



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential



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<http://www.facebook.com/BlackfenSchoolForGirls>
www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk

24th November 2023

Head Teacher's Message

Dear families

We held the first challenge day of the year this week where staff and students in all year groups were involved in a range of different activities and challenges. It was good to see them working in their year groups especially in their interactions with each other and with external providers and organisations. Thank you to all staff who led activities on the day.

Well done to the year 7 football team who progressed through to the next round of the Cup last week after beating Chislehurst school for girls 7-1. What was lovely to see was that there were 18 young people in the squad for the game. We look forward to hearing about who they face in the next round. The year 8 team also played this week but went out of the cup to a strong Hayes team.

National campaign by the Children's Commissioner

The Children's Commissioner is leading on The Big Ambition. There is a national survey to complete.

Children or parents can complete the survey here:
www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigambition

Further resources are available on their website. See attached leaflet.

The Children's Commissioner writes that, "It is really important that the pupils at Blackfen School for Girls have participated in The Big Ambition survey and had their say.

I want to ensure that the voices of the children in Bexley are fairly represented in the findings so that I can share their views with the most senior members of the country.

I must reiterate that it is vital that all children have their voice heard through this survey because, as Children's Commissioner for England, I have a statutory duty to protect and promote the views and interests of children. The Big Ambition provides a much-needed opportunity for the children of England to tell political decision makers what is important to them ahead of the General Election. I will be sharing their responses with Government to ensure that children's voices are heard."

This survey is for all children aged 0-18, parents, carers / other adults can complete on behalf of children who are under 6 or for children who need extra assistance.

Safeguarding newsletter

We are just putting the finishing touches to our first edition of our safeguarding newsletter. This will contain information, advice and guidance. We aim to publish this on the website in due

course. It will be sent out to all families by email. If, after you have looked at it, you have any suggestions or comments please let us know.

Staffing news

We welcome Ms Ali to the school as a Cover Supervisor.

Governors

We will be welcoming Brad Tanner to the governing body following the recent election of parent governors.

End of Autumn Term

There is an INSET day on Monday 27 November 2023. No students are in school that day

This term finishes on Thursday 21 December 2023 at 12.15. It will be a non-uniform day. More details to follow.

Start of Spring Term

The Spring Term starts for students on Monday 8 January 2024 at 10.30. Please note this slightly later start time. This is to enable mandatory safeguarding and other training to take place. Students should register at that time in their community groups.



Matthew Brown, Head Teacher

Governors Message

Since the last newsletter members of the Governing Body have participated in a variety of activities. These ultimately are aimed at helping the school to pursue its vision which is stated on the School's Web Site.

Recent governor activities have included visits to the School in Governor Link capacities for meetings with the Leadership Team and Faculty Leaders. The Chair and Vice-Chairs of Governors have had their regular strategic planning meetings with the Head Teacher and another is scheduled soon. The regular cycle of Sub-Committee meetings have continued, the most recent being the Staffing Committee, which will be followed shortly by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee. The Full Governing Body will also meet shortly, which will include the Head Teacher's Report together with consideration of the minutes of the committee meetings which have taken place this term.

A key concern of all meetings continues to be risk assessment and planning to mitigate these. This has been a key focus, particularly of the Full Governing Body meeting, with the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee acting as a focus for risk assessment. Financial and non-financial risks are constantly monitored, addressed and reported upon. This is a collaborative enterprise between the Governing Body and the Leadership Team, with regard to both strategy for mitigation and management of the strategy's implementation.

Any updates or further matters of importance will be included in the next newsletter of the term.

Stuart Fitz-Gerald
Chair of Governors

Free Parent Webinar: Helping Your Child to Build Resilience

Dear Parents,

We're excited to announce that Elevate Education will be hosting their next parent webinar on **Resilience** on November 28th.

Elevate works with our students, delivering high-impact workshops on study skills, motivation, wellbeing, and exam preparation. By tuning into their webinar series, you'll learn **how you can help support your children at home by reinforcing the skills they're learning at school.**

Sign up for the session below to learn how you can **help your child to recover from a knock to their confidence.** Whether that's a disappointing grade, exam slip-up, or a less-than-perfect report.

How You Can Build Resilience in Your Child

Tuesday 28th November 6:00-7:00pm (GMT)

[Click here to register for free](#)

Here's what Elevate will be covering on the night:

- ✓ Practical strategies to help your child manage their response to setbacks
- ✓ Building your child's resilience both in and out of school
- ✓ How 'fear of failure' can impact your child's resilience

Catering Facilities

The need for additional dining room space has been on the school agenda for many years. Until recently there were just 2 areas where the lower school students could obtain food, the Food Cube and the Main Catering Dining Hall. With up to 200 students a day using the Food Cube and 700 using the Main Dining Hall at both break and lunch, these areas do become very overcrowded.

