



Forest Gate Community School

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Headteacher: **Simon Elliott**

20th October 2014

Dear Parent or Carer

Key Information for Parents - Autumn Two

The return to school has been a success with students settling in to their new routines. Our new uniform has made our children look more professional and this is evident in their learning and behaviour around the school. Following successful re-marks, 59% of our children have obtained 5 grades A* - C with English and Maths. This is likely to be significantly above the national average and is above the Borough average of 56%. You will already be aware that our results in our core subjects of English (74%), Maths (76%) and Science (82% obtaining 2 good GCSEs) are very high. One consequence of this is that pressure for places at FGCS is intensifying, leaving many parents disappointed. It is very important that those parents of children in Year 6 who want their children to get into FGCS should put us as first choice to guarantee a place.

Key Dates for Autumn Term 2

Monday 3 rd November	Year 11 Preliminary Exams start
Tuesday 4 th November	Year 8 Immunisations Year 11 Statistics Controlled Assessment starts
Wednesday 5 th November	Year 10 Immunisations
Monday 17 th November - 22 nd November	National Anti - Bullying Week
Wednesday 19 th November	Year 10 Immunisations
Monday 8 th December	Start of Year 11 Preliminary Exams 2 – certain subjects
Thursday 11 th December	School production 'The Boy who Fell into a Book'
Friday 12 th December	School production 'The Boy who Fell into a Book'
Tuesday 16 th December	Year 10 Immunisations
Friday 19 th December	End of term. Early finish 12:20. Non-Uniform day

School Day

Please remember that lesson 1 starts promptly at 8:45am. All students are expected to be in school by 8:40am and will be marked as late if they arrive after this time. They will also receive a late detention that day for 30 minutes. Please help your child to be punctual. The school is open from 7:30am for quiet study and Breakfast Club is available for all students to have a free breakfast.

End of day Reminder

All students leave at this time every week.

Monday	3:23pm
Tuesday	2:50pm
Wednesday	3:23pm
Thursday	3:23pm
Friday	2:50pm

After school each evening we have various study interventions and clubs on offer. These are published on our website. If your child is attending an after school session, please ask them to inform you in the morning.

Attendance

It is vitally important that your child is in school every day and arrives on time. If your child has to be absent for any reason, you should telephone the school by 9am on the first day and everyday thereafter that your child is absent. Please see our school website for our 'Parent's Guide to Attendance and Punctuality'.

Please note if your child becomes ill during the school day, it is expected that a parent or appropriate adult collects them from school to accompany them home. This is paramount for safety. We also request that for any unavoidable appointments that are made during the school day, an adult accompanies the child to and from school. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Parents' Information Evenings

Both of these evenings were extremely successful. The settling in meeting with year 7 Form Tutors was a great opportunity for parents to meet their child's tutor and get to know more about their child's school life. 55% of year 7 parents attended and it was a useful evening for all involved.

On 1st October we held our first Head of Learning clinic. This gave parents the opportunity to drop-in and talk to Heads of Learning and members of the Leadership Group about anything at all. Over fifty parents took the opportunity to talk about a wide range of topics including homework, lunches and specific needs, and to request further information and make suggestions. Both staff and parents found the evening helpful.

Parent Voice

We value feedback and recommendations from all members of our school community, particularly parents. Parents have the opportunity to express their views in a variety of ways. These include using the Ofsted Parent Voice Survey (link on our website), Parent Surveys conducted at Parents' Evening or coming along to a Parents' Information Evening.

Alternatively parents can email a member of staff directly. Their email address is *firstname.last name@forestgate.newham.sch.uk*. For general feedback please use Info@forestgate.newham.sch.uk

Uniform

Our new uniform has been a big success. Please ensure your child is wearing the correct uniform items. Year 7 must wear the new uniform. **Years 8,9,10 and 11** must wear **either** the **new uniform** or the **old uniform** (please see the correct uniform items in the table below).

Please note from 3rd November, it is expected that all children are **either in the new uniform or the old uniform**. It is **not** possible to 'mix and match' old and new uniforms. All students who adopt the new uniform should have a shirt, tie and blazer at all times. Regulation school jumpers are optional and should be worn in inclement weather. Blazers however are compulsory.

All students in the old uniform should be in full new uniform by September 2015.

Suitable Footwear and Coats

Please note that living in the climate that we do, suitable waterproof footwear should be worn to school. This should be black leather shoes which are durable. Canvas shoes and trainers are not suitable for school. New uniform coats should be black and old uniform coats black or dark blue in colour.

