

“We are like islands in the sea, separate on the surface but connected in the deep.” William James (Philosopher)

Dear Blackfen students

In the early morning Rise and Shine email on Monday, Ms Minnis was casting aspersions about my singing talents! In her very thoughtful and thought provoking message, she also wrote about the importance of good connections. Think about any journey that you are on or have been on. I can guarantee that there is a connection at some point, whether that be waiting outside a shop or cinema for someone to pick you up, or having to change bus on your way to school, or catching a train to connect with another train at London Bridge, or flying somewhere in the world and having to join a connecting flight. I simply love it when a connection works smoothly. You alight from one bus and immediately there is another waiting for you or you transfer seamlessly through the departure lounge from one flight to another or your parent/carer is waiting for you the moment you come out of the cinema. Unfortunately, this is not always the case and you seem to pace around for hours waiting for your connection. How frustrating is that and how much longer that makes the journey seem. Journey connections are always factored in to the time it takes to travel. But the connection point gives us an opportunity to pause, to reflect on the journey so far and to think about the journey to come.

The great thing about belonging to any community is the connections that we build. At the moment it is easy to think that we are on our own, with our family, locked down in our households. From the outside we may think we are like islands in the sea and not in contact with anyone at all. But, we must remember, like the seedlings, what you see on the surface is not the full extent. Deep below the surface, like the roots, the connections we have still exist. I know how tough the last few months have been in terms of keeping relationships and your connections going. You won't have been making those connections in school and you won't have been doing all those wonderful activities that you are involved in out of school where you make lifelong connections with other young people and adults. But, those connections will not have been lost. They may take some time to re-establish but strongly built connections will survive.

So, as we head into another weekend, stay connected on this journey, with us, with your family and with each other. If there is a connection that you seem to have lost over the last few months, have a go at re-establishing it this weekend to make sure that you, and they, don't feel like an island in the sea.

And why not re-establish some contact with one of your teachers or a member of staff by thanking them for their work and reconnecting with them. Next Wednesday is Thank a teacher/member of staff day across the country.

Send your thank you messages direct to your teacher or other member of staff through Teams, in a card or note delivered to the school or in an email to admin@blackfen.bexley.sch.uk.



<https://thankateacher.co.uk/forschools/>

This is what the day is about: We celebrate teachers across the country every year on National Thank A Teacher Day. We are asking everyone across the country to join together to say a HUGE

thank you to their teachers and staff for their amazing work not only in these challenging times but all year round.

How are you going to say thank you?

This Thank A Teacher/Support Staff Day let's take the opportunity to say thank you to all our amazing teachers and support staff, who are doing a star job each and every day.

For more information go to: <https://thankateacher.co.uk/forschools>

I will thank staff on your behalf but it would also be great coming from you.

With my best wishes

Matthew Brown