



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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Dear parent/carer and families,

My best wishes to you all at this time. I know that it continues to be a very difficult and concerning time with many of you and your loved ones suffering from Covid-19. Please continue to update the school if your daughter/son tests positive. Our thoughts are with you at this time.

Last week I wrote to students to update them on where we presently are, to say well done on what they have done so far and to urge them to keep going. This week I am writing to you. First and foremost, I would like to thank you for your fantastic support and work at home with your daughter/son. Without you acting as this support, our young people would not be in the position they are today. I acknowledge and appreciate how tough this is for you, and for your daughter/son but like them last week, I urge you to keep going, to keep talking and to keep asking if you are not sure.

Secondly, I would like to thank staff for all their work in a range of roles to keep the school going, to keep the community together and to continue to plan and teach the curriculum. I have recently updated the governing body on the school's work and progress during his period of time and I would like to personally thank them for their work in challenging circumstances.

Risk assessments and other documents

At the recent governing body meeting I presented 3 risk assessment documents - the school risk assessment during this lockdown, the associated risk assessment action plan and the lateral flow testing risk assessment, along with an updated safeguarding policy addendum and an updated behaviour policy addendum. These documents were considered, discussed and approved and are available to view on the school website. These are all working documents. Please let me know if you have any comments, concerns or questions. They will be reviewed again at the governing body meeting in late February.

The present and the future

While the country remains in lockdown, schools continue to be open for only a few young people with the ongoing message of making sure people stay at home and don't put themselves and others at risk. Like you, all we know at the moment is that a roadmap for the future is being presented by the prime minister on 22 February with the earliest date that schools will start to reopen being set for Monday 8 March. I will update you on what the return to school will or may look like when I have more details.

In school, students and staff have a lateral flow test once a week. The test is carried out by trained test assistants and processors and results are provided within 30 minutes. We await further direction on what happens when schools partially or fully reopen.



Last week we held a virtual year 11 parents' evening. This was received very positively and we are now in the process of planning dates for remote parents' evening for all other year groups during the rest of the academic year. These dates will be published in advance to you.

I appreciate that students in years 11, 12 and 13 are still wondering about what is due to replace examinations and student grades this summer. The consultation on this closed on 29 January. We are hoping to have a clear direction on next steps once the results are published. Again, we know no more than anyone else at this stage. In the meantime, it is vital that all young people continue to work and to engage in their learning at this time.

Mental well-being day – Wednesday 3 February 2021

This week is mental well-being week and, led by Ms Wainwright, ably supported by staff, we are holding a mental well-being day on Wednesday 3 February 2021. I don't underestimate the enormous strain on "normal life" at the present time and how important it is to look after ourselves and each other. I hope that your daughter/son and family members are able to take part in some of the activities. Linked to this is the importance of kindness the importance of supporting each other. We need each other more than ever right now! Our acts of kindness and connection impact so many more people than we realise - and they also boost us too! In stressful times people around us may be feeling the strain, so let's try to keep calm, take time to listen and show compassion.

School building

The new school building has been completed and we are absolutely delighted with this new facility. This week we are demolishing two "temporary" structures which, we believe, have been standing for over 30 years. The new building has 8 classrooms, a training room, offices and associated facilities. We look forward to seeing it in use once the school community returns to school. We are now planning the next stages of the development of the school to ensure that it is a learning centre fit for the 21st century.

Of course, a school is much more than bricks, steel, glass and mortar. A community is only created by those who belong to that community and are actively involved in all that community can bring to us all. We all look forward to a time when noise, laughter, talk and a vibrant feel returns to the school. Until then, please keep safe, keep going and keep in touch.

With my best wishes to you and your family.

Yours sincerely,



Matthew Brown
Head Teacher

