




Weekly Newsletter Issue: Friday 11th February 2022

Transforming Lives  
Through Education

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|--|---|-------------------|
| <p><b>Covid Update:</b> New guidance</p> <p>New <a href="#">guidance</a> for schools was issued by the DfE on January 19th.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- From 11 January a positive lateral flow test for students with no symptoms does not need to be confirmed by a positive PCR (there are exceptions, please see the Government guidance).</li><li>- From Monday 17 January, people who are self-isolating with COVID-19 will have the option to reduce their isolation period after <b>5 full days</b> if they test negative with a lateral flow device (LFD) test on both day 5 and day 6 and they do not have a temperature.</li><li>- Positive lateral flow tests must be reported to the NHS so that normal track and trace procedures can be followed.</li><li>- We will continue to supply packs of 7 LFTs to our students. Please continue to test at home twice-weekly.</li><li>- Anyone over the age of 18 years and 6 months who is not vaccinated, must isolate in line with government guidelines if they are a close contact of a positive case.</li></ul> <p><b>Very close contacts</b></p> <p>Students (from reception age or above) who live with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, should take an <u>LFD test every day for 7 days</u>: testing should start from when the first person in the home tests positive as household transmission is very likely to happen. If at any time the student becomes symptomatic, they must stay at home and arrange for a PCR test immediately (regardless of having already had a negative PCR test result).</p> <p><b>Face coverings</b></p> <p>From after half term (21/2) face coverings will be voluntary. We will still expect students to follow the guidance regarding hand and respiratory hygiene.</p> | <a href="#">Co-Headteachers</a>               |                   |
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|  | <b>14/2/2022-18/2/2022</b>                    | Half term holiday |
| <b>25/2/22</b>   | Y9 Options deadline                           |                   |
| <b>8/3/22</b>  | International Women's Day                     |                   |
| <b>18/3/22</b>   | Red Nose Day                                  |                   |
| <div><h1>FEBRUARY<br/>HALF TERM</h1></div>  |   |                   |

## Co-Headteachers

### Weekly Roundup

There's much to report this week. Last night's Music and Poetry event was the perfect way to end the half term. The audience were treated to a series of poems, mostly written and performed by our Key Stage 3 students interspersed with a vast array of musical treats from vocal and instrumental solos and ensemble performances for some of our bands, our string group and big band. There was a recurring theme of rebirth and renewal in many of the items. We heard works from Mozart to Billie Holiday and Bob Dylan to Olivia Rodrigo. It was eclectic, it was diverse and it was everything that is wonderful about our school and its students. The standard of music-making and poetry writing left the audience speechless at times. The event was also attended by our inspirational Patron of Reading, Sita Bramachari, who has kindly taken the time to share her thoughts on the evening later in this Newsletter. We would like to thank Mr Jefferies, our Director of Music and Ms Ward, our Head Librarian for bringing this event to life. We would encourage our parents to always keep an eye on upcoming performances and exhibitions from our creative departments as, regardless of whether or not your child is involved, you are guaranteed a culturally enriching experience.

We were delighted this week to see competitive Rugby return to our school field as Fortismere took on Latymer. This was the first Rugby fixture since the pandemic; another indicator we are returning to life as we knew it. We were also delighted to note that Fortismere won which presents us with more sporting success to celebrate. Turning to football, we'd like to single out Araya Dennis (Y11) for praise this week as she certainly did her school proud by representing England at the England U16 vs Germany U16 earlier this week. There's a great shot of Araya in action for you to enjoy this week.



Turning to the theme of renewal, we sincerely hope that our families all find time to relax and re-energise over the half term break. We are very much looking forward to the part of spring term when spring actually arrives and look forward to welcoming back our students just as the blossoms begin to arrive.

## Parent and Student Engagement Notices

### Parent and Carer Webinars

Our LGBTQ+ webinar this week went well and it was good to see plenty of parents joining us online. The next webinar will focus on issues related to drugs and alcohol (see below for booking details). After half-term we will advertise dates for two more webinars on Dealing with anxiety. We're also hoping to arrange some follow-up Question & Answer sessions on the webinars.

