



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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Dear Parents/Carers

A happy new year to you and to your family. My particular best wishes and thoughts to all families who have been or are being directly affected by this pandemic.

Just when we were thinking that 2021 was going to be a chance for a fresh start, we are now into another full lockdown. The difference to November is that schools are now also, sadly, closed to all but children of critical workers and vulnerable children. However, I want to say, as I said last year, your daughter/son remains very much part of the Blackfen school community even if they are not physically attending the school. Personally, I was so looking forward to the new term and the new year so I am as disappointed as you are that we are not able to open. We do appreciate, though, the reasons for the lockdown and the need to make sure Covid-19 is not transmitted within the school and wider community. At this stage, I also want to say to you that we are doing all that we can to communicate with you as and when we have information to pass to you. Often, there are media reports which don't necessarily help. We will tell you and inform you what we know as soon as we know it and have had formal communication from the DfE rather than an informal communication from the BBC or other news outlets.

The purpose of this letter at the start of this term is to update you on several important points. Firstly, just to confirm that the school is closed to all students other than children of critical workers and vulnerable young people. This is until at least 22 February 2021.

Remote education

The remote learning policy was approved by governors last term and is available on the website. This outlines the expectations of students, parents and staff whilst remote education is in place. I will write to you in a separate letter about this. We will re-send the Appendices to all parents next week which summarise the school's expectations of teachers, students, and parents during periods of remote learning.

Provision for vulnerable young people and children of critical workers

This provision is in place in school. It is vitally important that, if you require a place in this provision, you contact the school by Friday 8 January 2021 via the admin@blackfen.bexley.sch.uk email address with the heading CRITICAL WORKER or VULNERABLE STUDENT in the subject field.

Examinations

We are expecting an announcement today on the summer external examination season for students and we will write to parents of students who are due to sit examinations in the summer in a separate communication.



Testing

We had spent time in getting ready for mass testing from the start of the term. The kit and equipment has all been delivered and is ready to use and we will be rolling this out once we have recruited a small workforce, once they have completed the training and once we have set up the testing station on site. Letters for consent will be sent out to only to parents of those students in school at this time. We are waiting on further details regarding the mass roll out of testing prior to the end of the lockdown period.

Covid-19 positive

Please can you continue to inform the school if your daughter/son tests positive for Covid-19.

This is a general letter to all parents/carers and I will be sending out letters to year groups over the coming weeks as some points are only pertinent to specific year groups.

Please use the usual methods of communication if you have any concerns, comments and questions. Once again, I look forward to working with you in 2021. You, your daughter/son and your family remain very much part of the Blackfen school community. Thank you, in advance, for your ongoing support



Matthew Brown
Head Teacher