

Headteacher's Message

The half term has got off to a flying start with sporting success for our senior boys' football team, who are through to the Middlesex Cup Final, and our chess team, who beat a number of opponents including Woodhouse College to progress to the next phase of their competition. It was also great to read in this week's Newsletter the success of our Year 11 physicists in their intermediate challenge, where a long list of students have won gold certificates. We're only half way through the year but have already seen an incredible scale of extra-curricular activity at Fortismere, with our Jack and the Beanstalk pantomime production alone involving 175 people!

Extra-curricular sport runs daily, with lunchtime and after-school clubs for football, cricket, basketball, badminton, pickleball, hockey, netball, table tennis and running to name just a few! Our students compete regularly in Haringey competitions and London wide tournaments across multiple sports, with Fortismere teams regularly reaching finals and becoming champions across all age groups. Our indoor cricketers and netball players have recently been crowned winners in their local competitions.

Music opportunities are extensive too, with lunchtime ensembles including Guitar, Samba, Junior & Senior Strings, Junior Band and Choirs, plus after-school sessions for Music Theory and Music Technology. Music continues at the weekend too with our Saturday School of Rock & Pop and we engage musically with our wider community through the Fortismere Community Symphony Orchestra and the Community Choir which meet in the evenings. Students perform together in concerts that go beyond just the music itself to help build their confidence and create a vibrant sense of belonging. This year we've already had a Welcome Back concert, Christmas concerts, a Pure Piano Concert, and a student-led Charity Band Night which raised over £1,000 for the RSPCA. Drama provision includes a KS3 Drama Club, major productions, and the annual Inter-House Drama Festival which involves students from Years 7 to 12 and is performed to visitors at our Open Evening.

Throughout the week our Library is a hub of activity and creativity with year-group Book Clubs, Pride Society, Manga & Comic Club, Crochet & Knitting Club, Arts & Crafts Club, Weaving Words Creative Writing Club, and a Book-Movie Club.

Contents

Headteacher's Weekly Roundup

Departmental News & Notices

Safeguarding Information

Calendar

05.03	FemSoc IWD Event 5.30pm SW Hall
11.03	Governors Round Table Event for Parents/Carers
19.03	Friends of Fortismere Comedy Night Doors 7pm for 8pm start



Feedback at Fortismere [here](#)

Academic enrichment includes a long and varied list of clubs and opportunities that really do provide something for all interests – there are clubs for Chess, Latin, Mad Science, Maths, Coding, Dungeons & Dragons and Art. Students can participate in numerous competitions including the Georgia Morris Photography Prize, Liana Ward History Prize, Anthea Bell Translation Prize and The Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge and all Year 12 students are offered the opportunity to complete an Extended Project Qualification.

Beyond the classroom students extend their learning through an impressive range of trips and visits - this year students have already been out on theatre visits to see Hamilton, Othello and The Flowers of Srebrenica, completed fieldwork at Battersea Power Station, Walton on the Naze and Kings Cross, practised their language skills and broadened their horizons on a 10-day trip to China visiting Nanjing, Zhenjiang and Shanghai and planned their futures at the What Careers? What University? event at Olympia.

Tremendous community spirit is shown by our students through charity work and so far this year our Student Ambassadors have raised money for Cancer Research, organised cold weather donations for a local homeless charity, collected over 100 warm coats for the Wrap Up Winter campaign, and made our biggest ever contribution to the Muswell Hill Food Bank.

In the Sixth Form students take the lead by launching their own student-led clubs and societies, built around their interests and passions and constantly impress us with their maturity, organisational and leadership skills. If you want to see what this looks like in action read about the Economics Society further on in the Newsletter and come along in person to the Feminist Society International Women's Day Event next week on Thursday 5th March [full details here](#)

Our recent student voice surveys show that about 60% of our students regularly attend clubs within our school and we'd love to get that closer to 100% - encourage your child to take part. We're assembling a whole school extra curricular activity timetable at present. For now, students who want to find something for themselves can ask their tutors what's going on.

This weekend sees the start of meteorological spring so hopefully some lighter and brighter weather ahead!

Friends of Fortismere

Get Ready for Comedy and Pizza!

