



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential



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14th February 2020

www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk

Head Teacher's Message

Well done to the IT staff and the Year 8 girls who took part in the semi-final of the Cyber Security HQ competition. Well done to the students involved and Mr Lindsay for all giving up a Saturday to take part in this prestigious competition.

This week we held our year 9 subject selection evening. This followed an assembly for all students last week and the taster fortnight where students have been getting a taste for the subjects offered in year 10. All students have been encouraged to think very carefully when choosing their subjects. The careers forum on 10 March will further assist in this process. This is a very important event in the life of the school and we expect to see many students and parents/carers at this event as students of different ages think about future career plans.

We welcomed year 11 Hurstmere students to the school last week as they met with members of staff to discuss and make decisions on their subject choices for the 6th form. It is good to continue to develop this partnership with Hurstmere as we continue to expand our successful 6th form provision.

Penhill Academies Trust

As you are aware, Blackfen school is a founding member of this Umbrella Trust along with Sherwood Park and Hurstmere schools. More recently we have been joined by Bexley Grammar and Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar schools. The aim of the trust is to provide a range of educational opportunities in this area of Bexley from nursery through to 18. The Head Teachers meet regularly to discuss a range of educational issues based around educational improvement. In addition, the Chairs of Governors and the Head Teachers meet every term to go through key business aspects of the life of the Trust. The Trust operates as a mutually supportive mechanism for the schools. There is not a lead school and every Head Teacher and governing body has an equal stake in what is discussed and what is agreed. We will continue to build this Trust over the coming years.

Building work

At last the building work has started and it will be a particularly busy time over the half term as the groundworks/foundation works begin.

Term dates 2020-2021

As I wrote in the last newsletter the building works have started later than planned and the expected finish date has been pushed back to the end of the Autumn term. With this in mind there

have been some minor changes to the term dates for students to facilitate our move to the new building and to ensure that everything is operational. The significant change is that the end of the Autumn Term 2020 will now be Friday 18 December 2020 and not Tuesday 22 December.

Short term closure procedure

This is just a reminder of what to do and how to find information in the unlikely event that the school has to be closed. A letter was sent home last term and is also available on the website. The short term closure procedure is available on the website. Please familiarise yourself with this information and keep it somewhere safe!

Future Dates

As last year, to ensure that all staff are updated on policies, procedures, current thinking and future planning we will be holding half termly staff meetings. The dates for these are 3rd March 2020, 21st April 2020 and 2nd June 2020. On these dates students should be in school by 8.40 for lesson 1 to begin at 8.45.

I wish you a pleasant half term. We return to school on Monday 24 February 2020 at 8.20 for an 8.30 start. It will be Week B when we return.



Matthew Brown, Head teacher

Governors Message

Meet the Governors

The Governing Body has been discussing ways in which we might raise our profile with parents and carers. One of the ideas we decided to adopt is to introduce each governor to you in this newsletter so that you can see who we are and find out more about our experience and skills.

There are a total of 17 governors on the Governing Body ie:-

- The Head Teacher
- 8 Appointed Governors (appointed by the Governing Body on the basis of their skills, experience and ability)
- 5 Parent Governors (elected by parents/carers or appointed when an election is not required)
- 3 Staff Governors (elected by staff)

The Head Teacher, Chair of Governors and Vice-Chairs are:-



Stuart Fitz-Gerald: Chair of Governors. Appointed Governor

Stuart has been a member of the Governing Body for 10 years, having joined originally as a Parent Governor when his daughter was in Year 7 at Blackfen School for Girls. He has been Chair of the Governing Body for 3 years. He is a member of all Governing Body Sub-Committees, including the Curriculum Committee and Premises Committee, both of which he chairs. Stuart is an Associate Professor at Kingston Business School within Kingston University. He is currently Director of Collaborative Programmes for India and also directs a collaborative programme with a Management School in Singapore. He initiated the establishment of the link between Blackfen School for Girls and a school in Chennai, India which has been visited by both staff and students from Blackfen. His role at Kingston Business School takes him on frequent visits to both India and Singapore. Before joining the Higher Education Sector, he worked in the Ministry of Defence and also HM Customs and Excise



Matthew Brown: Head Teacher

Matthew has been Head Teacher at Blackfen School since January 2007 and he has overseen many changes in the school since he was appointed. He has been teaching in state secondary schools in the south east for over 30 years and he has over 20 years of experience at senior leadership level. Originally a geography teacher he now teaches English at Blackfen School. He is passionate about providing young people with an education which meets their needs, supports their social, mental and emotional development and prepares them for the future. He is married with three daughters and any spare time is spent following Tottenham Hotspur, middle distance running (including two London marathons over the last 10 years), cooking and gardening.



