

School Leadership Messages	Contents																				
<p><b>Fortismere Rebuild</b></p> <p>Fortismere are delighted to announce that the DfE has agreed to include our school in their rebuild programme. We have yet to finalise details on the extent of the rebuild which covers the spectrum from the refurbishment of the South Wing to a new school; we will let you know the details when we have a clearer idea. We anticipate the opportunity for an onsite meeting with parents and the local community to share information and listen to views.</p> <p><b>Top Achievement Points This Week</b></p> <p>Well done to the following students who are our top achievement point scorers this week</p>	<p><b>CoHeads' Weekly Roundup</b></p> <p><b>School Trip Report</b></p> <p><b>House News</b></p> <p><b>Fortismind</b></p> <p><b>Careers Information</b></p> <p><b>Department News &amp; Notices</b></p> <p><b>LINC Department</b></p> <p><b>Easter Holiday Camps</b></p> <p><b>Safeguarding Information</b></p>																				
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	<p><b>OFFICIAL EMPATHY WEEK 2024</b></p> <p>Next week is <b>Empathy Week</b> See <a href="#">here</a> for details of resources and events to help young people develop the skill of empathy</p>																				

## Co-Headteachers

### Weekly Roundup

It's been a pretty wet and grey week in Muswell Hill but our students thankfully returned to school on Monday re-energised and ready for a packed week of learning activities. It's been an important week for student voices too as tutor times have been buzzing with the excitement of form captain elections. We are all looking forward to hearing the representations of our successful candidates in the coming weeks and months. Congratulations to all students who decided to stand in these elections. While not everyone can be successful in these processes, the value of standing in terms of developing confidence and articulating your views and ideas should never be underestimated.

The notion of expressing views and presenting arguments has been the theme of this week's Co-headteachers' assemblies and we have set this theme against the backdrop of the big year of elections taking place across the globe in 2024. 49% of people will be living in nations who have leadership elections this year and we wanted to address the fact that this is likely to make for a year of heated arguments and exchanges in all countries affected, including of course, this one. We were most keen to share the potential impacts of views and arguments being shared online as given the issues with the regulation of the internet and social media in particular we are concerned by the risk to our young people from extreme and radical views that may be presented as well as the emotional impact on them of arguments that can turn sinister and nasty. Considering what constitutes a 'healthy argument' is a skill that we cover with them as well as addressing their own responsibilities with regards to how they respond to angry, biased or dangerous content. We are reminded of recent interviews with the mother of Brianna Ghey, how challenging it is for parents to police the internet for online content and agree that there do need to be stronger measures to control both images and discourse that appears on the internet. However, we can also mitigate risk by frequently discussing this with our children and reminding them how to keep themselves safe online.

Finally, parents and carers will have seen our announcement on page one of today's Newsletter that Fortismere has been identified by the Department of Education as a school to be included in their rebuild programme. While we are not yet clear on the extent of the rebuild and do not have any sense of a timescale we do know that this is the beginning of an important partnership between the school, the DfE and the London borough of Haringey which will ultimately lead to new facilities for our students. This is an incredibly exciting prospect and we look forward to keeping parents informed as things progress.

We wish everyone a restful weekend!

## School Trip Report

### Fortismere Hit the Italian Slopes

Following the roaring success of last year's half-term ski trip to Les Deux Alpes, this year saw Fortismere students embark on an unforgettable trip to Pinzolo, Italy. The picturesque setting provided the perfect backdrop for an adventure-packed experience as you can see in the photos - the last one is the winner of the student photo competition.

It was a long day of travel (leaving school at 1am Saturday) but students were incredibly well-behaved throughout; excitement and adrenaline carrying them through the night. On the mountain,



students honed their skiing skills under expert guidance, navigating the slopes with enthusiasm and camaraderie. Our large cohort of beginner skiers took everything in their stride and made impressive progress over the 5 days whilst the top group enjoyed the black runs on offer.

We were blessed with perfect weather conditions - heavy snowfall on the first day followed by glorious sunshine for the rest of the trip (with only minimal goggle tan). Our students certainly made the most of the sun and were the life of the party at our lunch terrace on the slopes.

The trip not only offered thrilling outdoor activities but also cultural immersion, as students explored the charming local villages and indulged in authentic Italian cuisine. It really doesn't get much better than pizza in Italy! Memories were created through the combination of exhilarating skiing, breath-taking scenery, and shared moments of joy and laughter among classmates, making it a truly amazing and enriching journey for everyone involved.