FOF proudly presents the legendary **FORTISMERE COMEDY NIGHT** on **Thursday 19th March!** Doors at 7pm for Comedy at 8pm

Headlining is **Shazia Mirza**, an award winning British stand up comedian and writer. In 2023 The Telegraph named her as one of the 50 defining comedians of the century. TV credits include: Eastenders, 'QI' Would I lie To You and Celebrity Apprentice. Also making you laugh will be **Vlad Ilich 2025 British Comedian of the Year!** Vlad is a multilingual stand-up comedian and actor who has performed internationally and across the UK, debuted his solo show Vladislav Baby Don't Hurt Me at The Pleasance. And **Jenny Bede** an Award-winning writer, actor and musical comedian. She has appeared in numerous TV shows including Lovesick and Broadchurch, created multiple acclaimed Edinburgh shows, and built a following through her parody music videos and live musical comedy.



You can **pre-order your 12" Amici Miei Margherita pizza** to pick up at 7.30pm before the acts begin at 8.00pm. There will also be a **fully stocked bar with snacks** throughout the night.

Best of all? Every laugh supports our school. All profits will go directly back to improving the experience for our children – so come along, have fun, and laugh your way to doing good.

FULL DETAILS & TICKETS HERE <https://www.goodhub.com/go/fofcomedynight>

Student Led Societies & Events

Fortismere FemSoc - IWD Event Thursday 5th March 5.30pm-8.00pm SW Hall

Fortismere Feminist Society will be hosting their 18th annual International Women's Day celebration on Thursday 5th of March from 5.30pm-8pm in South Wing Hall. The FemSoc team is excited to welcome the school community to an evening of inspiring talks, student performances, and fun quizzes. All money raised by this entirely student-led event is in support of the charity Refuge, which helps women escape abusive situations, and supports them as they begin to stabilise their lives once more.

FemSoc is one of the longest running student societies within Fortismere, cultivating a community of outspoken women and men who value open conversation and progression. Our annual International Women's Day is a significant event each year, not only to the people in the society but also to the general student body of Fortismere. We strongly encourage you to suggest that your child attend this year – and parents and carers are of course also welcome! Tickets range from £5-£8 **You can find more details about the event and buy your tickets [here](#)**



Economics Society - Fortinomics

The Econ Society has been putting their economics knowledge into practice recently to produce *Fortinomics*, a series of articles researched and written by its student members. We'll be publishing some over the next few weeks as they are not just an opportunity to showcase our students' understanding of global economics but also a great example of how much benefit our student-led societies bring. EconSoc, and our other student led societies, are much more than just interest clubs - they help to foster intellectual curiosity and enable students to discuss complex ideas and topics that can challenge and broaden their own perspectives.

Our first Fortinomics article is written by Jonny Redland **Driving Lessons - Low Supply, High Demand**

In the UK, when people reach age 17, they become eligible to take driving lessons and eventually take a theory test; and a practical driving test in order to receive their full driving licence and be allowed to legally drive on public roads without supervision. This sounds straightforward enough, although there is a major problem facing many people across the UK: people are unable to get access to driving lessons and tests... What feels like an inconvenience to most is actually a great example of economics in action!

The Problem: During the COVID-19 pandemic, all driving lessons were halted, causing a major backlog for lessons and tests. When pandemic restrictions were lifted, people who had previously been unable to learn to drive began to want driving tuition again. This significant increase in demand led to a shortage of driving tuition, exacerbated by the fact that the number of Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs) also fell sharply.

The Consequences: When demand exceeds supply, the equilibrium price tends to rise, and driving tuition is no exception. The Sun reported that the cost of learning to drive has increased by a staggering 73% in the last 5 years! However, increasing prices has not been enough to solve the shortage due to the fact that the supply of ADIs is inelastic*. This is because of the high barriers to entry for becoming an ADI. Many driving

students have been faced with increasing costs, and also ridiculous wait times. At the start of 2020, wait times were around 6 weeks, but now they're over 22 weeks!

The Solution: Many people have different ideas about how this issue can be solved, but the key ideas are government plans to streamline test booking and significantly increase ADI and examiner recruitment. Over time, these solutions will hopefully help to reduce the shortage, and make access to driving tuition easier and more affordable for all of us looking to learn how to drive!

Conclusion: The situation that has unfolded with driving tuition is a live demonstration of supply and demand; it shows how demand can often change rapidly, but supply is often slower, leading to problems. It's often very interesting to learn about things like this, even if it's very frustrating for those who are actually affected!

