

School Leadership Messages

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Calendar

05.01 School starts 8.35am

25.01 & 27-29.01 Fortismere Drama Dept Jack & The Beanstalk [Tickets here](#)

Thank you for supporting our Student Ambassadors' charity work this year. The Muswell Hill Food Bank were amazed at how much we collected for them last week.



Feedback at Fortismere [here](#)

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YOUR FEEDBACK, OUR ACTION

Autumn Term 2025

FACILITIES

We are continuing our conversation with Haringey Council to seek support to upgrade our toilet facilities. In the meantime we have repurposed a block of staff toilets for use by our Year 8-11 boys. We have increased the monitoring and cleaning of our toilets during the school day. This has led to a decrease in reported issues. We have also put up mirrors in the toilets after feedback from our students.

COSX - PARENT INTERFACE

We are working closely with the developers of CosX to make our reports as useful and accessible as possible. The system is already transforming our ability to closely monitor students' progress in school. We will seek further feedback from parents, students and teachers next term.

HOMEWORK

Following a successful trial of Sparx Reader and Sparx Science, we will be rolling out Sparx across the core subjects at Key Stage 3&4 to provide consistent, differentiated high quality homework and revision resources. Please get in touch if you have any issues with computer access.

Use the link to the Feedback at Fortismere form on the weekly newsletter to share your ideas with us.

Headteacher's Message

This week began with our stunning Christmas music concerts on Monday and Tuesday evenings. The talent and musicianship on display were exceptional, but what struck me most profoundly was the way our students supported one another throughout their performances. Whether they were performing solos, playing in ensembles or bands, or singing in our choirs, the encouragement and care they showed each other was a real testament to the strength of our Fortismere community. I'm delighted to share that the Year 7 Christmas hamper raffle has raised an incredible £3,209. This outstanding figure is thanks to the generosity of our families and the hard work of the 'Friends of Fortismere' in organising this festive fundraiser.

This week also sees the publication of the latest bumper edition of our student magazine, Fortistory, produced by our talented Press Gang team. It's always a great read and the product of considerable hard work and dedication from our students. I'd encourage you all to take a look (available via our website [here](#)). It's wonderful to see our young journalists developing their skills and sharing their perspectives on school life.

This term, the school leadership team has been engaged in an important piece of work that I'm excited to share with you. Alongside our governors, staff, students, and parent representatives, we have been working to re-articulate Fortismere's vision and values for the years ahead. This collaborative exercise has been both energising and thought-provoking, and I've thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to engage with all our stakeholders in these meaningful conversations. This work is now complete, and I'm very much looking forward to sharing the outcomes with you all in January. As we enter the new year, it feels like the perfect moment to consider the future direction of our school and to move forward together with renewed purpose and clarity about what we stand for and where we're heading.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to those parents who have continued to provide us with valuable feedback through our 'Feedback at Fortismere' form. Your input is genuinely important to us and helps shape our decision-making. This half term, several key themes have emerged from your responses, particularly around reporting, homework, and our facilities. We have shared information about the actions we're taking in response to your feedback on the front page of this Newsletter. Please continue to share your thoughts with us and continue to use the feedback form. Our leadership team is checking this weekly so it very much supports an ongoing dialogue between school and home.

We have felt a strong sense of community at Fortismere as we've celebrated the season together. This year we reflected on the ideas of 'hope' and 'light' as sources of comfort during times when the world around us brings news of tragic events such as war, conflict, and senseless acts of violence like the horrific shooting at Bondi Junction. While our hearts break for those affected by such events, witnessing how our community comes together in support of one another offers us light in dark times. Seeing our students encourage and congratulate each other during celebration assemblies has been a wonderful example of this spirit. Your extraordinary generosity in donating to the local food bank was gratefully received this week. When the food was collected, the organisers told us this was their biggest contribution ever! Thank you for showing what it truly means to be part of the Fortismere community.

As we close the term and look ahead to the break, I want to wish you all a peaceful and restful holiday season. Whether you're celebrating Christmas, continuing to celebrate Hanukkah, or simply enjoying time with family and friends, I hope you find moments of joy and relaxation.

Governing Board

Let Us Know What You Think - Sixth Form Academic Entry Requirements

The governing board are consulting on proposed changes to sixth form academic entry requirements and would like to hear your views on the proposals. Full details were sent in a Parentmail and are available on the school website [here](#). The consultation runs until 31st January so there is plenty of time to respond.

Parent Governor Election - Remember to Vote by 2nd January

Voting in the parent governor election is open until Friday 2nd January 2026, at 5pm. A link to vote and a unique voter number has been sent to all registered parents. Election statements from the candidates are published on the school website [here](#).