Throughout the trip, staff were continuously impressed by the students' excellent behaviour, time-keeping skills and ability to follow instructions safely. Not to mention their sing-alongs and energy on the disco dancefloor! Thank you to all students and staff for creating a truly unforgettable trip. Mr Barsby and his dream team can't wait to share details of other trips. So if you are in Year 8 or 9 and fancy the trip of a life time, keep a look out for announcements around school and in future newsletters.

Mr Ward



## House News

### Inter-House Design & Technology Competition

I'm thrilled to shine a spotlight on some of the incredible entries from our talented students in the recent DT inter-house competition to craft a toy prototype for a child. The creativity displayed by our students throughout the design and manufacturing process was very impressive and we received a variety of entries that ranged from action figures to puzzle boxes to board games! The level of creativity and the quality of manufacturing really highlights our students' capabilities. The presentation of their projects was equally good, demonstrating not only technical prowess but also effective communication skills through their written justifications. The students articulated their design choices with clarity and passion which is really warming to see as a DT teacher. Well done to our young innovators for their exceptional work. All students will receive house points and a prize.

Mr Ward



## Fortismind

### Kooth Information Event

I wanted to say a big thank you to all the parents and carers who attended the talk with Kooth on Tuesday evening this week. I hope that you found it to be helpful and interesting. For those of you who wanted to come but were unable to attend, I will shortly be making a recorded version of the session available as well as sharing some other useful resources. [Kooth](#) provides safe online support and counselling and is a really excellent free resource that everyone would benefit from knowing about. Please contact me with any questions about it.



Ms Jones

Mental Health Champion

## Careers & Work Related Learning Notices

### Career Taster Sessions

All students can access a series of free career taster sessions running during March. These interactive online sessions provide a great introduction to a range of industries, while giving students an opportunity to hear from a professional and participate in an interactive career simulation. If students are unable to join live, they can register to receive a recording and follow up resources. Details and booking links are below.



12th March - 6.00pm	13th March - 6.00pm	14th March - 6.00pm
<a href="#">Breaking into Creative Arts</a>	<a href="#">Breaking into Engineering</a>	<a href="#">Breaking into Medicine</a>
<a href="#">Breaking into Psychology</a>	<a href="#">Breaking into Law</a>	<a href="#">Breaking into Banking</a>

## Modern Languages Department Notice

### Sixth Form Trip to Madrid

Mr Lewis and Ms Bruel would like to send their thanks to our Year 12 and Year 13 students who were outstanding representatives of the school on our recent trip to Madrid. Students began their stay in Spain with a show at Madrid's Flamenco Cultural Centre which certainly set the scene for a wonderful few days in the capital. Art lovers were well catered for with visits to the Prado and Reina Sofia museum along with a walking tour through multicultural Lavapiés to discuss politics and Street Art. Students also enjoyed a concert at the Sala Villanos given by the Canarian singer NIA. A trip to Toledo to visit its historic cathedrals and churches was also a great opportunity for students to learn more about Spanish history. Our stay finished with a lovely meal where we enjoyed Asturian tapas dishes. It was a real pleasure to take such a fantastic group of Hispanists! ¡Vivan los Gatos!

Mr Lewis



## Music Department Notices

### Fortismere Community Orchestra Concert - Saturday 9th March 7pm St Andrews N10

One of our most popular soloists is returning to perform the magnificent and epic Brahms Piano Concerto No.2 in just a couple of weeks. Tadashi Imai played a few years ago to an absolutely packed church, so don't miss out on the opportunity to hear him again! The programme starts with Beethoven's Fidelio overture, then Schubert's Symphony No.8, and the Brahms concerto will be after the interval. Tickets are £12 early bird online, £15 on the door, £8 students [Book Tickets here](#)

### Piano Masterclass - Thursday 7th March 6.30pm NW Concert Hall

We are really honoured that Tadashi is giving a piano masterclass two days before the FCO concert for some of our most talented pianists at Fortismere. We are making this an early evening event so that as many people can come as possible. Tickets are just £4 for students, £8 standard and any Fortismere GCSE or A level music students get free tickets. It will be a fascinating evening; Tadashi will coach three or four students and then spend a bit of time talking about and performing some of his favourite parts of the Brahms' concerto. Not to be missed! [Book Tickets here](#)

### Music & Poetry Night - Thursday 21st March 7pm NW Concert Hall

The annual evening of music & poetry from students at Fortismere is nearly here again! Tickets are available now - [book here](#)

## PE & Sports News

### Badminton Winners

Congratulations to our Year 10 boys badminton team who are champions of Haringey for the second consecutive year. And well done to the girls team who finished 3rd overall.