* **Inelastic Supply:** *When the quantity supplied is not very responsive to a change in price*

Look out for more Fortinomics next week.

Careers & Work Related Learning

National Careers Week 2026 (NCW26) 2nd-7th March

Following on from the recent National Apprenticeship Week, NCW26 begins on Monday 2nd March. We've got a range of careers related activities taking place in school and online next week. In tutor time sessions students will take careers related quizzes and in lessons, teachers will be emphasising the link between their subjects and possible future related careers. Through live webinars, students will also be exposed to a wide variety of careers. In the sixth form students and parents have already been informed about the launch of their careers sessions this half term.

Parents and carers may find these resources helpful - have a look at the links and use the information to have conversations with your child about NCW and future careers:

- **NCW 2026 booklet for parents** [link here](#)
- **NCW 2026 Virtual Careers Fair starting on Monday 2nd March** [link here](#)
- **This week's Fortismere Careers Newsletter is a NCW Special Edition** [link here](#)

And reminder that you can always access a **range of careers information on the school website** [here](#)

Science Department

Year 11 Physics Challenge Success

All Year 11 GCSE Physics students were recently entered into the Intermediate Physics Challenge - this is part of the suite of British Physics Olympiad challenges. Students rose to the challenge and plenty of Bronze, Silver and Gold certificates were achieved.

A special well done to the Gold certificate winners: Thomas Rack, Sam Braybrooke, Emily Eva Ranzoni, Jasper Hollier, Julian Olleson, Riccardo Villani, Baxter Davies, Preetish Ravi, Maximillian Mavric-Neal, Nicholas Cheung Yee Chau, Luke Nutt, Ali Cemgil, Riccardo Gagliardi, Tamar Goldberg, Finlay Crichton, Oliver Richmond, Vincent Westley, Shamil Yusuf, Cyrus Johnson

Library

New Shelves

A huge thank you to everyone who came through for the library and offered to donate or purchase us a bookcase. As you can see in the photo, we have received a wonderful donation. We were really touched by how many people offered to help and the sense of community that came from our request.

Our new shelves mean that we now have space to purchase even more [Barrington Stoke](#) books, and we have also managed to create a new reading nook. Students can look at books which we have multiple copies of so they can borrow books to read with their friends.



We're encouraging students to **Go All In with a friend** and read and discuss a book together! Why not try this at home too?

Welcome Back Jess Popplewell

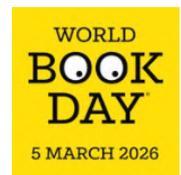
On Monday, we were very pleased to welcome back visiting author Jess Popplewell to hold workshops with more of our students. Jess enthralled students with her writing journey and once again, her activities were fun, captivating and focussed on supporting students to release and channel their own creativity into their work.

You can purchase a signed copy of Jess's book from Muswell Hill Children's Bookshop - use code **FORT0126** for a discount, and select **school free shipping** to have it delivered to school. [The Dark Within Us | Jess Popplewell | Children's Bookshop](#)

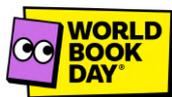


World Book Day Book Sale

Students have already started celebrating World Book Day 2026 during their library classes. This week there was *speed dating with a book!* Students were presented with a range of books and 'got to meet them' for a few minutes before having to decide if it was love at first read and worth borrowing from the library or if it was a dating fail. Next week we are holding a week-long book sale from Monday 2nd to Friday 5th March, inside or outside the library (depending on the weather). All books will be priced at 50p, or 3 for £1.



Name that Trolley



Since we made our new reading nook, we've noticed that this library book trolley has become a bit more prominent and is in need of a name! So we've launched a competition!

Students are invited to enter the **Name the trolley competition** by completing [this form](#) the winner will be chosen on World Book Day and announced in next week's newsletter - watch this space.



Sport & PE Notices

Haringey Football News

Four of our teams have qualified for the Haringey Football League semi finals. Well done to all those involved and good luck for your matches in the next round:

Boys: Year 7 vs St Thomas More; Year 9 v Greig City Academy; Year 10 v St Thomas More

Girls: Year 7 & 8 v Alexandra Park School

Middlesex Cup News

Our U18 Senior Football team are through to the Middlesex cup final! Congratulations to our senior boys who have made it through to the cup final for the 2nd time in 3 seasons! A dominant 6-2 win against Cardinal Vaughan School in Twickenham this week means that the team now look forward to the final on Wednesday 11th March.