Careers & Work Related Learning

Careers Fair - Tuesday 24th March 2026

Fortismere is looking to re-establish our Careers Fair with exhibitors coming in on Tuesday 24th March to meet all of our students in school during the day and parents and students in the evening. If you have an interest in sharing details about your job/professional role or can help us with bringing exhibitors from your company/organisation into school for the fair we would be really delighted to hear from you.

If interested, kindly contact Florence Herrero (Assistant Head KS4) and Mark Renner (Head of Business and Economics & Careers Lead) at the following email address: careers@fortismere.org.uk

If you have any other suggestions about how your company may be able to support us in delivering our careers education at school do not hesitate to get in touch!

Physics Department

Year 12 Science Trip to Geneva - September 2026

We are pleased to offer all our year 12 A-Level Science students the amazing opportunity of a 3-day residential trip to Geneva in Switzerland in September 2026. The trip includes some real scientific highlights with visits to CERN and the Large Hadron Collider complex, the History of Science Museum, the United Nations and the Plasma Research Centre as well as the opportunity to explore historic Geneva. There are 30 places available and if the sign up exceeds this number, places will be allocated by ballot.

We will leave early on Thursday 10th September and return late on Saturday 12th September 2026 to Finsbury Park station (this links to the Gatwick Express and is our preferred transport hub). The trip is designed to give students a richer understanding of their science subject and an insight into large-scale globally collaborative cutting edge scientific research. The trip is not a requirement of the school curriculum or exam board but should be of interest and value to all students studying science to A-Level. The overall cost of the trip is £625. This includes the train to and from the airport, flights, comfortable accommodation, all breakfasts and evening meals, tour guides, entrance fees and travel insurance. This is an amazing trip.

Please look out for the sign up details coming to you via parentmail and note that deposits must be paid by Monday 5th January for the school to access the present costing. If you have any further questions please contact Mr. Commons, ncommons@fortismere.org.uk Head of Physics.

Eco Committee

How Fortismere Cut Its Carbon

In November the Eco Committee set the Fortismere community a challenge - to cut their carbon use by taking 6 simple steps: Make three evening meals plant-based across the month; Make any three journeys 'active' across the month; Have a device-free day; Meal plan to reduce food waste for one week; Lower the washing machine temperature to 30°C for three washes; Turn down the heating by 1°C for a week

The Eco Committee has now pulled together all the information from tutor groups across the school and are pleased to announce the results.....In total, through our joint actions, **we have reduced the amount of carbon emitted by 6608.2 Kg of carbon dioxide.**

This 6 tonnes of carbon dioxide is the equivalent of:

- **Vehicle use:** Equivalent to avoiding the emissions from driving an average gasoline-powered passenger vehicle for approximately **33,041 kilometres** (around 20,530 miles).
- **Household energy:** Comparable to the amount of carbon sequestered by **284 tree seedlings** grown for 10 years. It is also roughly the amount of electricity consumed by over **four average UK homes** in one year.
- **Waste management:** The greenhouse gas emissions avoided by recycling approximately **22 metric tons** of waste instead of sending it to a landfill.
- **Travel:** Equivalent to avoiding the emissions of a one-way economy flight from New York to London for over **seven passengers.**

We should be very proud of our collective achievements. Please remember to try to integrate these simple steps into your everyday lives and to continue to work to cut your carbon.

Year 9 Notice

Year 9 Options Key Dates for 2026

Please see some key dates below for the Year 9 options process. Information will be added to [this section](#) on the website in due course but for now please note these dates:

- Wednesday 4 February 2026: Options Evening (face to face)
- Wednesday 25 February 2026: Parents Evening (online)
- Wednesday 4 March 2026: Options Form Due

Exams Office

Additional Language Exams Summer 2026

Fortismere students in Years 9 to 13 are being offered the opportunity to take additional language exams this summer - this is suited to students who are proficient in another language through home use or through previous study. There is further information on the website [here](#) in terms of the languages offered, the exam boards covered and the cost of exam entry.

If your child is interested please have a look at the information and complete the registration form. If you have any queries please contact exams@fortismere.org.uk

Drama Department Notices

Pantomime Tickets Now on Sale!

N10 PRODUCTIONS fortismereDRAMA
PRESENTS
Jack AND THE Beanstalk
A PANTOMIME

25 January 2025 2:30pm (Doors 2:00pm)
27, 28, 29 January 2025 7pm (Doors 6:30pm)
£18 Adults / £12 Under 18s
Tickets from:
www.fortismerecentre.co.uk

@fortismereDrama
North Wing Hall,
Fortismere School,
Creighton Avenue Entrance,
Muswell Hill N10 1NS

**N10 Productions and
Fortismere Drama present:**

Jack and the Beanstalk
A giant problem...
an even bigger adventure!

Book now and join Jack for the climb of his life!