Although there is ample external seating with a lot of this under canopy the only internal seating was in the main dining hall, with seating for 276. The opportunity to install a new dining facility came along and we are now in proud procession of a secondary under-cover seating area that seats an additional 120 students along with a third serving area.

The new facility has been set up to be the Deli area where students can obtain grab-and-go style food leaving the main dining hall to serve main meals. For more information on the current menus

please visit the schools web site. See attached images of the new facility that we are calling the Glass House. This type of structure is being used in many schools as additional dining space. Although we are mainly using this space for dining with the seating and table being folded away this space can be used for many other functions. The structure was designed, project-managed and installed by A&S Landscape www.aandslandscape.co.uk

Mr Morgan, Business Manager

Christmas Lunch

Christmas lunch this year will be on the Wednesday 13th December.

Tickets can be purchased up to the deadline date of Monday 11th December at a cost of £3.50 without desert or £4.00 with a desert. There will be other choices of food along with a vegetarian offering. Students on Free School Meals can collect a £3.50 ticket free of charge from the tills. If they would like a desert they can purchase one for 50p.

Essential Cinema Club

Thursday 30th November

'Planes, Trains and Automobiles' (1987)

On the surface, this is a raucous, high-energy comedy about mismatched travel companions but below the surface, there's a deeply moving and powerful story about charity, tolerance and forgiveness. Keep a box of tissues handy!

This road movie written and directed by John Hughes, stars Steve Martin and the late John Candy, both at the peak of their comic powers. Their on-screen chemistry here is an absolute joy to witness, with both actors excelling at exploiting the irritations and ironies of their own particular dilemma.

What is a road-movie?

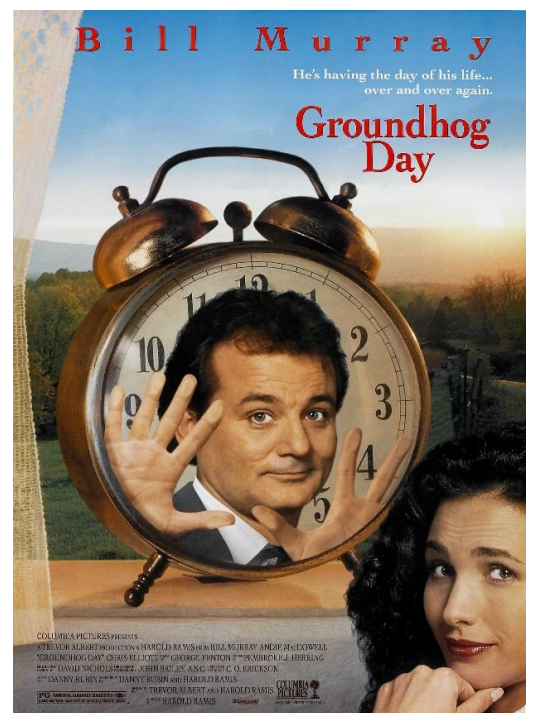
Road movies involve a main character leaving home on a journey which intentionally or not, ends up giving them a new, fresh slant on their life. In this sense, the physical journey through space and time becomes a metaphor for the character's necessary change and growth.

Thursday 14th December

'Groundhog Day' (1993)

To say that this movie is genius is no exaggeration at all. The fact that the term 'Groundhog Day' has found its way into common language tells you something about the film's enduring impact on popular culture.

Groundhog Day is a brilliantly written and acted comedy, but it could well have started off as a powerful Charles Dickens



story about redemption and the human capacity for change and renewal.

Bill Murray plays arrogant urbanite misandrist, Phil Connors, a modern day Scrooge and the deeply cynical TV weatherman whose production team has been commissioned to cover the traditional Christmas Hols festivities in the small Pennsylvanian town of Punxsutawney. Connors' mean-spiritedness and his scathing cynicism of local festivities and traditions, leads to unexpected surrealist consequences, in which Connors gets trapped in Groundhog Day purgatory for a seeming eternity, repeating his meanness against humanity and suffering the consequences himself unless he learns to change his ways.

Dickens would have been proud of such a reimagining of the Christmas Carol idea!

Mr Valente
Teacher of English

Careers & Work Experience

By Charn – Aesthetics and Beauty Therapy Career Talk

We were delighted to welcome 'By Charn' a local Aesthetics and Beauty Therapy Academy to Blackfen last week.

By Charn aesthetic training academy offers high-quality training to students from all backgrounds and experience levels.