There were strong performances across the pitch but special mentions to Noah Helfgott who scored 4 goals and as always the team was well led by captain Jason Braune. Good luck for the final!



Extra Curricular Timetable Updated

There have been a few changes to the Extra curricular timetable - see below and on the website [here](#)

- **Netball is back** now that is lighter in the evenings. Tuesdays after school on the netball courts.
- **Running Club** on Tuesday lunchtime with Ms Bailey bring a packed lunch and be ready to go at 1.10pm on the dot! Miss will meet you at the Sports Hall entrance.
- **Indoor Football** for Y7 girls and boys in the Sports Hall - Monday after school with Ms Jackson.
- **Hockey Club** is back on the Astro turf on Mondays after school.
- **Volleyball is back** in South Wing gym on Monday after school with Ms Boot.

Upcoming Fixtures

Mon 2 March	Y8 Boys Basketball Tournament 1pm-4pm @ HGW School
Tue 3 March	Y7 & 8 Girls Indoor Cricket Middlesex Finals Y9 Boys Basketball Tournament 1pm-4pm @APS
Wed 4 March	Y7 & 8 Girls Middlesex Cup Semi Final v Wren Academy Finchley
Thu 5 March	Y10 & 11 Boys Basketball Tournament @ APS 1pm-4pm
Fri 6 March	Y7 Boys Basketball Tournament @ Fortismere 1pm-4pm

Drama Department Notices

Year 11 GCSE Performance Evenings

Our Year 11 GCSE Drama cohort have been working really hard this week on their exam extracts. The students performed one of their extracts to a public audience of friends and family this week and were brilliant - really showing the culmination of all of their hard work, in anticipation of their exams next week.



BBFC Youth Panel Opportunity

 Exciting news! The BBFC Youth Panel is expanding, and they are looking for new members across all age groups! Established in 1912, The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) is the independent, not-for-profit film and video regulator for the UK. They help people choose age-appropriate films, videos and websites, wherever and however you watch or use them.

Help them shape the future of age ratings by joining one of their three new youth panel streams (Kids, Teens, Young Adults). It's an amazing opportunity to attend screenings, develop new skills, and represent the BBFC. **Find out more here [BBFC Youth Panel](#)**

Apply now with a short form and a two-minute video - deadline is Weds 11 March by 5pm

Beginner's Call: Easter Musical Theatre Course

Beginner's Call was founded by West End performers Carrie Hope Fletcher and Joel Montague. They provide masterclasses both in person and online, led by industry professionals.

An exciting opportunity to hone your musical theatre skills over Easter, the 2 day course features 12 masterclasses (6 masterclasses if you have bought a one day course). Focusing on the three main disciplines of Musical Theatre. Classes will be taught by current industry professionals. All teachers are working or have worked in the West End. The course is suitable for all secondary and A-level age groups. If this sounds like an opportunity that you'd like to be part of [click this link](#)

Extra Curricular & Enrichment

Chess Club Success

Twenty three teams played online in the English Schools Chess Championship Repechage C Event on Thursday afternoon and Fortismere came first with an impressive 93 points - a Fortismere record. We have now qualified to play at the next event on 19th March where we will be joined by teams eliminated in Round 2 of the ESCC regional stage. More details [here](#). Congratulations to the Fortismere Team - Stanley Badacsonyi (C), Amirali Nematollahi, Theo Mears, Oliver Rozmus, Alberto Chernin and Pavel Protopopov

Year 11 Notice

Deadline to Order Leavers Hoodies - Sunday 1st March

A reminder that the deadline to purchase Year 11 leavers hoodies is this **Sunday 01/03/2026 @ Midnight**. There are only 78 orders so far and students won't be able to order a hoodie after this weekend.

There will only be one order; students will **not** be able to place orders for hoodies after **01/03/2026**

Place orders here <https://shop.fizz-group.co.uk/> and enter **School ID: 25465YR11**
Ms Cuenca

Safeguarding at Fortismere

Safeguarding Contacts

If you wish to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead about any safeguarding matters or concerns please contact Ms Sullivan on safeguarding@fortismere.org.uk

Alternatively you can make a safeguarding referral using *My Voice* [use this link](#) or the QR code. You can also contact your child's Head of Year or Pastoral Support Manager.

