



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential.



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8th December 2023

Head Teacher's Message

Dear families

As we approach the last full week of the term, preparations are in full swing for the Winter Showcase led by the Expressive arts faculty. We look forward to an entertaining evening next week and thank all staff and students for their work.

Year 11 students continue with their PPEs next week. We hope that they continue to go well.

Last week, a group of 13 and 14 year olds joined us for a day. These young people were from our link school in Lille in France and were accompanied by staff from the school. The visit was as a result of Blackfen students, under the leadership of Ms Carter, forging pen friend links with these young people during the last year. Students from Blackfen spent the day with them. It was a full and busy day for all concerned. My thanks go to Ms Carter for leading on this exciting initiative and for all staff involved during the day. We look forward to the reciprocal visit to the school in Lille.

Staffing news

We welcome Ms Pascoe to the school as student support officer for the Purple Community. At the end of next week, Ms Wilkes will be leaving the school after 4 years at the school. Ms Wilkes is leaving to start a new life in Australia. We wish her all the best in her future ventures.

We welcome Ms Igbokwe and Ms Ajaga to the school as Mathematics teachers.

On Friday next week, Mr Murphy, the site manager at the school, retires. Mr Murphy has been at the school for 23 years, initially as a caretaker and now as site manager. During his time at the school, he has led and overseen many developments in the school including the building of the canteen, the IT/Dance/Drama building, the 14-19 building, the performance space and the new building at the back of the school. Mr Murphy has worked with a range of external contractors to ensure that buildings are finished to time and with the correct specifications. He has climbed roofs, visited the school at all hours of the day and night when alarms have gone off, locked up the school at the end of the day, opened the school first thing in the morning, mended the heating, fixed leaks, unblocked drains and toilets, swept snow and gritted pathways. All of this to ensure that the school is safe, warm and welcoming for all members of the community. Along with his site team, he is an unsung hero in the school. We thank him for all his work and wish him every success in the future and a happy retirement.

Future dates

The term finishes at 12.15 on Thursday 21 December 2023. Next term starts at the slightly later time of 10.30 for students on Monday 8 January 2024.

Matthew Brown, Head Teacher

Safeguarding

During the school holiday the safeguarding tile for students is not monitored. Any students with concerns should seek advice from helplines and websites attached in the safeguarding newsletter due out next week.

Christmas Lunch

A reminder that the student 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. Please make sure your daughters wise pay account is topped up with enough money to be able to purchase her ticket at the tills. Students on Free School Meals can collect a £3.50 ticket free of charge from the tills. If they would like a dessert, they can purchase one for 50p.

Careers and Work Experience

Year 10 Work Experience - 8th – 19th July 2024

Only 10 weeks left until completed placement forms must be returned!

If you have already found a placement and still need to arrange for the placement form to be completed, please ensure that it is returned to Room 106 by Monday 19th February. If you have not secured a placement yet why not spend some time over the Christmas holidays contacting employers or chasing up contacts you have already made to secure a placement?

I would like to thank all the Year 10 students and their parents/carers for the work they have put in to secure placements with many exciting opportunities already planned.

Mrs Smith
Work Experience and Business/Community Links Coordinator



Challenge Day Activities

Year 7

On challenge day Year 7's had to wear their PE kit. We all gathered and were excited for what we would be doing for that day.

We went to attend our lesson and found out that we were going to perform not one but three dances. The songs were called Dance the night, Valarie and I'm still standing. We had practiced the dance with another year 7 class. We were all ready to go but were a bit nervous. At break, we tried one more time because that was our last time to rehearse.

After that, we went to Music Technology and were playing cool beats on links. Everyone was enjoying their time and was showing their friends and others their beats, they made. Some links were a bit funny but others thought that it was weird. We had ended our lesson and were off to our next class, which was in the Performance Space.

We then sang the song we had rehearsed and another song. Our wonderful teacher Miss Linaker and her friend called Dave, were helping us learn it. We first learnt the songs and then practiced singing the harmonies to the song as well. We all had taken part and were having a lot of fun. So many people were extraordinary on their harmonies and were thrilled to perform. It was the end and everyone had mixed feelings about performing.

It was time to perform. We were happy and were singing and dancing at the same time. It came to an end and everyone was clapping their hands, including us.

We have not ever forgotten that day in our life.

By Tharshana R6

Year 8 STEM Careers Challenge Day

Challenge day for Year 8 was to help us explore our STEM knowledge and different careers within the world of work. Students took part in a practical session with 'The British Army'.