### Haringey Basketball Week

Boys and Girls Teams from Years 7, 8, 9 & 10 all took part in the Haringey Basketball Week, playing a series of matches over the last few days. There was some great team work on display in what proved to be a very competitive environment. Well done to our Y10 Girls who finished 3rd, Y8 Girls finished 4th. Y7 boys 6th and Y9 boys 4th. Great effort



### Football 1st XI Through to Cup Final

The boys 1st X1 squad played Ashmole in the semi final of the Middlesex Cup this week; it was end to end and with 25 minutes to go we were 3-2 down! Resilience and a winning goal from Jason Braune saw us end the match 4-3 up! A fantastic performance by all and so it's on to the final for the first time in many years Come on Fortismere!

## Year 7 Netball Squad News

Year 7 Netball Club is very popular on a Monday after school, run by Annabelle our visiting coach from AP Saints Netball Club. The girls have been consistent with their attendance and their effort and positive attitude is fantastic. We took two teams to Channing School on Monday to gain some match experience and they loved it. They all showed excellent progress in their skill and understanding of the game, considering some have not played netball before coming to Fortismere. Well done to all involved.



## Avianna Year 8 Boxing Star

Avianna has now been involved in two bouts at her boxing club in Finchley - winning both in three rounds. Well done and we look forward to seeing you boxing in the Olympics one day Avianna!



## Upcoming Fixtures

Monday 26th February	Year 8,9 & 10 Indoor Athletics Competition at Lea Valley Athletics Centre
Tuesday 27th February	GCSE Rock Climbing Moderation
Wednesday 28th February	GCSE Rock Climbing Moderation
Thursday 29th February	Year 9/10 Girls Middlesex Cup Semi Final v Highlands Away Year 9 Boys Haringey Football v APS
Friday 1st March	GCSE Practical Moderation Day

## Library Notices

### Top Tips to Keep your Children Reading



**Top Tip No: 18** Be aware of the books your children are buying/asking for. [Read this article in The Guardian](#) In our library, we can offer guidance but we don't censor (see what Kat Rosenfield says at the end of the article).

## Author Visit

On Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February we were delighted to welcome British-Nigerian author Shadé Lapite to the library. As an ex-teacher, her rapport with the Year 9 groups she talked to was excellent and they really enjoyed joining her quizzes about West Africa and inspecting the examples of geles (head wrappers) she brought to show them. It was exciting to be the first school to hear extracts of her book Goddess Crown – we still have a few copies for sale in the library at the reduced price of £8 or you can listen to it on Libby (the free Haringey Library audio book service).



## North London Book Festival

The website for the North London Book Festival (21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> March) is now live. Please take a look, there's something for everyone, including Jack Meggit-Phillips, Lemony Snicket and Michael Rosen for children (and the young at heart) and Laura Bates, Natalie Haynes and Robin Ince for the grownups. Get as many people to come as you can – and with the discount codes that the Festival Director has given us, you can book twice as many events! (Please persevere with the website ticketing – it's a bit of a palaver!)

<https://www.alexandrapalace.com/whats-on/north-london-book-festival/>

**For 50% off book fest events in the Theatre use code NLBFCLOFF50**

**For 20% off book fest events in the other spaces use code NLBFCLOFF20**



## Henrietta Branford Writing Competition

The Henrietta Branford Writing Competition, the annual competition for young people which runs in conjunction with the Branford Boase Award, is now open. It aims to find and encourage writers of the future, something Henrietta was always keen to do. Anyone under the age of 19 can enter - [see details here](#)



## Recommended Reads of the Week

Next month we will be inviting Year 8 students to join our prestigious Carnegie Shadowing Group. The shortlist will be announced on 13<sup>th</sup> March, but in the meantime [take a look at this amazing longlist](#) – these books are guaranteed to be brilliant reads.