[Tickets available here](#)

Our shows always sell out in advance, so buy tickets early and help us fundraise to provide more amazing opportunities and professional equipment for our students.

Final Week of Rehearsals Before Show Month!

We can't quite believe we are heading into show month in just a few weeks' time! Where has the time gone? It has been a very busy week in the rehearsal room as we have started running the full show. Our staff cast members have started to rehearse more and it has been fun seeing them in role and taking to the stage - some newbies and some seasoned performers! Set building has begun and our backstage crews have started to work on costumes, props, and lights ahead of January where we will be in full swing with the panto piecing it together, bit by bit. Thank you to everyone involved for your dedication and hard work this term. Please make sure you spend some of the holidays learning your lines and going over your scenes so you are off book when we return. Happy festive season to all and see you after the break!



Punchdrunk 'Lander 23': Y12 and Y13 Experience Immersive!

A highlight of the week was definitely our Y12 and Y13 trip to *Lander 23*, Punchdrunk's latest theatrical endeavour: an immersive gaming experience. "Tasked with uncovering uncharted territories", attendees became crew for the evening, navigating each other through missions, escaping guards, and becoming real time characters in a game.

All the teams had stories to tell by the end of the experience, along with a rush of adrenaline, and the desire to play again!



We can recommend going to *Lander 23* and taking part, it's fun, thrilling, and an engaging experience for all!

Drama and Theatre Work Experience

Park Theatre, Finsbury Park: Monday 16th-Friday 20th February 2026 10.15am-3.30pm
Work experience for students aged 14-18 in school Years 10-13

This one-week work experience is an opportunity for young people to gain hands-on experience in all areas of theatre work. A series of masterclasses led by a team of expert professionals, will give participants an insight into working in areas of theatre such as Producing, Technical, Directing, Marketing and more. Participants will also develop their knowledge of different pathways into the industry. Places on this programme are free. Apply to take part by filling out this [application form](#).

Polka Theatre, Wimbledon: Monday 22 June-Friday 26 June 2026.

Polka Theatre will work with a group of 20 students from school Years 11 & 12. The group will spend time with all departments at Polka including production, marketing, fundraising, creative learning and visitor services. Participants will learn about how they make theatre for children, and experience how an arts organisation is run. As part of the week all students will get to see the current productions, take part in practical workshops and present a production pitch to the Polka team. Full application details [here](#)

Music Department

Our Prizewinners!

Well done to all the students who have had singing or instrumental lessons this term. Learning an instrument takes hard work and dedication so congratulations to everyone for the effort they have put in and continue to put in! We asked our music teachers to nominate two students for special mention, so we are delighted to announce the students who received a certificate and a prize in their Celebration Assemblies this week (in no particular order):

For superb attendance this term: **Rosie Price, Noah Newbold, Mikail Yusuf, Eli Harridge, Phoebe Kapos, Catherine Morley, Pasha Ovanosov, Billy Watson, Shayam Seeruttun, Libby Harris, Scarlett-Havana Clarke, Aanya Roy, Efe Davies, Sherry Luximon, and Evie Ramkissoon.**

For outstanding progress and dedication: **Charlie Barnett, Jackson Bullock, David Dochitoui, Stanley Crosby, Eva Racos, Lyla Smale, Selin Buyukkaragoz, Melanija Marjanovic, Jacopo Pozzi, Lucas Aksoy, Pasha Ovanosov, Amitai Meshulam, Alayna Chomoko, Gustave Bernas, and Oscar Hall.**

Instrumental & Vocal Lessons Next Term

Lessons will begin the first week back, (ie Monday 5th January), and timetables will be put up on Google Classroom by the beginning of next week. Any queries about lessons in the first week of term should be sent to Mr Watson at mwatson@fortismere.org.uk as the fmcinfo@fortismere.org.uk email will not be monitored until Tuesday 13th January.

Applications for lessons during the week and School of Rock are still open via [this form](#).

Sport & PE Notices

Netball News

Last week was the Grand Finals in the Haringey Netball Tournament - the top two teams from the Haringey Leagues meet to play off for the overall top spot There are 14 secondary schools in Haringey and the Fortismere Girls made it through to every year group final!

Unfortunately the Year 7 and 9 Squads will have to wait until after Christmas for their matches as Tuesday's fixtures were rained off. The Year 8 and 10 squads were more fortunate with the weather and it was actually sunny for their matches!

The Year 8s played Heartlands in the semi-final and won 8-4, which meant they went on to play APS in the final. It was end to end and the two teams were very evenly matched but unfortunately APS won by only one goal. Etta was the girl of the match.

The Year 10s also met APS in their semi final and again it was a very competitive match with both teams equally as good and again APS beat us by just one goal! The Year 10s met St Thomas More in the 3rd/4th play off match which they won convincingly. Well done to Saoirse who was girl of the match.