The British Army session got students to take part in 4 different activities. The first activity was called 'A Bridge Too Far' in which we had to use 2 planks and a rope and using teamwork and communication try to get from one side to the other.

The second activity was using tyres numbered 1-5. We had to use our maths skills to stack the tyres on top of each other from 5 at the bottom to 1 at the top without carrying more than 1 tyre at a time. This made us run backwards and forwards quite a lot

The third activity we had a stick and ropes and had to get the stick into the cone without stepping into the area. This was really difficult to do



The fourth activity was electric lights on the floor which tested how quick our reflexes were to touch the light as quick as possible withing 3 minutes. The army officer had an app which could time us as we did it.

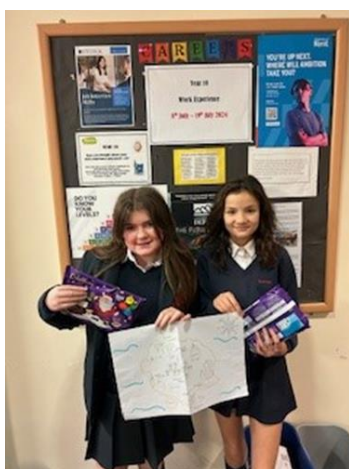
The day also included access to Kudos an online careers software programme. Kudos helped us to find out what career sectors we may be interested in and what type of person we are. This will help us to make important decisions in the future.

We also got the opportunity to make Vision Boards. Vision boards are a collage of images that can represent our future goals and dreams. We had to visualise what we would like to be doing in 2033, 10 years away! It was good to identify where we see ourselves in the future.

Finally, we completed a sustainability session where we had to plan who we would take to an uninhabited island and how we would be able to live sustainably on the island. It was good to draw the island before and after we had planned it.

Overall year 8 challenge day was enjoyed by everyone.

By Harley, Year 8, G1



As part of the Year 8 Challenge Day all students completed the 'Island Challenge' a sustainability activity where students have landed on an uninhabited island for 5 years with the aim of making it suitable for living on and to help the community thrive. There was a small prize for the best designed island which was won by **Maya P6 and Miley R6**.



CHALLENGE DAY

Year 9 students were looking at fashion over time and challenges that women had to face with waist-cinching corsets that made it difficult to breathe and ridiculously high heels and wide skirts that led to accidents.

They learnt how outfits can empower women nowadays and discussed what fashion means to them. Well done to all the Year 9s for their great efforts and amazing creations!

CHALLENGE DAY

STUDENTS' FEEDBACK

"I really enjoyed this activity a lot and exploring different styles."

"It was a chance to be really creative."

"I think that the paper dresses were a really good idea as it helps us with future designs. It was very enjoyable!"

"I thought it would be really hard and that I wouldn't be able to do it but it was really fun to do with my friends and the dresses weren't that difficult."

"It was very entertaining! It let me become very artistic."

"I enjoyed making the paper dresses; it made me use a range of skills as I was able to make a small clutch."

"I enjoyed making the dresses. It was fun and everyone's dresses were unique. If there was something I had to change about it, I would suggest we have more time to create them."

"It was really fun and engaging and everyone was doing something so no one was left behind."

"I loved making the paper dresses. It improved my skills in fashion."

"The paper dresses were brilliant!"

Year 11

For our Year 11 Challenge Day in Science, we had 4 different sessions aimed to help us achieve our best possible grades for the PPEs and the summer exams. Three sessions were aimed at the actual exams and the fourth session was how to prepare for the examinations. Each session covered an aspect of the examinations. The first session I attended was looking at command words that appear on the exam, such as explain and describe- during this session we learnt what the terms meant and what the exam boards are looking for when we answer the questions - I found that this helped me a lot as I now know what the question is asking me, and what I need to write.

The second session was looking at questions where we are required to identify the correct equipment for a particular role in an experiment or required to draw the correct experiment set up. I learnt that there is a difference between drawing what you see, and what is expected for a scientific diagram, which should help with ensuring we don't drop marks on these questions during the examinations.

The third session was on how to not only draw a graph and remembering to add the correct name and units to the axis but also how to analyse and explain what a graph is showing us. For example, it is easy to mix up a distance/time graph and a velocity/time graph if you don't read the axis. Also, when analysing questions on graphs we must remember to use data in our answers the questions.

The fourth session was on different revision techniques as mind maps, flash cards, practicing past papers - as well as being shown the revision materials on teams and the online textbook and sites such as Educake, Cognito etc.

Upon reflection, this has been a great to develop my exam technique across all 3 sciences

Emma P2

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Events scheduled so far

DATE	EVENT
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 10.30 for students
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
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