



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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Dear Parent/Carer and Year 9 students,

Key Stage 4 course selection 2019 - 2020 Overview of key dates, events and deadlines for Year 9 parents and students

Next term, Year 9 students will select their Key Stage 4 courses for study in Year 10 and Year 11, thereby beginning their transition from Key Stage 3 into Key Stage 4. Inevitably, the selection of Key Stage 4 courses prompts the first serious consideration of post-19 education, training and employment. These decisions are all exciting, serious and very important, which is why the input of family support and guidance is absolutely essential. This letter sets out the key dates, events and deadlines in the Key Stage 4 course selection process which parents and students should note.

Stage 1 – Complete the guidance booklet: ‘Year 9 preparation for Key Stage 4 course selection’

At the end of November, students were issued with a guidance booklet called ‘Year 9 preparation for Key Stage 4 course selection’, for use during Community Time and at home. Parents should now be reading the guidance booklet carefully, as there are specific sections to be completed in discussion with your daughter. The booklet is designed to guide students, with parental input, to reflect on their personal character traits and qualities and their academic strengths and learning journey. Parents need to complete pages 2 - 10 and page 21 of the booklet, in discussion with their daughters and then **sign on page 1** of the booklet to confirm that these pages have been read and discussed. Year 9 students have also been provided with login access details to the *Kudos* website, to enable them to work with their families to assess their interests and skills, as well as explore different education and career options. To access *Kudos*, please visit www.cascaid.co.uk/kudos and then click on the ‘Login or Register’ button.

Stage 2 – Note the dates of the following student meetings in school

The following events have been scheduled for students in school and during the school day. Parents need to be ready to discuss the information that is received by their daughters:

- **Thursday 6th February 2020:** The Key Stage 4 course selection Assembly led by school leaders. Year 9 students learn about the process of making an informed selection of Key Stage 4 courses, based on discussion with parents of the *Year 9 Preparation for Key Stage 4 Course Selection* booklet; information from the *Kudos* website and advice from teachers and from other events taking place in school. The importance of meeting the deadline date for return of their Key Stage 4 course selection forms on **Wednesday 18th March 2020** is emphasised to Year 9 students. No changes to Year 9 students’ selection of Key Stage 4 courses will be made after this date.
- **January, February and March 2020:** Year 9 small-group interviews take place with Jody Phillips, the independent Careers adviser from ‘Prospects’, who works in Blackfen School. These informal interviews provide an opportunity for students to learn about the wide range of potential careers that might match their preferred selection of Key Stage 4 courses.
- **Monday 3rd February to Friday 14th February 2020:** Key Stage 4 course selection Taster Weeks. The Year 9 timetable is adjusted during these dates, so that these special lessons for Year 9 students



can take place during the school day. The lessons are designed to offer Year 9 students a mini experience of Key Stage 4-style learning in all of the Key Stage 4 courses on offer for selection.

- **Tuesday 10th March 2020 from 4.30pm to 7.00pm:** The Blackfen School Careers Forum. Parents and their Year 9 daughters are warmly invited to this significant event to meet employers, training providers and University representatives, including personnel from the Russell Group universities.

Stage 3 – Attend the Key Stage 4 course selection Information Evening

The *Key Stage 4 course selection Information Evening* is on **Thursday 13th February 2020** at 5.30pm and 6.15pm. Students in Green and Red Community groups 1 – 9 and in Blue Community groups 1 – 4 should attend the 5.30pm session with their parents. Students in Yellow and Purple Community groups 1 – 9 and in Blue Community groups 5 – 9 should attend the 6.15pm session with their parents. At the beginning of each session, a short presentation by school leaders will explain important information about how to select Key Stage 4 courses. After the presentation, parents and students will meet Subject Leaders during mini presentations in classrooms, in order to collect information about each Key Stage 4 course on offer.

Stage 4 – Collect and keep safe the Key Stage 4 course selection booklet

The *Key Stage 4 course selection booklet*, containing information about all of the Key Stage 4 courses on offer, is issued at the Key Stage 4 course selection Information Evening on **Thursday 13th February 2020**. Parents and students should read the booklet carefully and discuss its contents, keeping in mind information from the *Year 9 Preparation for Key Stage 4 Course Selection* booklet and the *Kudos* website. Students still have time to ask teachers questions about Key Stage 4 courses after the Information Evening and parents are also welcome to contact Subject Leaders for further details, after this event.

Stage 5 – Attend the Year 9 Parents Evening

The Year 9 Parents Evening, from 4.30pm – 6.30pm, is scheduled over two sessions to provide more time for discussion with teachers regarding students' progress and suitability for preferred Key Stage 4 courses:

- Parents of students in Green and Red Community groups 1 – 9 and in Blue Community groups 1 – 4 should attend Year 9 Parents Evening on **Thursday 27th February 2020**.
- Parents of students in Yellow and Purple Community groups 1 – 9 and on Blue Community groups 5 – 9 should attend Parents Evening on **Thursday 5th March 2020**.

Stage 6 - DEADLINE for return of Key Stage 4 course selection forms

Students attend a formal 1-2-1 meeting with a member of Blackfen School's Leadership Team on **WEDNESDAY 18TH MARCH 2020**, in which they discuss their final selection of Key Stage 4 courses and hand in their course selection form. It is the responsibility of Year 9 parents to ensure that their daughters have chosen courses, as explained by the school and have completed the course selection form correctly. After this date, no changes will be made to Year 9 students' selection of Key Stage 4 courses.

The selection of Key Stage 4 courses is a very special and exciting time in Year 9 and we are looking forward to working with you and your daughter at all of the different events and meetings. Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you have further queries about the Key Stage 4 course selection process.

Yours faithfully,



Miss F Minnis / Deputy Headteacher