Leather and suede jackets, denim jackets and hoodies are not suitable for school. If worn, they will be confiscated and a detention will be issued.

Uniform items must be plain- without accessories, logos, decoration or any other colours.

New Uniform	Old Uniform
<p>Blazer: Black FGCS blazer with logo Shirt: Plain white shirt with collar Tie: FGCS tie, worn to the waist Jumper (optional): FGCS V-Neck with logo Trousers: Plain matt black, tailored, regular fit (no denim, coloured pocket zips) Skirt: Plain matt black, knee-length Socks or tights: Plain black Shoes: Plain black leather school shoes, providing adequate protection and support (no casuals, fabric, canvas, trainers, sandals, pumps, 'work' type shoes e.g. Doctor Martins, high heels, boots, coloured laces, coloured stitching) Coat: Plain black, to be removed in class (no leather, suede, denim, hoody, sweatshirt, sports top, body warmer, gillet)</p> <p>Hijab, Abaya, Prayer Cap, Turban, Patka: Plain matt black</p> <p>Jewellery, Decoration and Other items A single necklace or bracelet for religious reasons Hats: Plain black woollen hat, only to be worn outside the buildings during cold weather (no bobbles, visors) Hair Fasteners: Plain black or plain white Earrings: Small plain studs, matching pair or single Belts: Plain black, plain buckle (no oversized buckles) Make-up: To be modest and discreet (no lipstick, false eyelashes, acrylic nails) No body jewellery, hair dyes, coloured hair extensions, tattoos, visible undergarments</p>	<p>Shirt: White FGCS polo shirt with logo</p> <p>Jumper (optional): FGCS V-Neck with logo Trousers: Plain matt black, tailored, regular fit (no denim, coloured pocket zips) Skirt: Plain matt black, knee-length Socks or tights: Plain black Shoes: Plain black leather school shoes, providing adequate protection and support (no casuals, fabric, canvas, trainers, sandals, pumps, 'work' type shoes e.g. Doctor Martins, high heels, boots, coloured laces, coloured stitching) Coat: Plain black or dark blue, to be removed in class (no leather, suede, denim, hoody, sweatshirt, sports top, body warmer, gillet)</p> <p>Hijab, Abaya, Prayer Cap, Turban, Patka: Plain matt black</p> <p>Jewellery, Decoration and Other items A single necklace or bracelet for religious reasons Hats: Plain black woollen hat, only to be worn outside the buildings during cold weather (no bobbles, visors) Hair Fasteners: Plain black or plain white Earrings: Small plain studs, matching pair or single Belts: Plain black, plain buckle (no oversized buckles) Make-up: To be modest and discreet (no lipstick, false eyelashes, acrylic nails) No body jewellery, hair dyes, coloured hair extensions, tattoos, visible undergarments</p>

Banned Items

Chewing gum is not permitted in school. It has caused extensive damage to our surroundings and is unpleasant when not disposed of properly. If a student is in possession of chewing gum, it will be disposed of and a detention issued.

Reminder - Due to misuse, e-safety and to avoid distractions, **mobile phones and other digital items** such as ipods are not permitted in school. If students wish to use the items on the journey to and from school, they should leave them in their bags when on the school premises. If a member of staff sees the phone, hears it or knows it has been used, they will confiscate the item and it will be returned by the Student Manager to the parent only.

A number of children are bringing drinks including water to school in glass bottles. Please make sure **only plastic bottles** are brought to school for health and safety reasons.

Following Health Advice, I would like to remind you that **high energy drinks** such as Red Bull and Kick are not suitable for children. All energy drinks will be confiscated and disposed of if found in school.

Thanks for your support in these matters.

Lunches

Please make sure that your child is able to have a lunch each day. Please provide them with a healthy packed lunch or sufficient money to buy a lunch.

If you think your child may be entitled to free school meals, please apply. Until you have official notification of free school meals, you should provide lunch for your child. We are aware that many parents have seen their entitlement to free school meals withdrawn. If you feel you need help with this, please contact Cynthia Quarshie at the school on or email her on Cynthia.quarshie@forestgate.newham.sch.uk and she will be happy to help.

Increasingly children are bringing in snacks such as large bags of crisps or donuts which are not sufficient for a healthy balanced diet. Please speak to your child about healthy alternatives.

PE Information

The PE kit consists of the following required items:

- Shirt: Green FGCS polo shirt with logo
- Shorts: Black FGCS football shorts with logo
- Socks: Black FGCS football socks

The following items are optional and can also be worn if it is cold:

- Tracksuit bottoms: Black FGCS bottoms with logo or plain black bottoms
- Sweatshirt: Black FGCS sweatshirt with logo or plain black sweatshirt

PE Kit is also available from the school's uniform supplier, **Fashion Stop**. Please provide appropriate replacement kit as required.