#### **Drugs and Alcohol Tuesday 1st March 2022 at 6.00pm to 7.00pm**

This webinar for parents/carers will be facilitated by Geminee Patel, Senior Practitioner, Insight Platform. Insight Platform is the Children, Young People & Family Service, commissioned by London Borough of Haringey. The session will help you to update your knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Current Drug Trends
- Signs of Drug use and Talking to your child about Drugs and Alcohol
- Referrals to Insight and support in school

To book a place email your child's full name and tutor group to [rharris@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:rharris@fortismere.org.uk). A link will be sent out prior to the workshop.

**Ms R Harris**  
**Parent and Student Engagement Officer**

## Student well-being Notice

### Children's mental health week

This week is Place2Be's Children's Mental Health week - [see this link for more details](#). The focus of the week is *Growing Together*. Growing Together is about growing emotionally and finding ways to help each other grow. Challenges and setbacks can help us to grow and adapt and trying new things can help us to move beyond our comfort zone into a new realm of possibility and potential. However, emotional growth is often a gradual process that happens over time, and sometimes we might feel a bit 'stuck'.



This week students have had an assembly about Growing Together and we are encouraging them to take part in our challenge 'writing a letter to a younger person'. We would like students to write a letter (maximum length one side of A4) to a younger person about how they have grown over the years and offering advice about what they know now that they didn't know then. Further information about the challenge is *attached*, entries should be sent to [kjackson@fortismere.org.uk](mailto:kjackson@fortismere.org.uk)

**Ms Jackson**  
**Mental Health Champion**

## Year 7 News

### Sweet messages raise £100 for charity

Well done to the Year 7's who have raised £100 for charity by donating £1 and writing Valentine's messages to each other. The charity has not been chosen yet so this is something to think about after the half term. A special thank you goes out to the Student Ambassadors who collected the money, put the sweets in bags and delivered them on the last day of term.



**Ms Arrowsmith**  
**Head of Year 7**

## Year 8 News

### Student Ambassadors work on exciting new projects

The Student Ambassadors are working with other Year 8 students on a variety of exciting new projects. These include creating a mural for the new drama garden outside the drama studio in North Wing, two dance groups creating a small performance piece, a guitar group, an exercise group, a sign language learning group, a basketball group and a mandarin catch up group. Students have been invited from their tutor groups and will work on their projects during form time on Tuesdays until Easter.

Here are some photos from this week's session. Watch out for more news on the projects later.



**Ms Turner**  
**Deputy Head of Year 8**

## Year 9 News

### Valentine roses raise £217 for charity

Congratulations to Year 9 students who raised a HUGE £217 for charity this week selling and delivering roses around the school. They did a fantastic job. Many thanks to everyone who supported them by buying a valentine rose. After half term, Year 9 will vote to decide who will be the beneficiary charity.

**Ms Jackson**  
**Head of Year 9**



## Politics Department News

### Visit from Lord Carlile

On Friday 4th February Lord Carlile visited Fortismere library to speak to our A Level Politics students about his life in politics and the law and his experiences in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords. He discussed his time as an MP for a rural Welsh constituency, his role as the UK's independent reviewer of terrorist legislation, and the impact of 9/11 on his approach to this role, his reasons for leaving the Liberal Democrats and his love of Burnley Football Club. After listening intently during his engaging and often humorous talk, our pupils questioned him on range of topics, including his view of the current cabinet, his thoughts on the legitimacy of the House of Lords, his views on current legislation and his opinions on our electoral system. Lord Carlile was very complimentary about the pupils afterwards, and may have inspired the career aspirations of some budding politicians and barristers in the audience!



### Visit from Baroness Fox and Lord Wood

On Wednesday 9th February the school was visited by Baroness Fox, a non affiliated peer and Lord Wood, a Labour peer, to discuss how left wing beliefs can align with Brexit. They discussed and debated ideas around sovereignty, immigration, democracy and inequality. Fortismere pupils asked some excellent questions on the democratic legitimacy of the House of Lords, the impact on Northern Ireland and what the ideal Brexit would have looked like. Thank you to all who attended!