# Medal for Writing

Longlist 2024

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**Carnegies**



## LINC Notice

### Meet The Team

This week I'm introducing Dr Marilyn Allen PhD DNM, a psychotherapeutic counsellor who works with us at Fortismere.....

**Why did you choose this work?** Prior to qualifying as a psychotherapeutic counsellor, I had worked in Higher/Further Education for over a decade, lecturing and managing pastoral care. After a few years of watching students struggle with academic achievements, I realised that looking after their well-being helped them immensely in reaching their academic potential. For effective learning to take place, it was vital for them to feel mentally and emotionally cared for. I eventually switched careers and I now run a private practice, specialising in adolescent issues, trauma and bereavement. Fortismere is a great school and I felt that my small contribution to the well-being of its students could help.

**What is the best thing about your job?** One of the best things about my job here is when I see the students starting to feel the positive results of us working together in therapy and being able to manage their lives better as well as achieve better academic results.

**What would you like to share with the school community this week?** I would like to share a brief, though not conclusive, perspective of adolescence. Adolescence can be a wonderful time which is influenced by biological, cognitive and social changes. Children become more autonomous from their parents, and often want to spend more time with peers; they begin to explore personal relationships and identity formation. Characteristics include experimenting, risk taking, novelty seeking and affiliation with peers. Adolescents can become quite vulnerable to peer pressure and emotional contagion specifically, co-ruminating on some unhelpful behaviour patterns, reinforcing one another's negative affect or focusing on repetitive behaviours - eating disorders, self harm, substance abuse and more. However, there are also great positives including setting academic goals and competing to meet them, exploring the arts,



involvement in sports, developing new hobbies and achieving much more. Adolescents understand how individual circumstances affect behaviours though some might not necessarily understand systemic circumstances and their impact until they are more mature. Do note, this pattern does not follow the same pathway for all individuals. Adolescents' reward-processing centres in the brain develop more rapidly than cognitive control centres so they become more sensitive to rewards than to negative consequences. They have the ability to feel emotions intensively, can have deep empathy or not, and will defend their peers as a sign of loyalty. There is also the development of the ego which on the surface looks like defiance but in reality might be the adolescent testing boundaries. Despite these generalisations, factors such as social media influence, ethnicity, culture, religion, country of residence and sexual orientation also shape development which leads to diversity of experiences across adolescence. All this has to be taken into consideration when working with adolescents who may appear depressed, anxious or struggling with self-esteem issues which could manifest as anger/withdrawal/confusion and non-cooperation. Every case presented in therapy is unique and it takes several sessions of engagement to build trust and for a profile to be created so that the most effective treatment plan can be put in place to support the student. It is of the utmost importance for the student to feel non-judged and safe during the sessions and this is what I try to achieve. The good news is people do get better and live productive and happy lives. It is helpful to note that people who many adolescents look up to these days, have been raising awareness about their struggles with mental health issues, and reassuring us all that there is help out there. Selena Gomez, Lady Gaga, J.K.Rowling, Adele, Kit Harington, Will Smith and Kanye West have all openly discussed their struggles with mental health issues and have got help to enable them to feel better. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

[www.unicwf.org/adolescence/index.htm](http://www.unicwf.org/adolescence/index.htm)

## Fortismere School Holiday Camps

### Easter Holiday Camps - Booking Now!

Fortismere Holiday Camps are running during the two weeks of the Easter holidays. Bookings will be for Week 1 (2nd-5th April) or Week 2 (8th-12th April). Booking information and full details of all the camps are on the school website - See [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 use the My Voice [link](#) or QR code alternatively contact your child's Head of Year

<b>Year 7</b>	Ms Fox <a href="mailto:kfox@fortismere.org.uk">kfox@fortismere.org.uk</a>
<b>Year 8</b>	Ms Jackson <a href="mailto:kjackson@fortismere.org.uk">kjackson@fortismere.org.uk</a>
<b>Year 9</b>	Ms Cuenca <a href="mailto:icuenca@fortismere.org.uk">icuenca@fortismere.org.uk</a>
<b>Year 10</b>	Mr Aldridge <a href="mailto:saldridge@fortismere.org.uk">saldridge@fortismere.org.uk</a>
<b>Year 11</b>	Ms Boot <a href="mailto:aboot@fortismere.org.uk">aboot@fortismere.org.uk</a>