PE kits must be brought to school by all students without fail. Illness or injury is not an excuse not to bring it. Notes from parents about illness will not be accepted.

There are lots of opportunities to get involved in sport at Forest Gate such as football every day before school in the sports hall, basketball and cricket at lunch times, cross country, karate, netball, badminton and rugby after school. Please encourage your child to get involved!

GCSE Community Languages

If your child speaks a different language at home and you would like them to take a GCSE in that language (either a half GCSE in listening and speaking, or a full GCSE in listening, speaking, reading and writing), please ask them to contact Mr Benchoula by email (Mehdi-Benchoula@forestgate.newham.sch.uk) or see him directly (room M5) with the following details:

- Name
- Form class
- Language
- Skills (speaking, listening, writing and reading)

Music Information for Year 7 Parents

Your child will shortly be receiving or has already received a free musical instrument as part of Newham's Every Child a Musician programme, which provides students in Years 5 to 7 with access to free instruments and instrumental tuition. Please support your child's learning by encouraging them to practise their instrument at home a minimum of twice a week for at least twenty minutes each time, and by ensuring that they bring their instrument to school each week for their music lesson. Playing a musical instrument can improve your child's learning experience and research shows that learning a new instrument can help to improve intellectual development, self-confidence, concentration and help your child to take pride in his or her musical achievement.

Saturday School for children in Year 4, 5 or 6

Do you have a child in these year groups? Do you know a child who is? Why don't you ask them to join our Saturday School? It runs every Saturday from 9am -12pm. There are lots of fun activities and regular trips. There is no cost and children that attend say that it's great way to meet new friends and to prepare for secondary school. Please come along to the school via the back entrance on Station Road and sign up with Mrs Cole any Saturday. For more information contact Sam.cole@forestgate.newham.sch.uk

College Open Evenings for Year 11

We have now arrived at the time when your child needs to think about what they would like to do after Year 11. Please encourage them to attend as many open evenings as possible so that they can make an informed choice. It would be helpful if you are able to attend with them and speak to the teachers who teach the subjects they have an interest in.

Please refer to the school website where you will find a list of some of the schools and colleges that are currently holding open evenings and also the closing dates for applications.

Arrival Education

Since September 2014, 26 Year 10 students have taken part in the Arrival Education: Success for Life Programme. The programme looks at ways to help students take ownership for their own learning and responsibility for their actions; this means students seek strategies to reflect on their own behaviour and attitude to issues which affect them on a daily basis. There will be a celebration evening held on the 22nd October 2014 from 4.30 - 6pm, where parents have been invited to attend and join the school and the organisers in congratulating the students on completing the first stage of the course.

Every Child a Reader

Creating and sustaining a love of reading is a key component of our mission at Forest Gate Community School. In order to maintain our reading culture, all our students are expected to have a reading book in their possession at all times and designated reading times are allocated throughout the week. Books are available for loan from our library, and students are encouraged to bring in their own books to read. If you would like to donate any pre-loved books, please drop them at the school where they will be gratefully received.

Please ensure that your child has a book in their bag when going to school, and encourage your child to read at home. Our librarians will email both students and their parents/carers with reminders to return overdue books. Please ensure that your child's books are returned promptly, as lost or damaged books will incur a bill for the cost of the book which is payable to the library.

Presentation Policy

We have introduced our new presentation policy in English to great effect. The students' English books have clear guidance printed on the inside cover explaining the presentation expectations. The majority of students are diligently following these guidelines and are already reaping the benefits. Students are actively using the workbooks to improve their vocabulary choices and use a range of writing techniques to improve the quality of their written work.

Students are finding their work is easier to read, and as a result easier to use for revision. Writing is clear and it is evident where progress is being made. Our students are proud of their books and this is clearly shown in the standard of work that they are producing. We are introducing the same quality of book in History and Geography later in the year; the proof is at the printers as you read this.

We would appreciate your help in reinforcing our presentation policy. You can do this by simply looking through your child's books and challenging them when they are not up to our high expectations. We would of course also like you to praise them when the work is beautifully presented. We are sure this is going to have a huge impact on student progress and attainment right across the school.