Their courses include theory training, practical training, anatomy training, assessments, aftercare support, and more. A great emphasis is placed on hands-on training, ensuring all trainee practitioners get the best chance to move forward and get ahead in their careers.

The session included dispelling myths that beauty therapy was not regulated and explained to students that training courses continue to a Level 7 which is equivalent to a Master's degree!

Our Year 11 students who are interested in this career pathway found the session to be informative and beneficial for their post 16 choices.



Mrs K Smith
Work Experience and Business/Community Links Coordinator

Student Achievement

One of our students, Ava in G8, is Lance Corporal Royal Marine Cadet at the Chislehurst and Sidcup Sea and Marine Cadet Unit. Ava was selected to represent the London area Royal Marine Cadets at the national Remembrance Service at City Hall. This is a rare opportunity that Ava has worked very hard to be invited to.

Ava attended the Lord Mayor's Parade on Saturday and the Remembrance Day service on Sunday in Sidcup.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Events scheduled so far

DATE	EVENT
Monday 27 th November 2023	Staff Inset Day – students not in school
Thursday 30 th November 2023	Year 12/13 Photography trip to Tate Modern
Thursday 7 th December 2023	Year 13 Parents Evening Ski Trip Information Evening starts at 6.15pm
Tuesday 12 th December 2023	Winter Showcase
13 th – 19 th December 2023	Achievement Assemblies
Thursday 14 th December 2023	Parents Information evening – New York Trip
Thursday 21 st December 2023	End of Term – early finish
Friday 22nd December 2023 – Friday 5th January 2024	Christmas Holiday
Monday 8 th January 2024	Spring Term starts
Wednesday 10 th January 2024	Year 10 D of E Parent Information evening
Thursday 11 th January 2024	Year 11 Parents Evening
Monday 15 th January 2024	Year 10 Citizenship trip to Supreme Court

Thursday 18 th January 2024	Citizenship Fair
29 th January to 3 rd February 2024	New York Trip (year 11 Citizenship / year 12/13 Politics)
5 th February to 9 th February 2024	Year 13 Trip to Berlin & Krakow
Thursday 8 th February 2024	Year 9 Information Evening (KS4 Course Selection)
Monday 12th to Friday 15th February 2024	Half Term
Tuesday 20 th February 2024	Challenge Day 2 Year 7 Tower of London Trip
Friday 23 rd February 2024	Year 9 DTP Immunisations
Tuesday 27 th & Wednesday 28 th February 2024	Year 11 Hastings Trips
Tuesday 5 th March 2024	Careers Forum
Thursday 7 th March 2024	Year 11 PFS Year 12 'Next Steps' Parents Information Evening
Thursday 14 th March 2024	Year 10 Parents Evening
Friday 15 th March 2024	Year 10 Dance Workshop
16 th to 23 rd March 2024	Year 9/10 Ski Trip
18 th – 21 st March 2024	Achievement Assemblies
Tuesday 19 th March 2024	Year 13 Trip to Westfield Shopping Centre
Tuesday 26 th March 2024	Year 10 Resilience Event Year 9 DTP Immunisation catch ups
Thursday 28 th March 2024	End of Term – early finish
Friday 29th March 2024	Bank Holiday
Monday 1st April – Friday 12th April 2024	Easter Holidays
Monday 15 th April 2024	Summer Term starts
Wednesday 24 th April 2024	D of E Practice
Thursday 25 th April 2024	Year 7 Parents Evening
Monday 29 th April 2024	Year 8 HPV Immunisations Year 10/11 Citizen Trip to Royal Courts of Justice
Wednesday 1 st May 2024	Year 10 Drama Theatre Trip
Monday 6th May 2024	Bank Holiday
Thursday 9 th May 2024	Year 8 Parents Evening
Thursday 9 th & Friday 10 th May	D of E Bronze Final Expedition
Thursday 16 th & Friday 17 th May 2024	D of E Bronze Final Expedition
Thursday 16 th May 2024	Year 12 Parents Evening
Monday 27th to Friday 31st May 2024	Half Term
Wednesday 26 th June 2024	Year 8 HPV immunisation catchups
Thursday 27 th June 2024	Challenge Day 3
Friday 28 th June 2024	Year 12 Induction Day Sixth Form Prom
Tuesday 2 nd July 2024	Year 6 Induction Day Year 6 Parents Induction Evening
Monday 8 th July 2024	Year 8/9 immunisation catchups
Monday 8 th – Friday 12 th July 2024	Celebration Presentations
8 th – 19 th July 2024	Year 10 Work Experience
Tuesday 16 th July 2024	Sports Day
Wednesday 17 th & Thursday 18 th July 2024	Discover Days
Friday 19 th July 2024	Last Day of Term – early finish