Janet Phelps: Co-Vice Chair of Governors. Appointed Governor

Janet has been a governor at the School for 13 years, having first joined the Governing Body as a Parent Governor. Prior to that, she worked for the British Council for nearly 20 years, managing a range of different overseas aid projects, university links and overseas students' training. During this time, she travelled extensively in the developing world. She took voluntary redundancy to enable her to work locally and part time and worked in Bexley's voluntary sector – in mental health, and then in Bexley Volunteer Centre. She has also worked as a Casual Clerk with Bexley Governor Services. She is married, with a son of 30 and a daughter of 24. She is now retired and, in her spare time, attends adult education classes, and goes to the theatre at every opportunity.



Carol Townsend: Co-Vice Chair of Governors. Appointed Governor

Carol first joined the Governing Body in 1996 as a Parent Governor. When her daughter left the 6th form for university, Carol was asked to remain on the Governing Body as an Appointed Governor. During the past 22 years her involvement with the School has included the recruitment of two Head Teachers and other senior staff, meetings on school attendance, and Raising Attainment, attendance at special SEN events, and links with senior leaders and faculty heads. Her professional background lies in banking (foreign exchange dealing department), moving on to open her own catering business for mainly private dinner parties after completing 3 years at a Cordon Bleu catering college following the birth of her daughter. Unfortunately, due to a very bad accident, Carol was unable to continue the catering business but this has meant that she has had time to give to being a school governor.

Year 11 Parents Meeting

Reminder for parents of year 11 students!

24th February, 6pm: Memory and how to hack it. An evening delivered by an external consultant, this session gets to the very heart (well, the brain) of how to revise effectively. It's grounded in robust research and cutting-edge science. It introduces to parents the link between learning and memory and how to maximise their child's chance of success. Whatever you do, don't forget to come along on this evening. Tie a knot in your hanky if you need to, but don't forget!

Ms Hand, Deputy Headteacher

Building Works

The school has started the project to build a new teaching block. This new building is to replace 3 demountable buildings that have come to the end of life. The new building will give the school 8 new classrooms. The project started on the 3rd February 2020 and is scheduled to be finished by November 2020.

This project will put a lot of pressure on the parking within the school and the surrounding areas. We have been proactive in issuing letters to approximately 300 dwellings around the school highlighting the pressure on parking and additional vehicle activity. There will be a lot of vehicle activity from the contract in the form of large lorries and other forms of delivery vehicles. We have put in place safety measures to limit this disruption by stressing to the contractor that they must avoid deliveries in the busy times when students are moving around the school, on entering school in the morning and leaving in the evening. We hope to open the school field by April to relieve the strain on parking. This is weather permitting as the field is very boggy at certain times of the year.

The protection of students and staff is a priority and we will continually review the project from a Health and safety aspect. There may be times when we need to close certain entrance/exits around the school, so students may have to take a longer route home, we will keep everyone informed if this occurs.

This project is a much needed addition to the school where for many years we have been maintaining these old demountable buildings which has a large cost implication.

As the project evolves we will keep you updated.

Gary Morgan, Business Manager

London Youth Games Dance Competition

On Wednesday 29th January, Blackfen hosted the London Youth Games Dance Competition for the second year running. We were competing against teams from Townley Grammar School and King Henry School Erith.

Our KS3 Dance company did the school proud by performing a piece about the magic of fireworks in a spectacular show of colour, ribbons and technical choreography. As hard as the girls

performed Blackfen came away with a Bronze medal and sadly haven't qualified for the finals. The judges gave some fantastic feedback and the piece will be performed in the upcoming Dance showcase in March.

The KS4 team performed a piece called 'To find you'. This piece explored the use of relationships and how everyone is experiencing a difference in emotions. The piece included some fabulous lifts and complex canons that were good enough for the girls to come away with a Gold medal. I am pleased to announce that the girls will be representing Bexley in the finals of the London Youth Games at the Copper Box Arena in March where they will compete against other teams from approximately 20 London Boroughs.

We wish the KS4 team the best of luck for the finals.

