



# Blackfen School for Girls

Raising aspirations - releasing potential

Headteacher Matthew Brown BA(Hons) DMS(Ed)

Blackfen School for Girls,  
Blackfen Road,  
Sidcup, Kent.  
DA15 9NU

T: 020 8303 1887

F: 020 8298 1656

E: [admin@blackfen.bexley.sch.uk](mailto:admin@blackfen.bexley.sch.uk)  
[www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk](http://www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk)

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing this to you on the last official academic day of the year at Blackfen School. I can honestly say that it has been the most challenging, interesting and, at times, ridiculous year of my teaching career. I am sure it has been the same for you as a parent/carer in your own work and personal life.

This time last year we had our last and very successful Ofsted visit. It seems a lifetime ago now. After a relatively quiet start to the year we were all shaken by the sudden, untimely and tragic death of Emma Moorey (English teacher) during February half term. This week, we paused for a moment during our staff briefing to remember her and her family at this time. Please have them in your thoughts over the coming weeks.

By March we were well aware of the Covid-19 pandemic and we received the sudden news that schools would close and examinations would be cancelled. This feeling of the loss of a rite of passage was a desperate one for our young people and staff who had prepared them. In June, students returned to school – just year 10s and 12s, but it was a start.

The summer was spent dealing with the fiasco, chaos and anger and frustration caused by the examination 'results'. Once again, young people were also at the receiving end of this – their self-confidence already close to rock bottom.

After untold weeks of preparation, we reopened the gates to all our young people in September. It was a wonderful day for us all, and probably the best day for the Community in 2020.

We had relatively few positive cases up to half term but the second half term has been interrupted somewhat by a rapid increase in the number of cases leading to self-isolation and quarantining.

So, it is a strange last week of term this year. A year in which bubbles, sanitiser and self-isolation have become part of our everyday vocabulary.



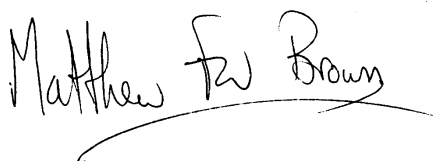
I, for one, am looking forward to drawing a line on this year and leaving it behind. Ever the optimist, I am also looking forward to 2021 when I hope the school can become a proper school again with all that involves. We also have the opening of our new building to look forward to.

What has not changed this year is the spirit, resilience and determination of the entire Blackfen Community to go the extra mile and to be there for each other. Thank you to all staff for their work and thank you for your ongoing support in a very difficult and challenging year.

Stop press: Mass testing and start of term arrangements – January 2021. Please see the separate letter sent earlier today. All letters and information are posted on the website under Covid-19.

I wish you and your family a blessed and peaceful festive season.

Yours sincerely,



**Matthew Brown**  
**Head Teacher**

