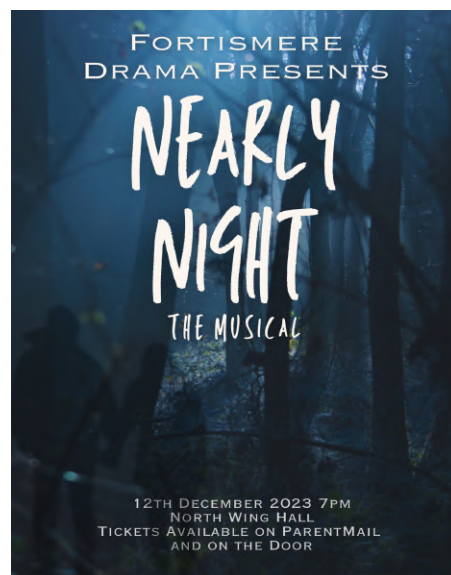
[download a copy here](#)

Drama Department Notices

Christmas Production: Nearly Night (Twilight The Musical) - 12th December 7pm NW Hall

The set build has started and the cast and crew of **Nearly Night** are preparing for their dress rehearsals.

This year, our Christmas show is on for **one night only!** So make sure to buy your tickets early as we are expecting to sell out. **Tickets are on sale now** on ParentMail under Shop



Year 13 Devised Drama Exam

Year 13 performed their devised exam last week and created an immersive 'Punchdrunk' style piece based on the 1991 French post-apocalyptic black comedy film 'Delicatessen', directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro. The piece was full of darkness, blood and a few sausages thrown in. Well done to the students for all of their hard work.

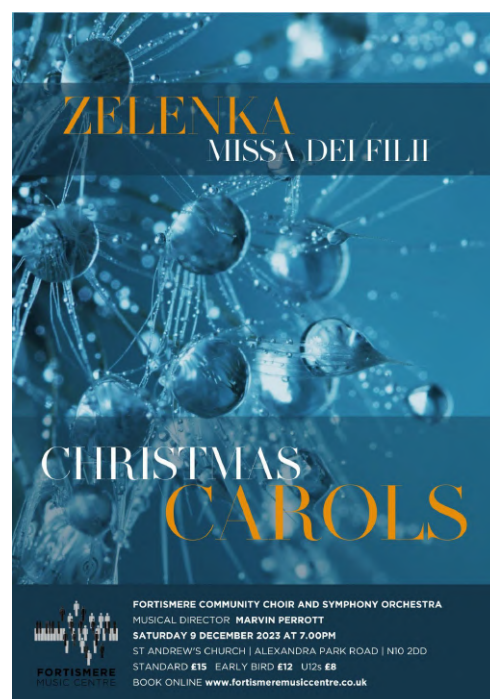


Fortismere Music Centre Notices

Community Choir Christmas Concert - Saturday 9th December 7pm St Andrews Church

Don't miss the ever-popular **Community Choir Christmas Concert**, featuring a fabulous Mass by Zelenka, a composer who **should** be (and one day **will** be) as famous as Bach! Then after the interval there will be carols for choir and audience, featuring many well-known traditional carols.