Mrs B Davis, Subject Leader of Dance and Drama

Spotlight Showcase

We are excited to announce our upcoming Performing Arts 'Spotlight Showcase' taking place on the evening of Friday March 27th. We are holding auditions for anyone who would like to show off their skills and help us celebrate the wide range of talents we have here at Blackfen. Auditions, for soloists or groups, will take place on Tuesday 10th March from 3:30pm - 5:00pm in our Dance Studio. Performers please come with your act prepared and any music needed. We are looking forward to it and tickets will be available on Wisepay over the next coming weeks.

Creative and Performing Arts Team

Blackfen School for Girls - Careers Forum

We will be holding our Annual Careers Forum on **Tuesday 10th March 2020 from 4.30pm – 7.00pm.**

The Forum provides an excellent opportunity for both students and parents to find out more about a wide range of careers and the choices available for both Further and Higher Education, by providing you with the chance to speak to the representatives of these organisations and establishments. The evening will also prove informative and useful in assisting the students' future career plans and choices.

We would like to see as many students/parents attend as we expect the evening to be both interesting and informative.



A full list of the exhibitors (subject to change):

Bailey Garner
 Berkeley Homes
 Bexley Council
 Bird College
 Blackfen School Sixth Form
 Canterbury Christ Church
 University
 Charlton Athletic Community Trust
 City University
 ELAM
 Fashion Retail Academy
 Frontier
 Goldsmiths University
 Graham Webb
 HB Academy
 Hadlow College
 Inspire Hair Academy
 Jobcentre Plus
 Kingston University
 LSEC
 London Ambulance Service
 London College of Performing Arts
 London Fire Brigade
 London Screen Academy
 Metropolitan Police
 Middleton Murray
 North Kent College
 Oxleas NHS
 Prospects
 Ravensbourne
 Reynolds Training Group

Rose Bruford College
 Royal Air Force
 Royal Navy & Marines
 Royal Veterinary College
 St Mary's University
 The British Army
 University of Chichester
 University for the Creative
 Arts
 University of East London
 University of Essex
 University of Greenwich
 University of Hertfordshire
 University of Kent
 University of Law
 University of Newcastle
 University of Portsmouth
 University of Salford
 University of Sussex

Calendar of Events 2019 – 2020

Dates scheduled so far

| Date | Event |
|--|---|
| 17th – 21st February 2020 | Half Term |
| 24 th February 2020 | Year 11 Parents meeting 6pm |
| 25 th February 2020 | Challenge Day 2 |
| 27 th February 2020 | Year 9 Parents Evening 1. 4.30 - 6.30 Green/Red/Blue 1-4 |
| 3 rd March 2020 | Extended Staff Briefing – School starts at 8.45am |
| 4 th March 2020 | Sixth Form 'Next Steps' Information Evening' |
| 5 th March 2020 | Year 9 Parents Evening 2 Yellow/Purple/Blue 5-9 |
| 10 th March 2020 | Careers Evening |
| 18 th March 2020 | Year 9 Subject Selection Interviews |
| 19 th March 2020 | Year 11 PFS afternoon |
| 20 th March 2020 | Year 9 DTP Catchup vaccinations |

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| 23 rd – 27 th March 2020 | Achievement Assemblies |
| 26 th March 2020 | Jack Petchey Regional Final |
| 27 th March 2020 | Easter Concert date to be confirmed |
| 3 rd April 2020 | Last day of term school finishes at 12.50 |
| 6th – 17th April 2020 | Easter Holidays |
| 23 rd – 24 th April 2020 | D of E Practice |
| 30 th April 2020 | Year 7 Parents Evening |
| Friday 8th May 2020 | Bank Holiday |
| 14 th May 2020 | Year 8 Parents Evening |
| 19 th May 2020 | Year 8 HPV Vaccinations |
| 20 th May 2020 | Year 12 A Level results Assembly |
| 21 st – 24 th May 2020 | D of E Final |
| 25th – 29th May 2020 | Half Term |
| 2 nd June 2020 | Extended Staff Briefing – School starts at 8.45am |
| 5 th June 2020 | Year 8 HPV Catchup vaccinations |
| 17 th June 2020 | Year 10 Work Experience Assembly |
| 19 th June 2020 | Year 11 Celebration |
| 24 th June 2020 | Exams Contingency Date |
| 26 th June 2020 | Year 12 Induction Day |
| 1 st July 2020 | Challenge Day 3 |
| 6 th – 13 th July | Celebration Presentations |
| 7 th July 2020 | Year 6 Induction Day and Parents Induction Evening |
| 14 th July 2020 | Sports Day |
| 15 th & 16 th July 2020 | Discover Days |
| 17 th July 2020 | Last day of Term school finishes at 12.50 |