School Production

The rehearsals for the school production 'The Boy who fell into a Book' are underway. Rehearsals are taking place Monday – Thursday lunchtimes and Thursdays from 3.30 to 4.30pm. The performances are on Thursday 11th and Friday 12th December from 7pm. If you would like to attend, tickets are £3 each and will be available from the Drama office or school reception. You can find out more by emailing Christopher.victory@forestgate.newham.sch.uk

Intervention for Year 11

All Year 11 students have exams skills on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Please see the table below for all exam skills details:

Subject	Day	Time	Students
English	Monday	2.50pm-3.50pm	All Year 11s
Science	Tuesday	2.50pm-3.50pm	All Year 11s
Humanities	Wednesday	3.30pm-4.30pm	Year 11 Geography/History
Mathematics	Thursday	3.30pm-4.30pm	All Year 11s
Media	Friday	2.50pm-3.50pm	Only Media Students

We have further interventions taking place such as peer tutoring in Maths, whereby if your child is selected they will receive one to one support from students who have achieved a grade A*/A in Mathematics. This will take place after school and it will be for an hour.

We also have small group tutoring with our FGCS English tutor Ben Kettner. He will be tutoring students in small groups (max. 3) after school for one hour.

Both interventions will be taking place during term time and you will be informed by a letter if your child has been selected for any of these interventions along with their day and time.

Lastly, we will be preparing our Year 11s for preliminary exams. They will take place in December. They will sit exams for all their subjects and their grades may affect their reference grades that will be given to their colleges.

Assessment for Learning

In our lessons we use 'random name selection' when it comes to answering questions. In this way all students get the chance to answer questions and we can assess everyone's learning. Please ask your child about the different ways teachers select them to answer questions!

- Grade 5 will be positioned in the top third of the marks for a current grade C and bottom third of the marks for a current grade B. This will mean it will be of greater demand than the present grade C, and broadly in line with what the best available evidence tells us is the average PISA performance in countries such as Finland, Canada, the Netherlands and Switzerland.
- The new maths GCSE will be tiered, with grades 4 and 5 available through both tiers.

National Anti- Bullying Week

To raise the profile of anti-bullying in our school we have held a series of assemblies on cyber -bullying and its effects. We have also set up a dedicated email where students can report bullying issues (Reportit@forestgate.newham.sch.uk) anonymously. We have distributed pens, stickers for the contact books and wristbands to all students to encourage them to report any bullying incidents to this dedicated email.

We have also teamed up with a film production company called Kambabi Arts & Community Enterprise Solutions to create a short film called 'Bullying Expelled'. The shooting of the film will take place at Forest Gate Community School and our students will gain valuable hands-on experience and insight into the filmmaking industry, they will use professional filmmaking equipment and most important they will use the film to raise awareness about the problems of bullying and the effects it can have on young people, their families and society as a whole.

Student Voice

Congratulations to our new Head Boy Ethan Barr in 10F and Head Girl Nazifa Choudhury in 10T who were elected this week. Both students campaigned extremely hard to win the votes of both students and staff. They are looking forward to representing the school at key events and as well as being a voice for all the students at Forest Gate Community School.

Also many congratulations to our Student Council members from Year 9s who earlier this month were elected on the Student Council board for this academic year. Their primary role is to work with all students and come up with new initiatives to improve the school. They will be working very closely with the school leadership team to improve the school.

Enrichment Committee

Bisayo Jeyifous – 9S	Sorlah Taylor-Thomas -9T	Fatima Abukar – 9T	Lorca Bennet – 9R
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Culture & Community Committee

Nafhat Sharif – 9T	Ridwan Ahmed – 9T	Leah Kendall – 9O	Brittonia McCubbin – 9F
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Safeguarding Committee

Grace Firmin – 9T	Naeem Suhel – 9O	Sohaib Rashid – 9E	Muhammed Haris – 9S
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Academic and Intervention Committee

Vidhee Jagatia – 9F	Kaashif Kamaly – 9G	Sanjidah Khatun – 9G	Zarvesha Rasool -9O
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Environment Committee

Helena Nogueira -9S	Suleiman Yusuf – 9F	Vanessa Martins – 9F	Ben Drain -9S
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End of Term

School finishes for the Christmas Holidays on December 19th at 12.20pm. Students are permitted to attend in their casual clothes and make a donation of £1 for Richard House Hospice, E15. School will commence for the spring term at 8:40am on 5th January 2015.

Website

All letters and important information are placed on our website. This includes after school activities, trip letters and other key information. Please check it regularly for updates.

May I take this opportunity to wish all students a safe and enjoyable half-term break.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charlotte Whelan".

Charlotte Whelan
Deputy Head teacher