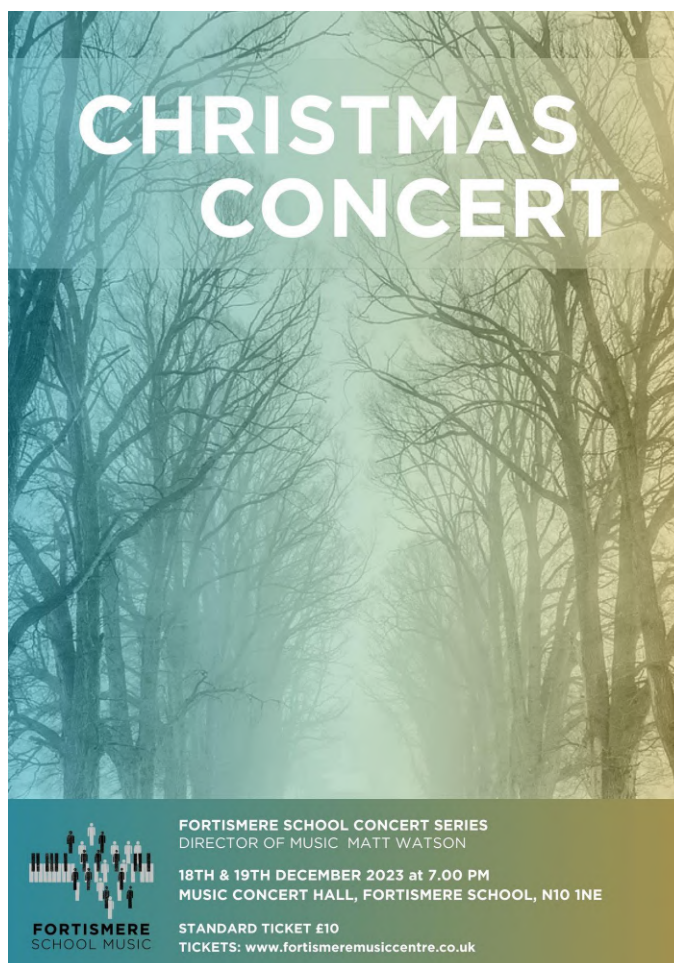
Tickets in advance £12, on the day £15 Book tickets [here](#).



Fortismere School Christmas Concerts - Monday 18th & Tuesday 19th December 7pm

Then on Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th, it's the turn of the students to showcase their musical talents at the **Fortismere Christmas Concerts**. The line-up will include the Jazz Band, Senior and Junior Choirs, Big Band, Samba, String Ensemble, solos and more...

[Book Mon 18th Dec tickets here](#), and [Book Tues 19th Dec tickets here](#).



School of Rock - Saturday Music School Starting January 2024

School of Rock places for next term are filling up fast! Send off the registration forms to ensure a place for your child. More information and forms available here: [here](#)

Fortismere Community Symphony Orchestra concert and violin masterclass

The Syrian violinist, Bilal Alnemr, gave a moving and virtuosic performance of Beethoven's *Violin Concerto* at the FCSO concert on 18th November, which was greeted with a standing ovation and loud cheers from a packed St Andrew's. The orchestra performed brilliantly as well, playing Haydn's *Overture to The Creation* to start the concert, and finished with Schumann's *Fourth Symphony*.

On the Thursday prior to the concert, Bilal spent an afternoon giving a masterclass to a small group of talented violinists at school. It was an enthralling hour and a half, seeing such a gifted professional give guidance and support in such a sensitive way to the young players. All the players who took part were exemplary in the way they listened to the advice and put it into practice with immediate results, which cannot have been easy by any means. We are so lucky to have this connection with Bilal through Thomas Gregory the FCSO's conductor, and plans are already afoot for a return visit in Summer 2025, so watch this space!

Library News

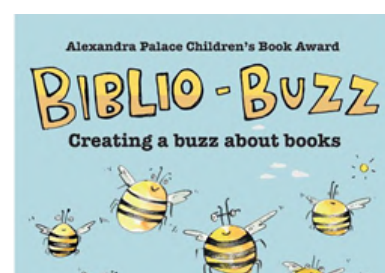
Top Tips to Keep your Children Reading

Top Tip No 10: According to research conducted by the University of Sussex, silently reading fiction for only six minutes reduces stress levels by 68%. Imagine how chilled your children would be if they read for half an hour every night...



Alexandra Palace Children's Book Award club

Just a reminder that the Year 7 APCBA/Bibliobuzz group starts in the library Monday lunchtime. Students can bring a packed lunch (nothing hot or smelly!) They will be borrowing the first of the 6 books they'll be reading for the award ceremony in March.