Well done to everyone involved in netball this season - you have all been a pleasure to coach and a pleasure to watch play a real credit to the school.

Middlesex Cup News

The Under 14 Girls are through to the semi finals of the Middlesex Cup after beating Chiswick School at home on Tuesday this week. They played very well from the start, Farrah scored early and set us on a run of goals - the final score was 10 -0! Etta scored 4, Farrah 5 and Salma 1.

Well done to all, it was a very strong performance and a great way to finish off 2025.



Football News

The Year 9 Boys are undefeated so far this season in the Haringey League, so they were confident travelling to St Thomas More this week, even though we only had 11 players! Fortismere got off to a positive start, although they were also lucky not to concede as STM missed a couple of open goals. Max made a few great saves and by half time it was all square. We conceded an early goal in the second half but Teddy was fouled just outside the 18 yard box and slotted home a great free kick - all square again. Unfortunately, they had a few lucky shots and our heads went down a bit - finishing 3-2. Unlucky boys.



Our Year 7 squad travelled to Harris Academy on Wednesday, where they had a great game and played really well as a team, winning 7-0. Well done to all.



New Extra Curricular Timetable for January 2026

We have updated our timetable of extra curricular sports and PE for January 2026. You can [download a copy from the website here](#)

Upcoming Fixtures

Tuesday 5th January: Haringey U13 Girls Indoor Cricket - Sports Hall 2pm

Wednesday 6th January: Year 11 Parents Evening (face to face)

Thursday 8th January: Year 8 Boys Football v APS 2.30pm ko (home)

Library

Author Visits

In the new year, the Library will be hosting three fabulous authors who will come into school to deliver talks and workshops to our students. We have most of their books in the library already and we will be getting a few more copies before the visits. In the meantime, if you're looking for last minute gift ideas you could always buy a copy for your child and then they could bring their book into school for signing by the authors.



The Perks of Graphic Novels

Recently, the Library has been promoting graphic novels, especially to our reluctant readers, and we are actively trying to expand the collection with more thought provoking ones covering a variety of themes. Studies have demonstrated that memory retention using pictures is far greater than by simply reading text; in other words, pictures help us remember things more easily. This is where graphic novels come in, stimulating the brain in different ways to a traditionally written book. This also means that, for those readers who struggle to create a mental image of what they are reading, a comic book or a graphic novel can be a gateway to start forming those images, and thus remembering more about the text.

It is with these thoughts in mind that the Library has been trying to inspire students by acquiring and showcasing a variety of graphic novels, from accurate retelling of the classics, making some stories more accessible, to slice of life stories from authors with a variety of backgrounds and experiences, as well as more educational books.

In the new year, we hope to be able to purchase more graphic novels and to inspire our reluctant readers even more. Here are some of our favourites, click on an image to read more about the book on the Accessit library catalogue.



Extra Curricular Clubs

Weaving Words

The first term of Weaving Words is drawing to a festive close. Each group ended with a small party and some fun games! The new term begins on the 5th of January with a whole host of fresh creative writing activities. Children who have taken part have told me that they enjoy each session as a way of letting their imagination flow freely, and that they have enjoyed the added sweetness of an end of session biscuit!. My lovely students make new friends and share their words, receiving relevant feedback from their peers to develop new ideas. Students have mentioned that with this added weekly writing practice their grades in English have shot up! Excellent news.

Several students in Years 9/10 have asked to use the Weaving Words Creative Writing Club and my input for their Duke of Edinburgh award. Which is a great honour, indeed.

We will continue to meet upstairs, in the backroom of the Fortismere library every week from 3.20pm-4.20pm. The cost will remain at £160 per term. If your child is interested in rejoining or joining up for the first time, or if you would like more information, please contact me at Weaving100words@gmail.com I hope to see many of this year's wonderful writers again in 2026. All the very best and I hope you have a very happy festive season and a very happy new year!

Ms Massey

School Catering

Student Catering Accounts

Could you please ensure that your child's catering accounts are fully settled and have no outstanding balances owed to the canteen.

Negative balances will continue to be closely monitored next term. If any lunch account reaches **minus £10 or more**, parents/carers will be notified via Parentmail that an urgent top-up is required. Please ensure the balance is cleared before lunchtime to avoid any issues with your child receiving a canteen meal.

Alternatively, please ensure your child brings a packed lunch to school. To help avoid disruption, we strongly recommend enabling the Auto Top-Up feature on ParentMail.

Thank you for your continued support.

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.



Please note there is limited checking of school safeguarding emails and My Voice during school holidays. If you require any support during this time we recommend you contact the NHS, Police or your council's safeguarding and children's services teams. Links for support can be found on our [website](#)

