



Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

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December 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

As we approach the final two terms of your son/daughter's education at Blackfen. I write to you with important information.

Exams

BTEC final unit exams take place in January/February. The final set of PPEs (pre-public exams) for A level students takes place in March. Final A level exams begin in May. It is vital that year 13 students are effectively using all of their study time in school. All students are required to remain in school until lunchtime as a minimum and should be using this time (and available resources) to study for their exams. In addition, the study centre is available before and after school and at break lunchtime for students for students to work quietly. Revision books and resources are available to borrow and students are also encouraged to purchase copies of revision guides (ask subject teachers for recommended titles).

UCAS

Most students have now submitted their UCAS applications and are now receiving offers from their Universities. Once a student has heard from all five choices they need to select their 'firm' and 'insurance' choices through 'track' on the UCAS website). Each student is given a deadline date by UCAS to do this. You will need to complete a student finance application in March – we will send you further information on this next term.

Apprenticeships

For students seeking an apprenticeship, the more competitive higher-level offers are being advertised now and into January. Students can use the school website (sixth form – apprenticeships) to look for opportunities (these are updated weekly). There are also opportunities displayed on the apprenticeship notice board. Please be aware that although these jobs have deadlines, once they have had a set number of applicants they do close. Therefore, our advice is to apply as soon as you see an appropriate position available. For further support/information on applying for an apprenticeship please contact Mrs Drewer, our transition co-ordinator at school. If your son/daughter requires an independent careers interview through 'Prospects' please speak to Mrs Eiffert who can book an appointment.

Punctuality

I am very concerned about the number of students who are coming into school late. This is not only disruptive to their learning but also to the learning of other students in the class as well as being disrespectful to the teacher. Can I remind you that we start at 8.30am every day and therefore students need to allow time to get to school and into class to start at this time. If your son/daughter is late he/she will be required to make up this time at 3.10pm on the following Monday, **No Exceptions**. Please ensure your son/daughter is punctual to school.

Dress code

Sixth Form students are required to dress in smart attire. The vast majority of students follow the dress code perfectly, however a small number of individuals are not doing this. Please can I remind you that all students must wear a tailored jacket. The following items are not allowed and must not be worn: trainers, large knitted jumpers and jumper dresses. Could you please also ensure that skirts are of a suitable length. From January students are not allowed leather, suede or denim jackets as their outdoor coat. Please support us in ensuring that your son/daughter is correctly dressed. Repeat offenders will be sent home to change.



Wellbeing and Mental Health

We are very aware of the pressures placed on young people today and know that for some of our students managing pressure and anxiety is difficult. All of our students have had mental health awareness week this term where they completed activities in form time and had an assembly. We have a member of staff who does a mindfulness group session on a Tuesday during CT for students who feel they need this support. If this is something your son/daughter would benefit from please tell them to see Mrs Eiffert. Further support can be found on the following websites:

www.youngminds.org.uk

www.headscapebexley.co.uk

Attendance

I must remind you that attending school and ALL lessons is highly important in ensuring success. There are a number of students who have had a number of days absent this term. Where I am sure that they were well enough to attend. Please ensure that your son/daughter attends every day. If they become unwell during the day they must report to the sixth form office. Leaving school of their own accord will result in an unauthorised absence, this is also a safeguarding issue. Appointments during the day MUST be avoided and made after 3.10pm. A phone call from a parent/carer is required to explain absence on the morning.

Safeguarding

All students must wear their 'sixth form' lanyard around their neck at all times. This is for identification and safeguarding reasons. Failure to wear the lanyard will result in a one hour after school detention on a Thursday. A lost lanyard/card must be replaced at a cost of £6. Students must remain in school during study periods – they must register for their lessons using their swipe cards and remain in the learning zone or study centre for the full hour. Students who do not attend or leave early will be required to make up the full hour at 3.10pm on a Thursday after school

Part Time work

I am becoming increasingly concerned about the number of hours some of our students are working in their part-time jobs. As a school, although we approve of the students taking on the responsibility of a small job, it is vital that their education is the number one priority and therefore the absolute maximum hours a student should work is 12 hours a week. Any more than this will seriously impact on their achievement in school. Please support me with ensuring that your son/daughter does not work over this number of hours.

Charity Work

I am pleased to report on our positive contributions to a range of charities this term. This has included a Macmillan coffee morning, MIND cake sale, Children in Need leg waxing, World Aids Day ribbon sales and poppy selling. In addition, we continue to raise money for our sixth form charity CRY (Cardiac Risk in the Young) through selling refreshments, Christmas jumper day and proceeds from ice skating. This week we will hand over a huge collection of products to two local foodbanks – the students have given generously so that we can donate to this worthwhile cause. The sixth form leadership team will be carol singing this week at a local day centre. I'd like to personally thank all the students for their charity efforts this term.

I wish all students and parents a restful break and look forward to working with you in the new year!

Yours sincerely

K Brewer

Miss K Brewer
Assistant Headteacher, Head of Sixth Form



Important Dates

Thursday 19th December – Last day of term for sixth form students

Monday 6th January 2020 – Start of term 8.30am

Friday 24th January – 8.30-9.30am Presentation to A level students by outside provider

Friday 24th January – CT 10.30am Presentation by the Samaritans

Tuesday 25th February – A Level intensive revision day

Tuesday 10th March – Careers Evening

9th – 13th March – A Level PPEs

Friday 3rd April – End of term