Author Visit

Friday 24th November saw the welcome return of our Patron of Reading, Dan Freedman. He talked about the wonders of having a supportive and inspirational teacher in secondary school who encouraged him to write and who still reads the proofs of everything Dan does. It was interesting to hear what our Year 7 students thought made a good teacher! Dan was never quite good enough to play football professionally, but his audience were in awe of his determination to go to the top matches all around the world, to sit in the best seats and to get paid for doing so. We may have some up and coming sports journalists and authors in Year 7 who were motivated by their talk with Dan.



Library Opening Hours

We are sorry to let you know that the library will be closing at 4pm on Thursdays and Fridays for the foreseeable future. Apologies to all the students, especially 6th formers, who make the most of our quiet space after school for study.



Recommended Reads of the Week

Our TikTok Made Me Buy It display is always popular. Here are some of the books that don't stay on the shelves for long!



PE & Sports News

Year 7 Netball Team Making Amazing Progress

The Y7 Netball Team played a home match against St Thomas More on Monday night. The amount of progress they have made in just a few weeks of playing together is amazing and it was clear to see! There were some excellent passages of play down the court and some fantastic interceptions. Player of the match was Felicie Castle. The end result was 1-1. Well done to all the players



Haringey Netball Champions

We travelled to Channing School on a bitterly cold Wednesday afternoon this week for a Haringey Netball Tournament. All our girls played brilliantly. The Y7 team made excellent progress as the afternoon went on and came 5th overall. The Y8 team dominated throughout and were champions of Haringey on the day!



Fixtures Next Week

Tuesday 5th December	Year 7 Middlesex Cup v Wren Academy @ Home 3.20pm KO Year 8 Netball v Woodside @ home 3pm start
Wednesday 6th December	Haringey Volleyball Tournament @ St Thomas More School
Thursday 7th December	Year 10 Football v Southgate @ Away 2pm KO

School Christmas Events

Winter Fair - Sunday 10th December 11am-5pm

Come along and join us for some festive fun - there will be mulled wine, food, games and Santa's grotto. Entrance is via Tetherdown and costs £3 for adults and £2 for children.

Any help you can offer with donations and support on the day would be very much appreciated. If you can help or have queries please contact Maria Demetriou mdemetriou@fortismere.org.uk

And don't forget our **Winter Fair Festive 40 baking challenge** - parents, staff and students are invited to make a festive cake that also celebrates Fortismere's 40th year - the cake should include the number 40 somewhere but other than that the design and ingredients are up to you. Cakes will be judged at the Winter Fair. Please bring cakes to school on Friday 8th December or on Sunday morning before the Fair starts. Please contact mdemetriou@fortismere.org.uk with any queries or questions

Fortismere School Holiday Camps

New Year Holiday Camps 2nd-5th January 2024 - Booking Now Open

Fortismere Holiday Camps run from **Tuesday 2nd January 2024 to Friday 5th January 2024**. Activities on offer include Sports, Art, Drama, Cooking and Early years fun. The camps are led by experienced practitioners and offer a full day of fun and entertainment. Activities take place at Fortismere School (Tetherdown, London N10 1NE) from 9am to 4pm and cost from £80. There is an option for an early drop off and/or a late collection for an additional cost. Please contact Ms Demetriou mdemetriou@fortismere.org.uk Extended Schools Manager, if you would like to take up this option or want more information on any of the activities. **Booking information and details for all the camps are on the school website - [Fortismere Holiday Camps](#)**

Safeguarding at Fortismere

Safeguarding Contacts

If you wish to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Ms Sullivan) about any safeguarding matters or concerns please email safetalk@fortismere.org.uk alternatively contact your child's Head of Year

Year 7	Ms Fox kfox@fortismere.org.uk
Year 8	Ms Jackson kjackson@fortismere.org.uk
Year 9	Ms Cuenca icuenca@fortismere.org.uk
Year 10	Mr Aldridge saldridge@fortismere.org.uk
Year 11	Ms Boot aboot@fortismere.org.uk