## Library Notices

### Stationery Shop

A reminder that the library sells stationery from pencils to calculators, all at cost price. Our filled pencil cases are very popular - £3.50 for everything you need, including gluesticks. We also sell handy packs of tissues for 10p.





## Patron of Reading Visit

Our Patron of Reading, Sita Brahmachari, came to the library on 8<sup>th</sup> February with Billie to spend some time with a Year 8 class. Using “Red Leaves” as a starting point, she took the students on a journey through her writing inspirations, and they were delighted to recognise many of the local places described in the book. Sita also proved that they all have stories inside them, and it was great to share so many of them. Sita later ran a session with a small group on her Barrington Stoke book “Brace Mouth False Teeth” and was very pleased with the students’ perceptive comments, ideas and exemplary doodling. Billie was also very pleased because they all read passages from the book to him, and fed him carrots!



## Recommended Reads of the Week

Books for Children’s Mental Health Week, all available (with many more) in the library. Research shows that reading for pleasure improves mental wellbeing, with more than half (59%) of children saying reading in lockdown made them feel better and half (50%) saying it inspired them to dream about the future (*The Literacy Trust, January 2022*).



## From our Patron of Reading

### Ode to Fortismere’s creative inspiration in Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week.

It was with a great sense of joy, hope and pride that I attended the inspirational Music and Poetry Concert at Fortismere. From Year 7 to sixth form, students revealed their great gifts for writing, singing, musicality, individuality, choral skill and strength. It was an honour to read from my favourite poet Maya Angelou, who has been for me an inspiration of courage and humanity throughout my life. Great art lives with us and in us. I sat next to some parents whose daughter was singing and I was overwhelmed by emotion. In front of me were a row of Year 7 and 8s supporting each other as they stood up to read their spellbindingly good fledgling poems. In the interval I loved chatting to a family recently welcomed into the Fortismere community - every parent in the room would treasure the ‘Poem to Mum’ that the student composed and read with such conviction. A poem intended to convey pure love.

We as humans have felt the drought of communal experience and looking around this feeling was tangible. We were a community that needed to share voices, music, poetry, humour, talent and choral experience across generations. Not just me then shedding a pride-tear!

Since my first novel ‘Artichoke Hearts’ I have written about the power of the arts to heal, empower, and give

strength at every stage of life and why it should be a place where we all belong and are represented. My work spans the age range from Years 7 to 13. Last night I read 18 year old Kai's words from my latest novel 'When Shadows Fall'. He writes through traumatic times in need of fluidly, in free verse, poetry and prose. His friend Omid, a recently arrived refugee survivor paints and draws his way to regeneration while Kai's father Dex fills his son's heart with jazz music. Through the power of the arts Kai and his friends Omid, Orla and Zak are transformed and through the strength communal work brings them they help rebuild the heart of their community. There was literally nowhere better I could have read from this story that tells the journey of a group of bonded young people and their community from nursery to sixth form.

On the way out I congratulated one of the hugely talented singers ... who it turns out I have known since primary school.

I call this 'heart-work'. It's why anyone who works with young people does the hard yards.... for who does not remember the moment when they felt their creative self was seen and heard? These moments can sustain and are a charge that lasts a lifetime.

Many congratulations to the staff and young artists for this exquisite, cherished 'heart-work.' I imagine Kai will go on to do this work too! I have a feeling that I'll be inspired by so many of you again and way beyond the gates of Fortismere.

**Sita Brahmachari**

*Sita Brahmachari is an award winning author, Fortismere's Patron of Reading, an Amnesty Ambassador and Writer in Residence at Islington Centre for Refugees and Migrants.*

## PE & Sports Department Notices

### Half term round up

Although it's been a short half term Fortismere students have crammed in an unbelievable amount of sport in the last six weeks. And, I'm proud to say, enjoyed plenty of success along the way. We have had Indoor Cricket competitions, Sports Hall Athletics events, Hockey tournaments, Rugby matches, Cross Country races, Netball fixtures, Table-Tennis competitions and Football matches galore! It's been all across the board as well from the U18 1<sup>st</sup> XI through to the Year 7 'D' Teams. There are many highlights including our U18 Boys winning their London Area Hockey tournament and qualifying through to the London and Home County Finals, a really amazing achievement by a state school in a sport mainly only played by independent school nowadays.

Also, a special mention to our wonderful Young Sports Leaders who officiated the Year 5/6 Primary Girls Football tournament held at New River Sports Centre recently. The organisers, Haringey Sport, said the Fortismere leaders were just brilliant! Leadership skills, and the opportunities to use them, are a massive part of our all-round sport offering here at Fortismere and we just love hearing this kind of feedback about our students.

The stand out moment though was a group of PE teachers clustered around Ms Vangucci's computer watching live coverage of the U18 women's football match between Portugal v England featuring Fortismere's very own Araya Dennis in the three lions shirt. Amazing! Araya recently attended an England, Warm Weather training camp, which included matches against Portugal and Germany, in which she heavily featured. This is a reward for all Araya's hard work and dedication and she knows she will have to continue this if she is to remain on her incredible journey. It speaks volumes for Araya's commitment to Fortismere that within days of playing an international match against Germany she was getting ready to play for Fortismere in their Middlesex Cup Match against APS. What a true Star! Have a fantastic half term break

**Mr Orton**  
**Director of Sport**



## Hockey boys are London Champions

Our U18 Boys Hockey Team travelled to Ashford to play in their London Zone Hockey competition, an event that brings in the best hockey teams from schools all over the capital. I'm so delighted to report that our boys won the event and now qualify through to the London & Home Counties Regional finals. A dramatic last minute flicked goal saw us get the victory. Well done Mr Kay and Boys.



## Year 7 Girls Netball Team

Our Y7 Girls Netball Team competed in their first competition on Tuesday. Well done to them! They're looking forward to more matches in the future.



## Six Nations? Fortismere is where the real rugby is at!



On Wednesday afternoon Our Year 9 Rugby Team played their first competitive match - ever! They played Latymer School in a thrilling game that saw our Boys edge it by 30 points to 25. Both teams are new to the game and the match was played in a coaching/training style but Fortismere were definitely good for the win playing, at times, some really free flowing rugby combined with tenacious tackling and rucking. A well earned win!



## Sports Leaders exemplary again

On Wednesday Haringey Sports organised the borough wide Primary Girls Football Tournament for Years 5 and 6. This is a massive undertaking and the event saw over 400 girls compete. Once again it was Fortismere who the borough came to when they were looking for sports leaders of the highest quality to officiate and pitch manage at the tournament. Organiser Adem Ali said that Fortismere Leaders were brilliant and the tournament probably the best they have ever run. High Praise indeed for our wonderful young leaders. The end of the tournament was also special for Fortismere as our current England International, Araya Dennis, presented the successful teams with their medals. It wasn't that long ago that Araya was playing in, and winning, the very same tournament.



## Results and Fixtures

### Results This Week

Tuesday - Y7 Netball Champs 1-3pm at Channing School **6th**  
Tuesday – Hockey U18 Hockey Tournament Ashford – All day. London Area - **Champions**  
Wednesday – Rugby Y9 v Latymer (H) 2.30 Kick Of **Won 30-25**  
Wednesday – Hockey U16 Tournament, Ashford – All Day  
Friday –Hockey U16 T/B/A

### Fixtures Next Week (after half term)

No external fixtures first week back – see the extra curricular timetable for clubs *attached*

## Half Term Activities

### Half term activities in Haringey

The Fortismere Holiday Camps are all sold out now but if you are looking for local things to do in the break download a copy of the [Haringey February 2022 Half Term Fun Booklet](#) - there are lots of activities taking place, including sports, art workshops and drama clubs.

New River Sports Centre is also running a range of holiday camps including archery, fencing and zorb football - [see details here](#)

